

61-4211

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 12, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

Subject: Federal Participation at Segregated Meetings

The President has on numerous occasions made clear his view that Federal officials should not participate in segregated meetings. Recently some situations have developed where it has been necessary for Government personnel to withdraw from scheduled events when it has become apparent that they were to be segregated. This embarrassment and inconvenience can be prevented if all are made aware of the policy. Accordingly, it is suggested that all heads of departments and agencies take such steps as are necessary to insure that this position is understood throughout the Federal Government.

Attached is a suggested guide which might be helpful in developing your own policy. I would appreciate receiving a copy of any department or agency statement you issue.



Lee C. White
Associate Special Counsel
to the President

Enclosure

cc: Members of Subcabinet Group on Civil Rights

GUIDE TO FEDERAL DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY OFFICIALS
ON ACCEPTANCE OF SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS AND ON
PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCES

It is the goal and policy of this Administration to secure equal treatment and equal opportunity for all Americans and to assure that no Federal program operates to encourage or support racial segregation. President Johnson has stated, "As far as the writ of Federal law will run, we must abolish not some but all racial discrimination."

Pursuant to this policy, government public information programs, educational activities and services of a like character should be available to all persons on an equal basis. Care must be exercised that acceptance of speaking engagements and participation in conferences by Federal officials is consistent with this policy. Officials should not participate in conferences or speak before audiences where any racial group has been segregated or excluded from the meeting, from any of the facilities or the conferences or from membership in the group.

When requests for speakers or participation are received under circumstances where segregation may be practiced, there is a clear obligation to make specific inquiry as to the practices of the group before acceptance is given. If the inviting group expresses a willingness to discuss modification of its practices for the occasion, obviously the department should cooperate in such efforts.

The Federal government should not sponsor, support, or financially assist, directly or indirectly, any conference, convention or meeting held under circumstances where participants are segregated or are treated unequally because of race. This policy includes the granting of Federal funds to reimburse the expenditures of non-Federal agencies under grant-in-aid programs.

If the Federal civil rights program would be better served by permitting an exception to this policy in a particular case, the head of the department or agency should be advised prior to making any commitments for his confirmation of the waiver.

