

Carton 10:10

THE BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS

EXECUTIVE ORDER 8802/9981

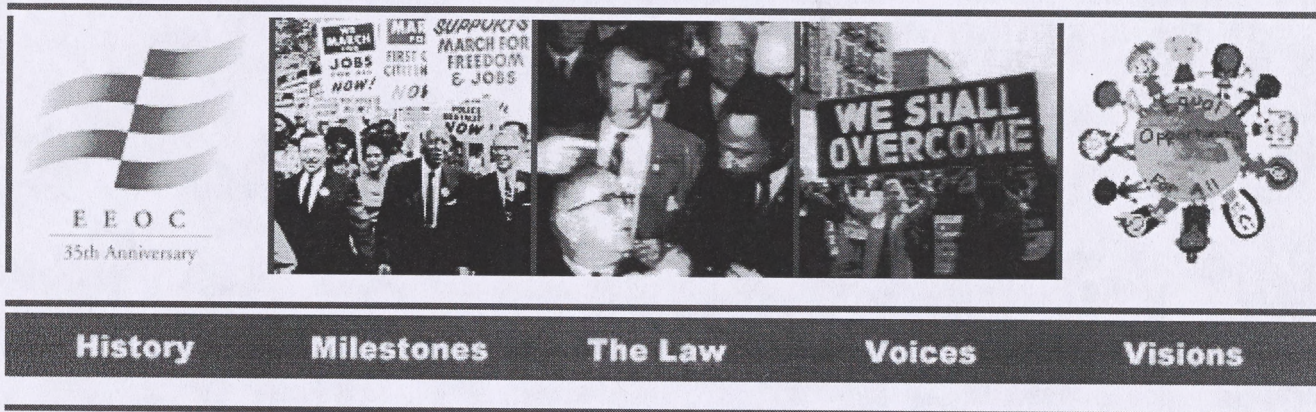
1941-1965

2017/193
C

Make the Nazi
Invasion Come

Roose The Cause
of a national Japanese
emergency during
help legitimizes 8802
need for

Quote 8802



History

Milestones

The Law

Voices

Visions

Executive Order 8802

Reaffirming Policy Of Full Participation In The Defense Program By All Persons, Regardless Of Race, Creed, Color, Or National Origin, And Directing Certain Action In Furtherance Of Said Policy

June 25, 1941

WHEREAS it is the policy of the United States to encourage full participation in the national defense program by all citizens of the United States, regardless of race, creed, color, or national origin, in the firm belief that the democratic way of life within the Nation can be defended successfully only with the help and support of all groups within its borders; and

WHEREAS there is evidence that available and needed workers have been barred from employment in industries engaged in defense production solely because of considerations of race, creed, color, or national origin, to the detriment of workers' morale and of national unity:

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the statutes, and as a prerequisite to the successful conduct of our national defense production effort, I do hereby reaffirm the policy of the United States that there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin, and I do hereby declare that it is the duty of employers and of labor organizations, in furtherance of said policy and of this order, to provide for the full and equitable participation of all workers in defense industries, without discrimination because of race, creed, color, or national origin;

And it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. All departments and agencies of the Government of the United States concerned with vocational and training programs for defense production shall take special measures appropriate to assure that such programs are administered without discrimination because of race, creed, color, or national origin;
2. All contracting agencies of the Government of the United States shall include in all defense contracts hereafter negotiated by them a provision obligating the contractor not to discriminate against any worker because of race, creed, color, or national origin;
3. There is established in the Office of Production Management a Committee on Fair Employment Practice, which shall consist of a chairman and four other members to be appointed by the President. The Chairman and members of the Committee shall serve as such without compensation but shall be entitled to actual and necessary transportation, subsistence and other expenses incidental to performance of their duties. The Committee

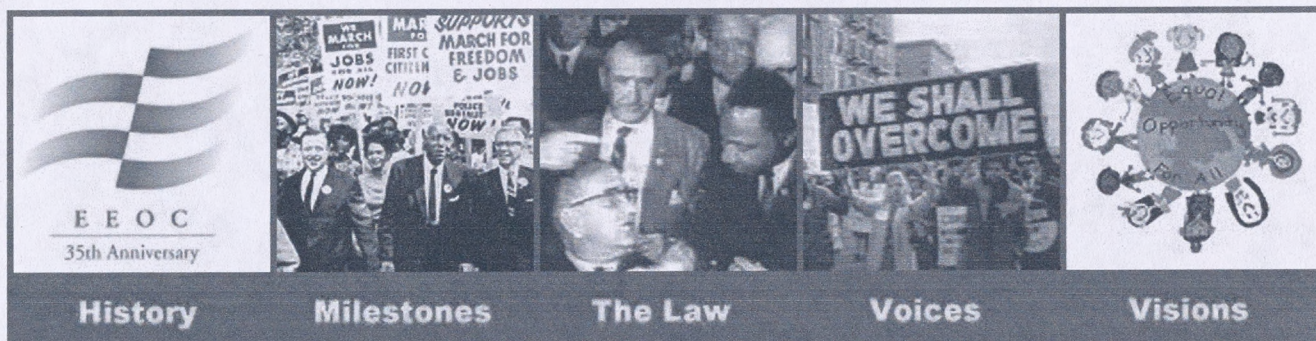
shall receive and investigate complaints of discrimination in violation of the provisions of this order and shall take appropriate steps to redress grievances which it finds to be valid. The Committee shall also recommend to the several departments and agencies of the Government of the United States and to the President all measures which may be deemed by it necessary or proper to effectuate the provisions of this order.

Franklin D. Roosevelt
The White House,
June 25, 1941.

35th Anniversary Home

EEOC Main Site

W o enforcement authority
Don't care military
(1948 order)



Executive Order 8802

Reaffirming Policy Of Full Participation In The Defense Program By All Persons, Regardless Of Race, Creed, Color, Or National Origin, And Directing Certain Action In Furtherance Of Said Policy

June 25, 1941

WHEREAS it is the policy of the United States to encourage full participation in the national defense program by all citizens of the United States, regardless of race, creed, color, or national origin, in the firm belief that the democratic way of life within the Nation can be defended successfully only with the help and support of all groups within its borders; and

WHEREAS there is evidence that available and needed workers have been barred from employment in industries engaged in defense production solely because of considerations of race, creed, color, or national origin, to the detriment of workers' morale and of national unity:

Military necessity
NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the statutes, and as a prerequisite to the successful conduct of our national defense production effort, I do hereby reaffirm the policy of the United States that there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin, and I do hereby declare that it is the duty of employers and of labor organizations, in furtherance of said policy and of this order, to provide for the full and equitable participation of all workers in defense industries, without discrimination because of race, creed, color, or national origin;

And it is hereby ordered as follows:

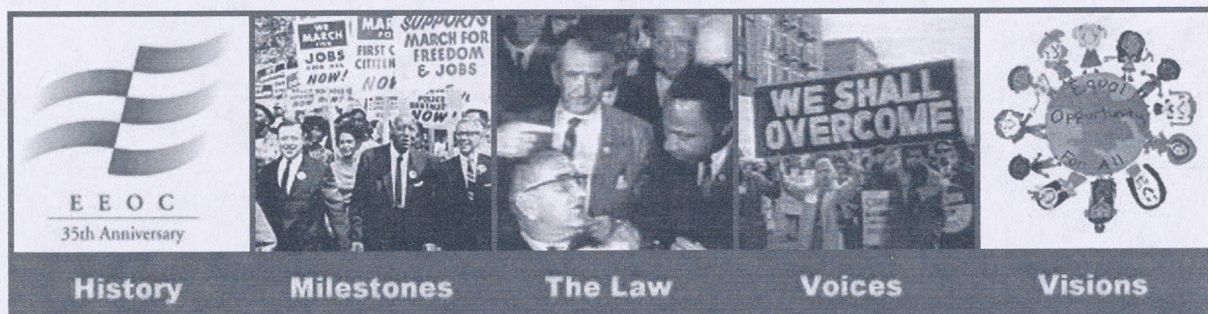
1. All departments and agencies of the Government of the United States concerned with vocational and training programs for defense production shall take special measures appropriate to assure that such programs are administered without discrimination because of race, creed, color, or national origin;
2. All contracting agencies of the Government of the United States shall include in all defense contracts hereafter negotiated by them a provision obligating the contractor not to discriminate against any worker because of race, creed, color, or national origin;
3. There is established in the Office of Production Management a Committee on Fair Employment Practice, which shall consist of a chairman and four other members to be appointed by the President. The Chairman and members of the Committee shall serve as such without compensation but shall be entitled to actual and necessary transportation, subsistence and other expenses incidental to performance of their duties. The Committee shall receive and investigate complaints of discrimination in violation of the provisions of this order and shall take appropriate steps to redress grievances which it finds to be valid. The Committee shall also recommend to the several departments and agencies of the

Government of the United States and to the President all measures which may be deemed by it necessary or proper to effectuate the provisions of this order.

Franklin D. Roosevelt
The White House,
June 25, 1941.

35th Anniversary Home

EEOC Main Site



Executive Order 9981

Establishing the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity In the Armed Forces.

WHEREAS it is essential that there be maintained in the armed services of the United States the highest standards of democracy, with equality of treatment and opportunity for all those who serve in our country's defense:

NOW THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, by the Constitution and the statutes of the United States, and as Commander in Chief of the armed services, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. This policy shall be put into effect as rapidly as possible, having due regard to the time required to effectuate any necessary changes without impairing efficiency or morale.
2. There shall be created in the National Military Establishment an advisory committee to be known as the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, which shall be composed of seven members to be designated by the President.
3. The Committee is authorized on behalf of the President to examine into the rules, procedures and practices of the Armed Services in order to determine in what respect such rules, procedures and practices may be altered or improved with a view to carrying out the policy of this order. The Committee shall confer and advise the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Secretary of the Air Force, and shall make such recommendations to the President and to said Secretaries as in the judgment of the Committee will effectuate the policy hereof.
4. All executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government are authorized and directed to cooperate with the Committee in its work, and to furnish the Committee such information or the services of such persons as the Committee may require in the performance of its duties.
5. When requested by the Committee to do so, persons in the armed services or in any of the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government shall testify before the Committee and shall make available for use of the Committee such documents and other information as the Committee may require.
6. The Committee shall continue to exist until such time as the President shall terminate its existence by Executive order.

Harry Truman
The White House
July 26, 1948

35th Anniversary Home

EEOC Main Site

EXECUTIVE ORDER

9981

ESTABLISHING THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON
EQUALITY OF TREATMENT AND OPPORTUNITY IN
THE ARMED SERVICES

WHEREAS it is essential that there be maintained in the armed services of the United States the highest standards of democracy, with equality of treatment and opportunity for all those who serve in our country's defense:

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, by the Constitution and the statutes of the United States, and as Commander in Chief of the armed services, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. This policy shall be put into effect as rapidly as possible, having due regard to the time required to effectuate any necessary changes without impairing efficiency or morale.

2. There shall be created in the National Military Establishment an advisory committee to be known as the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, which shall be composed of seven members to be designated by the President.

3. The Committee is authorized on behalf of the President to examine into the rules, procedures and practices of the armed

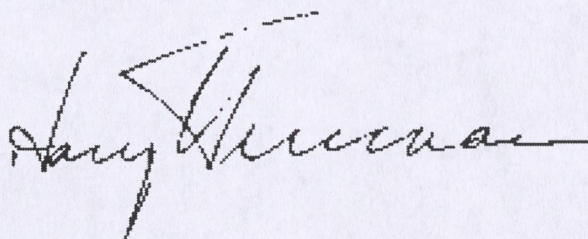
services in order to determine in what respect such rules, procedures and practices may be altered or improved with a view to carrying out the policy of this order. The Committee shall confer and advise with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary

of the Army, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Secretary of the Air Force, and shall make such recommendations to the President and to said Secretaries as in the judgment of the Committee will effectuate the policy hereof.

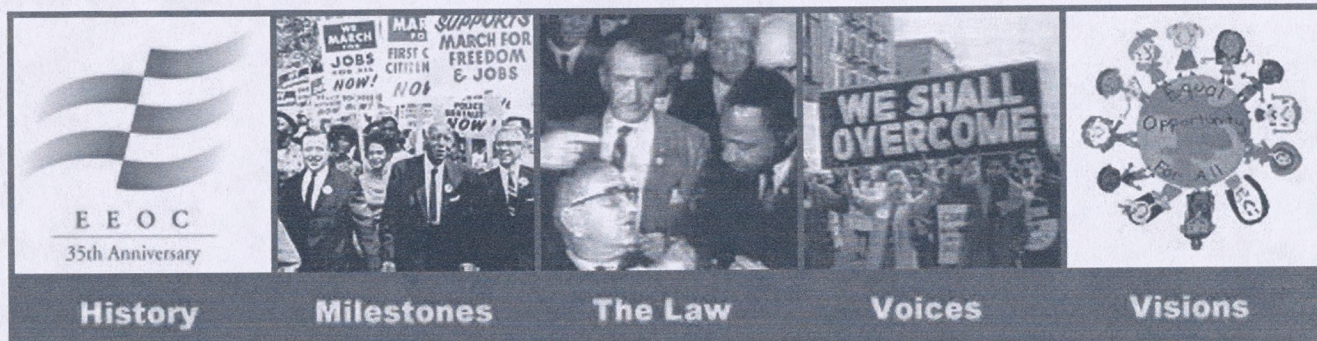
4. All executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government are authorized and directed to cooperate with the Committee in its work, and to furnish the Committee such information or the services of such persons as the Committee may require in the performance of its duties.

5. When requested by the Committee to do so, persons in the armed services or in any of the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government shall testify before the Committee and shall make available for the use of the Committee such documents and other information as the Committee may require.

6. The Committee shall continue to exist until such time as the President shall terminate its existence by Executive order.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Harry Truman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "H" and a long, sweeping underline.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
July 26, 1948.



Milestones: The Early Years

- ▶ In June 1941, on the eve of World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs Executive Order 8802 prohibiting government contractors from engaging in employment discrimination based on race, color or national origin. This order is the first presidential action ever taken to prevent employment discrimination by private employers holding government contracts. The Executive Order applies to all defense contractors, but contains no enforcement authority. President Roosevelt signs the Executive Order primarily to ensure that there are no strikes or demonstrations disrupting the manufacture of military supplies as the country prepares for War.
- ▶ In July 1948, President Harry S. Truman orders the desegregation of the Armed Forces by Executive Order 9981. The order requires that there be "equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin." America's fighting forces are actually integrated only when the Korean War begins in 1952.
- ▶ In May 1954, a unanimous Supreme Court decides Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas striking down all local, state, and federal laws that enforce racial segregation in public education. Newly-appointed Chief Justice Earl Warren authors the opinion of the Court, stating: "We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of "separate but equal" has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal"
- ▶ In December 1955, Rosa Parks, an African American woman, refuses to give up her seat to a white man on a municipal bus in Montgomery, Alabama. She is arrested and is to be tried for disturbing the peace. The arrest prompts a group of black citizens to initiate a one-day boycott of the public bus system which leads to a series of pickets and eventually a year-long boycott of the Montgomery public bus system and selected merchants. The boycott is successful and Montgomery's public bus system is desegregated. A Baptist minister, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., helps organize the boycott and by 1957, Dr. King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference has begun to press for equal rights across the South.
- ▶ In September 1957, angry white mobs in Little Rock, Arkansas, opposing the court ordered desegregation of public schools, threaten violence. President Dwight D. Eisenhower orders federal troops to protect nine black students integrating Central High School in Little Rock.
- ▶ In March 1961, President John F. Kennedy signs Executive Order 10925 prohibiting federal government contractors from discriminating on account of race and establishing the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity. Departing from previous presidential directives, this Order grants the Committee, initially chaired by Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson, authority to impose sanctions for violations of the Executive Order. President Kennedy states this enforcement authority signals a new "determination to end job discrimination once and for all."
- ▶ In April 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. selects Birmingham, Alabama as the location for continuing

civil rights protests. Local law enforcement authorities attack the peaceful demonstrators using high pressure water hoses and police dogs. These scenes, broadcast nightly on the national news, stir the public conscience and bring about a demand for change.

► In June 1963, Congress passes the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA) protecting men and women who perform substantially equal work in the same establishment from sex-based wage discrimination. The EPA is the first national civil rights legislation focusing on employment discrimination. The Department of Labor has responsibility for enforcement until 1978.

► In August 1963, approximately 250,000 Americans of all races march in Washington, D.C. for racial equality and justice. The large peaceful gathering assembles in front of the Lincoln Memorial to hear speakers, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s historic "I Have a Dream" speech. This is the largest protest for racial justice in the country's history up to that time.

► In September 1963, four black children are killed when Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist church is fire bombed by individuals opposing integration efforts.

Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check ...

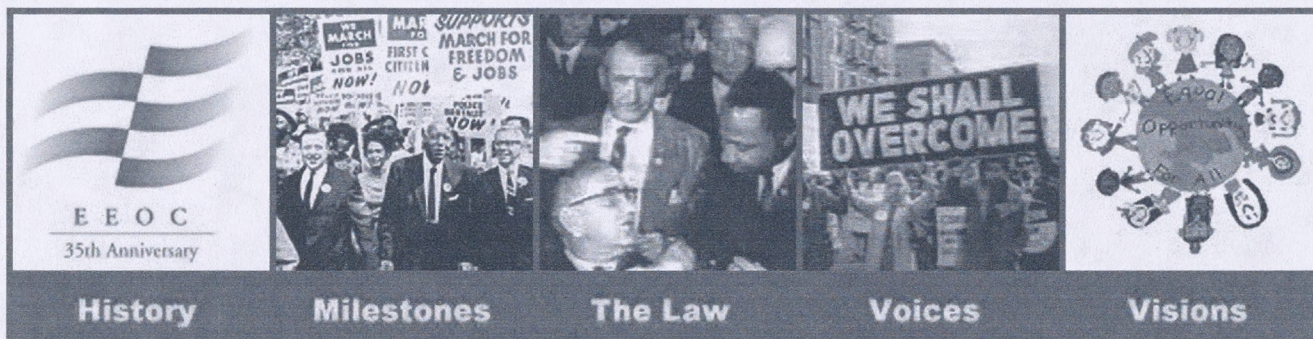
It would be fatal for the Nation to overlook the urgency of the movement and to underestimate the determination of the Negro. So I say to you ... I still have a dream ... deeply rooted in the American dream that one day this Nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed.... We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Next: 1964

[35th Anniversary Home](#)

[EEOC Main Site](#)



1964

► At 7:40 on the evening of June 19, after the longest debate in its nearly 180-year history, the U.S. Senate passes the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The vote in favor of the bill is 73 to 27. Thirteen days later, on July 2, the U.S. House of Representatives passes the bill and President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the bill into law that same evening. Five hundred amendments were made to the bill and Congress has debated the bill for 534 hours.



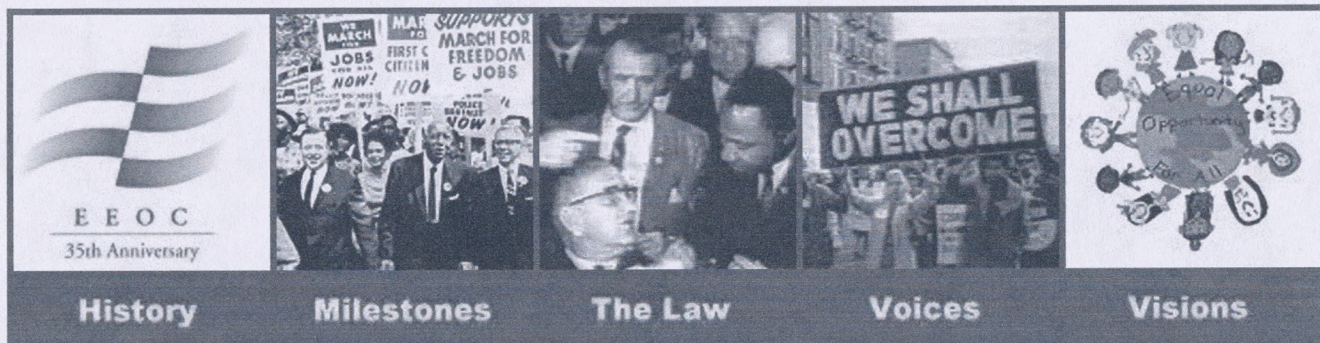
► The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in a broad array of private conduct including public accommodations, governmental services and education. One section of the Act, referred to as Title VII, prohibits employment discrimination based on race, sex, color, religion and national origin. Title VII applies to private employers, labor unions and employment agencies. The Act prohibits discrimination in recruitment, hiring, wages, assignment, promotions, benefits, discipline, discharge, layoffs and almost every aspect of employment.

► Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 also creates the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), a five-member, bipartisan commission whose mission is to eliminate unlawful employment discrimination. The law provides that the Commissioners, no more than three of whom may be from the same political party, are appointed to five-year terms by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The Chairman of the agency appoints the General Counsel. EEOC is to open its doors for business on July 2, 1965 -- one year after Title VII's enactment into law.

Next: 1965

[35th Anniversary Home](#)

[EEOC Main Site](#)



Milestones: 1965

► In May, just two months before EEOC is to open for business, President Lyndon B. Johnson appoints Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. as EEOC's first Chairman. President Johnson also appoints Richard Graham, Aileen Hernandez, Luther Holcomb, and Samuel C. Jackson as EEOC's first Commissioners. Hernandez is the only woman to serve on the Commission. The Senate confirms the nominees in June. A year later, Graham assists in creating the National Organization for Women (NOW). He is a founding Vice President. Hernandez becomes President of NOW in 1970, succeeding Betty Friedan.



► On July 2, Title VII becomes "the law of the land" and EEOC opens for business with a budget of \$2.25 million and approximately 100 employees, many of them detailed from other federal agencies. EEOC's primary responsibility is to receive and investigate charges of unlawful employment practices, determine if reasonable cause exists to believe the charge is true, and if the agency determines there has been a violation of law, to attempt to reach a voluntary settlement through conciliation.

► In its first year, Title VII applies to employers with 100 or more employees, with coverage phased in over the next three years to reach employers with as few as 25 or more employees. Title VII also applies to labor unions and employment agencies but does not apply to federal, state, or local government employers; nor does it apply to educational institutions. It was projected in its first year that EEOC would receive approximately 2,000 charges. Instead, EEOC receives 8,852 charges. A backlog of charges to be investigated is created after only one year of agency operations.

► Under the original Title VII, EEOC has no authority to bring lawsuits of its own. However, private individuals may file actions in court and EEOC can recommend to the Department of Justice that it bring pattern and practice lawsuits.

► EEOC Chairman Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. appoints Charles T. Duncan, an African American Howard University law professor, as EEOC's first General Counsel.

► EEOC begins to formulate guidance to give meaning to Title VII's broad prohibitions against discrimination. EEOC officials initially note that there is virtually no legislative history explaining Congress's intent in outlawing sex discrimination.

► The lack of Congressional guidance and lack of public consensus result in the Commission initially struggling with the issue of whether sex segregated classified advertising -- separate "help wanted" advertisements for men and women -- are unlawful under Title VII given that it is unlawful for newspapers to have separate classified job advertising sections for white and blacks. The Commission eventually rules that it is unlawful under Title VII to have separate "help wanted" sections for men and women, despite the strong protest of newspaper publishers.

- ▶ The Commission's first determination on a charge holds that any corporate policy requiring firing of female employees when they marry violates Title VII.
- ▶ More than half the states already have some form of fair employment practices laws outlawing discrimination based on race, sex or national origin. Title VII requires EEOC to defer charges it receives to state or local Fair Employment Practices Agencies (FEPAs) so that attempts to resolve disputes are first undertaken under local laws. Charges which are filed with EEOC and then deferred to state FEPAs are called dual filed charges. EEOC determines that 32 agencies should be designated as "deferral agencies" for dual filed charges. One of the first EEOC cooperative activities is a research project to study the operations of 11 state FEPAs.

Next: 1966

[35th Anniversary Home](#)

[EEOC Main Site](#)



1966

► In January 1966, EEOC opens its first field office in Dallas, Texas. By year's end, the office is relocated to Austin, Texas. Three other field offices open this year -- Atlanta, Chicago and Cleveland.

► In its first full year of operations, EEOC obtains conciliation agreements with 111 employers, most of them located in the deep south. Many of these conciliation agreements focus on desegregating employer facilities, most notably restrooms, washrooms, shower and locker rooms and cafeterias. The agency holds that the removal of "white" and "colored" signs may not always be sufficient to eliminate the vestiges of segregation. To achieve desegregation, employers also may have to eliminate separate toilet facilities for whites and blacks, remove unnecessary walls and generally remodel facilities.

► The most far reaching of the conciliation agreements involves Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company. The Newport News agreement provides class relief for approximately 5,000 black workers. The agreement provides that black workers performing the same jobs as white workers are to be given equal pay for their labor. The agreement also provides that 3,200 black workers be promoted and that all blacks be given an equal opportunity to participate in apprenticeship programs, compete for supervisory and craft jobs and that the company desegregate its facilities.

"We are proud of our part in working out this agreement. It represents, in our view, an effective and responsible effort by the company and the Commission to further achieve genuine equality of opportunity for Negroes in our yard."

Donald A. Holden, President
Newport News Shipbuilding
and Drydock Company

► More individuals in North Carolina file charges with EEOC than in any other state requiring the agency to assign 17 investigators to that state alone. In North Carolina and nationally, the most frequently alleged charge involves allegation of race (Black) discrimination in hiring.

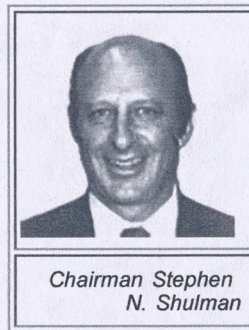
► EEOC requires employers with at least 100 employees or government contractors with 50 employees to fill out the EEO-1 Private Sector Report annually. This report is a snapshot of how many racial and ethnic minorities and women are working in a company. The report profiles 25 million employees as well as 45,000 employers or approximately 50 percent of the country's private payroll workers.

► An EEOC study shows that some employers' ability and aptitude tests and other selection devices for hiring and promotion are being used to maintain pre-Act patterns of racial exclusion and discrimination. To encourage employers to establish objective standards, EEOC issues its first Guidelines on Employment Testing Procedures. EEOC takes the position that Title VII prohibits not only intentional discrimination, but also neutral employment practices if they exclude a disproportionate number of minorities and employers cannot justify the neutral policy as job related and consistent with business necessity. The Supreme Court later accepts this position in the 1971 case Griggs v. Duke Power Co.

► In June, EEOC issues its first Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Religion.

► President Lyndon B. Johnson appoints Luther Holcomb as the first Acting Chairman of the Commission. He would serve as Acting Chairman on three occasions during his tenure (1966-1973) as an EEOC Commissioner.

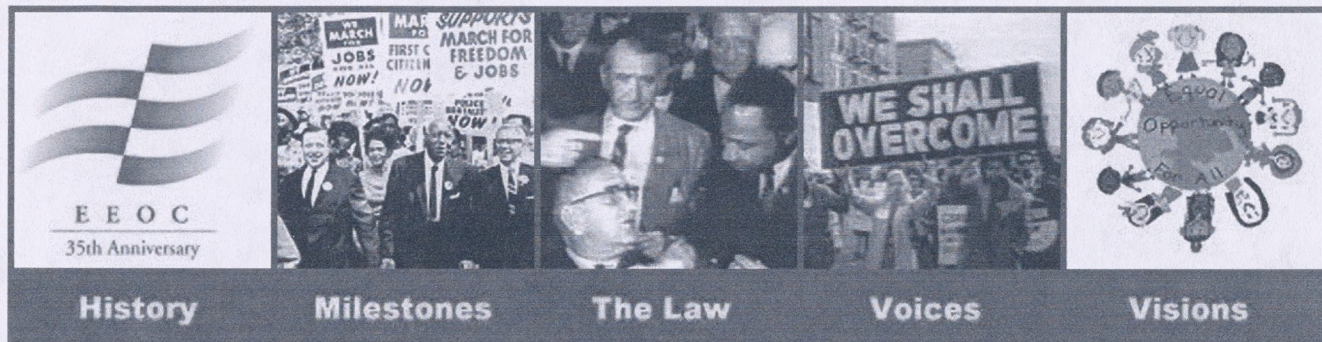
► President Lyndon B. Johnson nominates [Stephen N. Shulman](#) to be Chairman of EEOC. The Senate confirms Shulman within two weeks. When nominated, Shulman is the General Counsel of the U.S. Air Force.



Next: [1967](#)

[35th Anniversary Home](#)

[EEOC Main Site](#)



Milestones: 1967

► Congress passes the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) protecting individuals who are between 40 and 65 years of age from discrimination in employment. The Department of Labor has enforcement responsibility. Three years earlier, Congress had voted down an amendment to Title VII to include age discrimination as an unlawful employment practice.

► EEOC institutes EEO-3 reports, requiring local referral unions with 100 or more members to report every two years on membership/referral and applicants by race/ethnic group, gender and trade. These reports cover 1.2 million union members and applicants for union membership.

► President Lyndon B. Johnson appoints and the Senate confirms Vincente T. Ximenes as a Commissioner. He is the first Hispanic American to serve on the Commission. President Johnson also appoints Ximenes to be Chairman of the Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican American Affairs, a federal task force established to ensure that Mexican Americans receive a fair share of Federal Government services and programs.

► President Lyndon B. Johnson appoints and the Senate confirms Clifford L. Alexander, Jr. as the first African American Chairman of EEOC. President Jimmy Carter later appoints Alexander to be the first African American Secretary of the U.S. Army.



*Chairman Clifford L.
Alexander, Jr.*

► EEOC shifts the focus of its relationship with state and local Fair Employment Practice Agencies (FEPAs) from research to action oriented programs which are designed to strengthen FEPA compliance and enforcement efforts.

► The Commission addresses the issue of whether employers can rely on state protective laws as a defense to claims of sex discrimination. State protective laws in 43 states restrict women from holding certain jobs, often prohibit women from working at night and in general restrict employment opportunities for women. The Commission declines to address the issue directly and directs charging parties to the courts for a determination. The Commission eventually determines "state protective laws by their very nature conflict with Title VII" and will not be considered a defense to a claim of sex discrimination.

► EEOC begins conducting public hearings in selected cities throughout the country to publicize the existence of Title VII, make members of the public aware that they can complain to EEOC about employment discrimination and to focus attention on particularly acute discriminatory employment practices. Using EEO-1 data, EEOC documents the scope and intensity of discrimination and urges employers to take stronger action to overcome the historical exclusion of minorities and women in particular industries and jobs. Technical assistance is provided to employers.

► EEOC's first public hearing is held in Charlotte, North Carolina and focuses on the textile industry, which has been one of the largest sources of individual charges to date. EEO-1 reports show that only

8.4 percent of all textile employees are African American, although nonwhites constitute 22 percent of the population in North Carolina and 30.5 percent in South Carolina. The EEO-1 Reports also show that 99 percent of the African American employees in the textile industry are blue collar and service workers and that African Americans are only 2.3 percent of craftsmen, foremen and similar positions.

Next: [1968](#)

[35th Anniversary Home](#)

[EEOC Main Site](#)

Military has been Desegregation Model

By Major Cox

Fifty years ago, on July 26, 1948 President Harry Truman issued Executive Order 9981. The order brought an end to racial segregation within the ranks of the United States military forces. The written document contained six paragraphs with less than 250 words.

Executive Order 9981 addressed four areas: First, it declared the President's policy of equality of opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin. Second, it created the President's seven-member Committee on Equality of Treatment in the Armed Services. Third, it authorized the Committee to examine existing rules and determine what changes would be necessary to carry out the policy of integrating the services. And fourth, it directed all executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government to cooperate with the Committee in its work.

President Truman held views about race and civil rights similar to other southern politicians of his time. This being the case, why was he different? What was the driving force behind his decision to integrate the military? There is no simple answer, or maybe there is.

One year earlier on June 28, 1947, while speaking at the Thirty-eighth Annual Conference of the NAACP, President Truman provided delegates a glimpse of the future. In his speech about "civil rights and human freedom," Truman congratulated convention delegates gathered at the Lincoln Memorial for what he called "the effective work for the improvement of our democratic processes."

He won their allegiance when he said, "It is my deep conviction that we have reached a turning point in the long history of our efforts to guarantee a freedom and equality to all our citizens... And when I say all Americans--I mean all Americans."

In February of the next year, (Feb. 2, 1948) President Truman did something no previous President had ever done: he sent Congress a special message on civil rights. He proposed a ten-point program, which included provisions for an anti-lynching law, an anti-poll tax law, a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission, a Commission on Civil Rights, home rule for the District of Columbia and desegregation of the armed services.

The morning he sent his message to Congress, Truman wrote in his diary that members no doubt would receive his message coldly. "But it needs to be said,"

the President concluded. He underestimated the reaction in the congress. Critics on Capitol Hill easily stopped his proposals.

But the issue of civil rights rose again at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia in early July 1948. Minneapolis Mayor Hubert Humphrey stunned party regulars when he engineered the adoption of a civil rights plank that was stronger than the one proposed by Truman. In response to Humphrey's coup, many of the southern delegates walked out of the convention hall.

Some historians believe President Truman had hoped to unite the Democratic Party by promising civil rights to African Americans, but not pushing so fast as to alienate segregationists. That was not to be the Truman legacy. Instead, renegade southern Democrats formed the Dixiecrat Party and nominated South Carolina Governor Strom Thurmond for president.

Despite all these events, and with his civil rights legislative proposals bogged down in congress, President Truman decided to desegregate the United States Armed Forces by executive order. This decision surprised both liberals and conservatives. Army General Omar Bradley, warned, that it was not the business of the armed services to conduct "social experiments."

Notwithstanding General Bradley's public admonition, the armed services marched forward and implemented the desegregation policy. By the end of the Korean War in 1953, the U.S. military was almost completely desegregated.

Today, thanks in large measure to President Truman's gutsy decision to do the right-thing, the U.S. military is a paradigm of institutional racial integration, a 50-year-old role model. One with a path to success, that would be a wise choice to follow, for the many public and private institutions that seem unable to modify their racist policies.

~

Originally Published: 4 August 1998, *Montgomery Advertiser*

© Copyright - 1992-2004 - Major W. Cox and *Montgomery Advertiser*.
[Read our copyright notice.](#)

[Home](#) | [Directory of Columns](#) | [Search](#) | [More About Major Cox](#) | [Related Links](#)
