Quest and Response
McCoy, Donald R., Ruetten, Richard T.

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During 1947 the Republican-controlled Eightieth Congress took up its duties. Negroes and other minorities waited to see if the change in party control would lead to action on civil-rights measures. Few black leaders expected much, but they did challenge the Republicans to live up to their past promises. As the Afro-American wrote, "The Republican party for years has been saying that it would gladly pass a federal anti-poll-tax bill, FEPC, and antilynching legislation comparable to the federal antikidnapping law but didn't because it didn't have the votes. Well, it has the votes now. . . . If the GOP means business, . . . it now has its best opportunity in years to prove it."

The NAACP and other minority organizations approached the new Congress with a sizable legislative program, asking for action on the FEPC, lynchings, poll taxes, filibusters, aid to education, jim-crow travel, housing, rent control, school lunches, farm aid, various changes in the District of Columbia, and for the ouster of Theodore Bilbo from the Senate. Japanese-Americans sought passage of their claims bill and liberalized citizenship and immigration provisions, and Indians wanted increased appropriations.

President Truman abetted this drive. In his State of the Union address of January 6, he pointed out "numerous attacks upon the constitutional rights of individual citizens as a result of racial and religious bigotry" and said that he was "not convinced that the present legislation reached the limit of federal power to protect the civil rights of its citizens." Two days later Truman sent his Economic Report up to Capitol Hill and asked for a number of general measures of interest to many Americans and particularly to minorities, including rent control, increasing the minimum wage, extending the Fair Labor Standards
Act to a larger number of workers, and raising and expanding the coverage of social-security benefits. He added, “We must end discrimination in employment or wages against certain classes of workers. . . . Discrimination against certain racial and religious groups, against workers in late middle age, and against women, not only is repugnant to the principles of our democracy, but often creates artificial ‘labor shortages’ in the midst of labor surplus.”

Congress responded but slightly to minority-group demands. Although Bilbo was not drummed out of the Senate, he was not allowed to take his seat. The question became academic, however, for Bilbo soon died. In March the Senate Rules Committee ordered the admission of Negro correspondents to the press gallery, and the House of Representatives soon followed suit. The Senate Rules Committee, also in March, took action against discrimination in the operation of Capitol and Senate Office Building restaurants used by Senate employees.

Action on legislative proposals moved slowly, however. No hearings were scheduled on the fifteen FEPC bills in the House. Senate hearings were held on S. 984 in June and July, but the Labor and Welfare Committee failed to report this FEPC bill until the following year. Little prodding came from the executive branch, and Truman only alluded again to fair employment practices in a June speech. Moreover, the White House decided to dispose of A. Philip Randolph’s pleas for presidential support by not answering them. Labor Secretary Lewis B. Schwellenbach did not testify before the Senate Labor Committee, although in August, after the first session of Congress adjourned, he did send a long and strong endorsement of S. 984 for inclusion in the record.

No action was taken on antilynching proposals or on Adam Clayton Powell’s bill to forbid segregation in interstate transportation. Only a minor victory was achieved in the effort to limit filibusters, and that was to extend the cloture rule to Senate motions not considered to be pending business. Only three measures in which civil-rights advocates were interested met with some success: the House passed the antipoll-tax and Japanese-American-claims bills, and the Senate and the House enacted legislation providing for the people of Puerto Rico to elect their own governor. Some pleasure was taken in Truman’s vetoes of the restrictive Taft-Hartley labor bill and the measure excluding newspaper and magazine vendors, a group which included many Negroes, from social-security coverage.

Nevertheless, these actions gave scant cause for joy. Negroes knew that the poll-tax bill would be filibustered to death in the Senate.
Moreover, regarding the FEPC, who could forget House Speaker Joseph Martin's blunt statement in January that "we are not going to pass the FEPC bill" because of opposition from industrialists who were the Republican party's chief financial supporters. The general reaction of the Negro press and Negro leaders was that the first session of the Eightieth Congress was a failure. The Defender, using a phrase that Harry Truman would make famous a year later, called the Republican Congress a "do-nothing Congress." There was plenty of evidence, certainly, that it would be "business as usual" throughout the Eightieth Congress unless something remarkable happened.

Harry S. Truman had his ups and downs with minorities in 1947, and deservedly so. Although his January State of the Union message and Economic Report dealt favorably with many issues of concern to minority groups, he did little to press specific civil-rights questions. Furthermore, on January 23, he crossed a CORE picket line that was protesting the refusal of Washington's National Theater to admit black people to performances. His blunder was widely taken as an insult to Negroes. Several interpretations of the president's apparently relaxed position early in 1947 can be suggested. One is that he was hoping to ride out civil-rights problems without doing much of anything. Another is that he was not yet fully aware of the situation and therefore drifted, now that the pressures of 1946 had lessened. Still another is that Truman and his government were in the process of transition, of adjusting to the new powers in Congress and a new set of emerging postwar problems. The fourth is that he knew what was happening and was biding his time for the right moment to strike. Cases can be made for all four of these views, but the evidence favors the third one, that Truman was caught up in a transitional tide.

A considerable number of weighty problems had roosted on the president's shoulders. Among them were the attenuation of relations with the Soviet Union and its satellites, recruitment of allies, development of the United Nations, reconstruction of war-torn Europe, and, at home, treatment of the problems of civil rights, inflation, labor-management relations, and welfare services. These had to be dealt with in the face of Republican control of Congress, opposition from the Left and the Right within the Democratic party, and shifts of power within executive circles; and they had to be done by an overworked chief executive who was far from popular within his nation. In view of all this, it can be conjectured that Harry Truman, before taking action on civil rights, decided to wait upon the report of his
civil-rights committee, which was longer in coming than expected, and to see what the Republicans did.

Some Democratic strategists, however, were busy. Liberals were forming in ranks that would support and push the president toward a more advanced civil-rights policy. After the Democratic defeat in the congressional elections of 1946, a group of these liberals, led by Federal Security Administrator Oscar R. Ewing, came together to discuss how Truman was to recoup the party’s losses. Liberalism had to be the road, and the president, according to Ewing, would have to emerge as “the champion of various groups.” A band of administration liberals, beginning late in 1946, met at Ewing’s apartment every Monday evening to talk about how to influence Truman on policy. In on these discussions and in developing influence on presidential policy were, among others, Ewing, White House Special Counsel Clark Clifford, Leon Keyserling of the Council of Economic Advisers, Assistant Interior Secretary C. Girard Davidson, Assistant Labor Secretary David A. Morse, and Presidential Administrative Assistant Charles S. Murphy. Interior Under Secretary Oscar Chapman was an important ally, for he, more than anyone else who held Truman’s confidence, had wide connections with minority groups, including Negroes, Indians, Japanese-Americans, and territorial peoples.8

These men were concerned with many things, and in general, as Cabell Phillips has written, with “a liberalism focused on the creation and equitable distribution of abundance.”9 Minority problems were subsumed under this approach. The administration liberals, however, were just forming in 1947. Their effect was to be gradual, for they represented a transition from earlier, less coordinated influences on Truman. They also represented the elements that would help the president structure his Fair Deal program. This development was not just one of stimulus and response. Truman’s decision to listen increasingly to the administration liberals made it clear that he welcomed their advice.

At least an equally important development was the formation of the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) and the Progressive Citizens of America (PCA). The ADA, headed by Leon Henderson, Chester Bowles, Wilson Wyatt, and other militant New Dealers, was pitted against the PCA, which rallied around Henry Wallace. Both groups appealed to liberals in the Democratic party and sought to pick up what they thought was the shattered leadership of the party.10 Both placed pressure on Truman from the Left. He responded, with the assistance of the Ewing group, by joining in the fight for liberal and
minority-group support, finally gaining the reluctant backing of the ADA, while the PCA dissipated its strength in Wallace’s quixotic candidacy for the presidency in 1948.

These struggles and influences left their mark on Truman’s statements and actions in 1947. His State of the Union message and his Economic Report showed this, as did his decision to present the annual Wendell Willkie awards to Negro journalists in February, when he lauded the black press for its “courageous and constructive manner” in dealing with race relations. He also carried the message of human rights abroad. In addressing the Inter-American Conference in Rio de Janeiro in September, the president referred to “the belief of our people in the principle that there are basic human rights which all men everywhere should enjoy.” A president as forthright as Truman would have been prepared to make such a statement only if he was also prepared to seek those rights for his own people. Moreover, although he did not make an issue out of civil-rights legislation in 1947, he did fight for other legislation of interest to minorities—for the adjustment of income to prices, extension of wages-and-hours and social-security laws, public housing, rent control, and price ceilings.

The most publicized of Truman’s civil-rights statements was his June 29 address to the annual meeting of the NAACP. Walter White invited him to speak to the association’s closing session at the Lincoln Memorial. The president accepted and told White to send “a memorandum of the points you think I ought to emphasize in my speech.” Plainly, Truman wanted to demonstrate his earnestness on civil rights. Furthermore, his speech could serve as a holding action until the civil-rights committee made its report.

This was to be no quiet statement to Negroes, but a major address. In preparing the message, Truman rejected David Niles’s suggestion to devote only the last paragraph to civil rights. Instead, the speech was devoted solely to that subject. Not only was Truman’s appearance to be staged at the Lincoln Memorial, with the probability of a large audience, but he was to share the speaking with Eleanor Roosevelt and Republican Senator Wayne Morse, no small crowd drawers themselves. Truman’s talk was to be precedent-breaking in that no president had previously addressed the NAACP. The four major radio networks broadcast his speech, as did most independent radio stations; and the State Department arranged to transmit the message by shortwave all over the world.

In the address, Truman solemnly declared, “We must make the federal government a friendly, vigilant defender of the rights and
equalities of all Americans. And... I mean all Americans." After he said, "There is no justifiable reason for discrimination because of ancestry, or religion, or race, or color," Truman enumerated the fundamental rights that each citizen should have. These were "the right to a decent home, the right to an education, the right to adequate medical care, the right to a worthwhile job, the right to an equal share in making public decisions through the ballot, and the right to a fair trial in a fair court." He added that the evils of insult, intimidation, physical injury, and mob violence had to be dealt with. "We cannot wait another decade or another generation to remedy these evils... we can no longer afford the luxury of a leisurely attack upon prejudice and discrimination... we cannot, any longer, await the growth of a will to action in the slowest state or the most backward community. Our national government must show the way." After Truman sat down, he said to Walter White, "I said what I did because I mean every word of it—and I am going to prove that I do mean it."¹⁴

Truman's address left him open to criticism from some whites, and indeed to the charge that any sign of friendship for Negroes was a form of being a Communist fellow traveler. Yet a great deal of attention was given the speech abroad, and there were reports that many whites took it well at home. Black response was enthusiastic. Walter White summed it up when he told Truman that the speech "was the most forthright pronouncement any American president has yet made on this issue." Of course, understandably, there were those, such as the Chicago Defender and the Amsterdam News, that pointed out that although the words were great, there was no substitute for deeds.¹⁵ And this was not to take anything away from the president. His words had been electrifying. But the question was sincerely meant, what was the government going to do?

The answer, until the President's Committee on Civil Rights reported, was, not much. One thing in the works was the Freedom Train. Sponsored by the American Heritage Foundation, with the cooperation of the White House and the attorney general, its goal was to exhibit across the nation such documents of American freedom as the Bill of Rights and the Emancipation Proclamation. Thanks to a resolution by Charles E. Wilson, the foundation's board of directors voted to withdraw the train from cities that tried to segregate visitors to the exhibit. Not only was the Freedom Train a public-relations effort in behalf of basic concepts of freedom, but it was an object lesson in civil rights, however small, in that the train's stops were canceled in
Memphis and Birmingham, which had insisted upon segregation of those who wanted to see the documents. 

More significant were governmental action and inaction on matters of concern to minorities. Federal employment constituted one area of interest. That fair practices in government employment had not been achieved was strongly suggested by data gathered from various federal agencies on the employment of blacks in their Washington offices as of August 1947. The figures showed that employment patterns varied greatly among the agencies that supplied useful information. The National Labor Relations Board employed 69 Negroes and 280 whites in the capital, and the Civil Service Commission, 422 and 1479; while the Bureau of the Budget had 25 Negroes to 545 whites, and the Tariff Commission, 10 to 219. More than 10 percent of the employees were black in the Federal Security Agency, the Public Housing Authority, the Federal Housing Administration, the Housing and Home Finance Agency, and in the Commerce, Navy, and State departments. The Interior and Agriculture departments and the Interstate Commerce Commission had less than 10 percent. Although the employment percentages varied considerably among these fourteen agencies, the types of positions given to Negroes were almost unvarying. Only in two agencies—Federal Security, and Housing and Home Finance—was the proportion of Negroes to whites in professional positions more than one in ten. The black-to-white ratio in professional jobs averaged under one in a hundred in the other twelve agencies, with indeed none reaching as much as three in one hundred. In all agencies except the Commerce Department, Negroes outnumbered whites in the lowest category, the CPC (Custodial, Protective, and Crafts) level. Blacks were plainly the victims of the low level of education afforded them and of discriminatory patterns of employment in the civil service.

Another area of concern was the appointment of Negroes to executive positions. The black press contended that the number of Negroes in high-level government jobs had declined markedly, and it was said that the caliber of some of those who remained was lower. The usual example of this was Marcus H. Ray, the civilian aide to the secretary of war, who was considered weaker than his two predecessors, William H. Hastie and Truman K. Gibson. A few battles were won, for example in the Department of Labor, which appointed a black to the Women's Bureau and another one to increase integration of black youths in the apprenticeship training program. One prestige appointment was that of President Charles S. Johnson of Fisk University to be an American
delegate to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.\(^{18}\)

Negroes were also keenly interested in the whites who occupied the highest government positions. The appointment of General Omar Bradley as army chief of staff was widely approved. Commenting on his work as veterans administrator, the Afro-American said that he had “under the most trying conditions demonstrated his ability and courage to do a job.” More predictable were the compliments given to Tom Clark. The Chicago Defender, for example, named the attorney general to its Honor Roll of Democracy for 1947, citing him for conceiving the Freedom Train idea, pressing to upgrade the Justice Department’s civil-rights unit, and interceding in litigation involving racially restrictive covenants and the union rights of black railway firemen.\(^{19}\)

The NAACP was disturbed about appointments to several agencies. The association’s labor secretary, Clarence Mitchell, appeared before the Senate Civil Service Committee to challenge confirmation of Jesse M. Donaldson as postmaster general because of evidences of racial discrimination while he had been first assistant postmaster general. Although Donaldson was confirmed, a subcommittee was appointed to investigate Mitchell’s charges. Walter White took this matter up with the president, along with that of Carl Gray, who had been named to head the Veterans Administration. White contended that Donaldson and Gray possessed undesirable racial attitudes, and he urged Truman “that particular attention be devoted to examination in the future of the racial and religious attitudes of all others who may be considered for federal government posts.” Truman responded cordially, but in effect indicated that he did not need White’s advice. “When I make administrative appointments, I try to make them on the basis of the ability of the man to do the job, and I think that has been followed in almost every instance.”\(^{20}\)

Negroes were also concerned with developments in the defense establishment. The appointment of Kenneth C. Royall as secretary of war met with opposition. Columnist Louis Lautier said that Royall was less liberal on race relations than his predecessor, Robert Patterson, and was thought to be “responsible for reactionary moves of the department.” Black leaders were pleased with the appointment of James V. Forrestal as the first secretary of defense. Some were, however, unhappy that in the new, unified defense establishment, only the army had a Negro adviser.\(^{21}\)

Negroes were interested in more than appointments in the reconstruction of the military services. The Supreme Court’s decision in the
Morgan case against segregation of passengers on interstate busses led the army to rule: “It is not the function of military police to compel military personnel to obey state laws.” Military police could intervene only to protect soldiers involved in a dispute or when the soldiers conducted themselves in a discreditable manner. The army custom of burying soldiers and veterans in national cemeteries on a racially segregated basis yielded in 1947 to the pressure of black protest.

The segregation of national guardsmen was another and more important pressure point. Citizens’ committees had been formed in six states to urge racial integration of their Guard and Reserve components. In response to NAACP pressure on the army, Civilian Aide Marcus Ray recommended in April that each locality be permitted to decide whether to integrate its Guard and Reserve units; but the recommendation was “nonconcurred in” by Lieutenant General C. P. Hall, the director of organization and training, and Major General W. S. Paul, the director of personnel and administration. They suggested instead that the Reserve be governed by Circular No. 124, and that integration of the National Guard be left up to the states, with the proviso that troops would in no case be mixed racially within companies. Hall’s reasoning was that “individual integration will not be accepted on a nation-wide basis in time of emergency” because it would lead to discontent. This statement was accepted by Chief of Staff Dwight D. Eisenhower and Assistant Secretary of War Howard C. Peterson. Ray swallowed the policy recommendation, but he cautioned that it might lead to well-founded court cases which “would endanger the orderly and progressive movement toward a full utilization of our manpower as outlined and envisioned by Circular 124.” He also indicated that black and liberal-white elements would “line up against the army and this may well be felt in Universal Military Training.”

Adoption of the Hall-Paul recommendation would have been a step forward, although a short one. It might even have averted the crisis in the army in 1948 over official state pressures to desegregate the Guard. Secretary of War Patterson, however, decided to make no change in policy. The letter that went out in response to the NAACP’s communication, after being mulled over for two-and-a-half months, was a model of evasion. Colonel Edward J. Geesen, the acting chief of the National Guard Bureau, conceded the importance of questions relating to racial integration of guardsmen and said that the War Department had “studied them earnestly and in detail.” The crux of his answer was, “You, of course, will realize the impossibility of making a
decision of such consequence based on an abstract or hypothetical presentation. A question of this kind will be determined, if presented in regular course, on inquiry from official sources." In other words, there would be no change. Patterson had evidently decided that the army had more to lose from southern reaction to change than from the antagonism of Negroes and white liberals. The test of his wisdom would come in 1948, forcefully, “on inquiry from official sources” in northern states.

As indicated by these National Guard, burial, and military-police matters, the army brass, although slow, was not unmovable. Intransigence in 1947 was provided mainly by the secretary of war. More evidence that some top uniformed leaders of the army were willing to consider change was supplied by an experiment in Europe. Lieutenant General Clarence R. Huebner, chief of staff for the European command, believed that black soldiers could benefit greatly from improved training and indoctrination. This he personally sponsored in Europe from 1947 on, with General Paul’s encouragement. His program also included greater use of Negro officers with black units and a genuine effort to qualify more Negroes for use in specialties. Huebner’s program was to lead to considerable advancement of black troops in terms of pride and skills.

Conscription had lapsed early in 1947. With the emergence, however, of the cold war between Russia and the United States, debate began about the need for a peacetime draft, either along wartime lines or in the form of universal military training for all qualified young men. Negroes decided to exert pressure for nondiscriminatory and unsegregated conscription procedures. Therefore, during the fall of 1947, A. Philip Randolph and Grant Reynolds organized the Committee against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training, which was widely supported by Negro newspapers and leaders. Thus the stage was set for a battle royal in 1948 on several fronts concerning blacks and the armed services. Negroes wanted to be consulted; they wanted an end to discrimination and segregation in the services; they wanted fair treatment and equal opportunities in an area of life that affected so many of them so much; and they were willing to make a major political fight for achievement of these goals.

President Truman had chosen to meet America’s future manpower needs through a program of universal military training. Under this plan, all young Americans would spend a period of their lives in military training, so that there would always be a considerable number of men in service and, after a while, a large body of trained men that
could be drawn upon in case of emergency. Late in 1946 the president appointed a commission of prominent citizens to study the question of universal training and how best to achieve it. Truman K. Gibson, Jr., was named to it, as was Charles E. Wilson, the chairman of the President’s Committee on Civil Rights, which militated against the commission taking a segregationist line.

In May 1947 the President’s Advisory Commission on Universal Training made its report, strongly opposing segregation in a citizen’s army. That did not settle the question, however, for Truman did no more than to present the report to Congress with his endorsement. Additionally, an experimental unit established at Fort Knox, to show how universal training would work, contained no Negroes, in order to avoid raising the question of race in the eyes of southerners. What it did, of course, was to raise the issue of military segregation all the more forcefully in the minds of blacks and liberals.

Another group that added to the official pressures for civil rights was the President’s Commission on Higher Education, which had been appointed during the summer of 1946. Its report, made public beginning in December 1947, urged, “The time has come to make public education at all levels equally accessible to all, without regard to race, creed, sex or national origin.” The commission’s report confirmed, as the Chicago Defender wrote, that Jim Crowism was “officially under fire.” The reaction among Negroes was a happy one, perhaps all the more because of the consternation and bitterness created in the South by the commission’s recommendations. The report reinforced sentiment among minorities to challenge discrimination in education, but it also stiffened the determination of southern whites to meet the challenge either by outright resistance or by trying to improve educational opportunities for minorities within the framework of separate-but-equal schools.

The most eagerly awaited official civil-rights activity of 1947 was, of course, the work of the President’s Committee on Civil Rights. The committee met for the first time on January 15 at the White House, where President Truman gave it a big send-off. He told the committee that he wanted to stop a recurrence of the Ku Klux Klan terrorism of the 1920s. “I don’t want to see any race discrimination. I don’t want to see any religious bigotry break out in this country as it did then.” Yet he charged the committee with more than meeting current problems. As he said, “I want our Bill of Rights implemented in fact. We have been trying to do this for 150 years. We are making progress, but we are not making progress fast enough.” The president found it diffi-
cult to state in detail what he wanted, but it was something that would work a change in people's hearts, "accomplish the purposes which we have been trying to accomplish for 150 years," and clarify the powers of the federal government in protecting citizens' rights. "It's [a] big job," he told the committee. "Go to it!"

The committee got down to work that same day. It established three subcommittees which were to investigate existing federal laws and to suggest new legislation to remedy inadequacies; to consider the social, economic, and public relations aspects of civil rights; and to study elements that contributed to the derogation of minority rights. The question of securing an executive secretary for the committee was discussed, and it was decided that "it would be better to get a younger person who would put in a lot of time" and "who in no way was connected with any group or organization." Chairman Charles E. Wilson told his colleagues that no fiscal ceiling had been placed on the committee in doing its work. As to how much time the committee had for its work and to whom it should report, he said that the president would receive the report and that recommendations along legislative lines were expected within sixty days, so that they could be acted upon by Congress during the current session. As to how Congress should be approached, the committee concluded that its report "ought to go as a 'massive approach.'"

The President's Committee on Civil Rights (PCCR) met again on February 5 and 6. Wilson announced that President John S. Dickey of Dartmouth College and Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., would be vice-chairmen and would serve with him as the members of the executive committee. Assignments were made to the three subcommittees, which were expected to become active immediately. In addition, the committee met with representatives of the Justice Department to discuss its civil-rights activities. The appointment of Robert K. Carr as executive secretary was announced. Carr's appointment was fortunate. He was a professor of government and chairman of the department at Dartmouth. For the preceding two years he had been part of the Cornell University research project on civil liberties, with particular concern for the operations of the Civil Rights Section of the Department of Justice. Carr was to prove an able, energetic, and well-informed executive secretary.

The members of the PCCR varied in their backgrounds and interests, so that keeping track of such a large group, fifteen, was no small problem for Wilson and Carr. Absenteeism occasionally became a problem because of illness and conflicting engagements; and at least
once—on April 17—not enough members turned up to constitute a quorum at a meeting. Yet, most committee members showed zest for their work and indeed a keen sense of mission. That sense was best shown in their singular action in taking a special oath of office: “I do solemnly swear that I will well and faithfully discharge my duties as a member of the President’s Committee on Civil Rights and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the ideals to which this committee is dedicated. So help me God.”

President Truman, in his January 15 talk, had said that his office and the attorney general would aid the committee. The White House did assist considerably in making administrative and fiscal arrangements for the PCCR and its staff. Philleo Nash and David K. Niles kept in close touch with the committee and its work. The White House was well aware of the group’s potential value. Of course, the committee was meant to draw up a blueprint for dealing with the overall problem of civil rights. It was further hoped that the PCCR would serve the purpose of educating the people to the need for action. But the committee also had the function of removing Truman from immediate civil-rights pressures until a program could be formulated. This was seen in the fact that the PCCR, during its existence, became the chief vessel to contain pressure, protests, and ideas. The best illustration of this was in the case of Willie Earle’s lynching on February 17. Walter White urged the committee to investigate the lynching. Charles Wilson replied immediately, “Appreciate your wire. Federal investigations under way. This crime will command our closest attention. Urge that you forward President’s Committee additional information and advice. Deeply concerned.” Niles exulted in a memorandum of February 19 to Matthew Connelly: “The president may be interested to see how his Civil Rights Committee is taking him off the hot seat. Day before yesterday there was this brutal lynching in South Carolina. They immediately moved in on it.”

The Justice Department also helped the PCCR, probably viewing it as a public-relations and pressure-group adjunct to its own operations. The department prepared drafts of possible civil-rights legislation for the committee’s inspection. Although the department was not pressing specific bills onto the committee, it did make plain its concern for adequate legislative sanctions against violations of civil rights. As Turner Smith, chief of the Civil Rights Section, told the committee on February 6, “My trouble is not personnel. Our real difficulty is legal trouble.” At the committee’s suggestion, Smith promptly submitted a paper outlining the problems that appeared “to be of principal public
concern." These included lynchings; the Ku Klux Klan; discrimination in primary elections; discrimination in transportation and public accommodations; police brutality; and issues peculiar to Japanese-Americans, Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, and Jehovah's Witnesses. Progress had been made in dealing with some of these problems, but Smith made it clear that the legal bases for action left much to be desired.

Attorney General Tom Clark appeared before the committee on April 3. He stressed that prosecutions in civil-rights cases had steadily increased over the past five years, indeed that more than half of all such prosecutions in the nation's history had taken place during that period. Clark urged the PCCR to take seriously its educative potential in preventing lynchings and mob violence. "Law enforcement," he said, "largely depends upon the communities. You can't legislate morals in the people; you have to educate morals into people. We have to cause communities to become more interested and more public-spirited in this regard." Yet legislation had its place. What he recommended was enlargement of "the present Sections 51 and 52 of the Civil Rights Statutes so that those who engage in mob activity or lynch activity, as it is commonly known, might be found guilty of a federal offense."

While materials from the Justice Department were piling up, the committee elicited recommendations from other parties. Late in February Executive Secretary Carr sent letters to 194 groups and 112 individuals asking for recommendations and information. Responses came from 82 people and 141 organizations, including those as diverse in interest as the American Bar Association, the Red Cross, the National Education Association, Time magazine, and the United Automobile Workers, as well as such obvious respondents as the NAACP, the American Jewish Committee, and the American Civil Liberties Union. The PCCR corresponded with many other groups and individuals, and had extended exchanges with some of the original correspondents, on civil-rights questions. Some twenty-five federal agencies and many state and local units of government also assisted the committee.

The members met in full committee ten times and even more often in their subcommittees. Additionally, they exchanged with Carr and each other a considerable volume of letters, recommendations, memoranda, and reports. At their meetings they sometimes heard witnesses—about forty—in open or closed sessions. The PCCR's staff churned up a large number of studies that shed light on a broad range of minority-group problems. This activity showed how true was Presi-
dent Truman's comment that "it's a big job." By February it was clear that the committee could not study the problem thoroughly enough to make well-supported legislative recommendations by the middle of March. The target date for the final report was moved to June 30. That soon proved unrealistic too, so on March 19 the committee voted to set October 1 as the date for its report.\textsuperscript{37}

By late April the PCCR had made substantial progress. It was hoped that the committee and its subcommittees could complete their remaining investigations by late May or June, so that the committee could determine its final recommendations and the writing of the report could begin. This was, however, a case of too much optimism. It had taken much time to develop the positions of the various committee members and of the subcommittees; these positions had yet to be reconciled. Moreover, since the members were busy people, the problem of scheduling committee meetings intruded on the progress of the PCCR and its staff. And then there was the necessity of moving the staff offices into a different building in May. Other delays hampered progress. For example, on May 23 Carr wrote the attorney general asking for the Justice Department's advice on four points; but Tom Clark did not send a reply for almost two months.\textsuperscript{38} In any event, not enough members of the committee could find time to come together in late May or early June to make the decisions on what should be included in the report. Carr was able to schedule a session for June 30 and July 1 in Hanover, New Hampshire, and it was there that the PCCR made most of its decisions.

There were, of course, disagreements among the committee members at Hanover, as there had been at most of their meetings. But, as Channing Tobias later related, little struggle was involved in bringing the committee to essential agreement. The PCCR invested much time in deciding what not to recommend. They discarded suggestions for antilynching legislation directed against whole communities; invoking of the congressional-representation penalty clause of the Fourteenth Amendment against states where minorities were denied voting rights; self-government for dependent areas; joining of a permanent Civil Rights Commission with the Justice Department's civil-rights program; grants-in-aid for health, education, and housing; criticizing the Housing Authority on restrictive covenants; abolishing the Un-American Activities Committee; and repeal of sedition laws. These were dropped for a variety of reasons, probably because they were out of the committee's purview or were impolitic, or because other approaches to the problems were thought to be more satisfactory. Disagreement, when it
cropped up, was confined mainly to discrimination in schools, proposed nonsegregation stipulations on federal grants-in-aid, the role of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in civil-rights cases, and the administration of federal loyalty programs. Lest it appear that the committee was drastically shaving its responsibilities, it must be said that it decided to be bold in the many areas that it decided to tackle. It would make recommendations for state and local as well as federal action. It would attack segregation as well as discrimination in American life. This is plainly seen in the PCCR’s final report.

The committee’s recommendations were largely settled at the Hanover meeting, and it was left up to the staff to tie up loose ends in consultation with committee members and to translate the recommendations into acceptable language. The PCCR agreed to keep the final report within 100 to 250 pages in length.

Now came the task of writing. Robert Carr believed that the Hanover session had gone well, although he wrote to Morris Ernst, “We are not entirely out of the woods yet, and I suppose we won’t be until the finished report is finally submitted to the president.” Carr wanted to spend the first two weeks of July reviewing what had happened at Hanover and then to enter a “period of intensive activity” of composing the draft report. He believed that the report could be drafted and circulated among the committee members by September 1, when he wanted the committee to meet again in final session. Charles Wilson thought that date too optimistic and suggested postponing the meeting until September 12–13.

There were other affairs to attend to. The PCCR had pressed for government action on civil-rights violations on several occasions. One had been the Willie Earle lynching. Another came up in July, when one committee member, Mrs. Tilly, wrote with alarm about a series of violent incidents in Georgia and urged the attorney general to intervene. Carr indicated that he was in touch with the Justice Department on the “veritable reign of terror” in Georgia. In fact, he added that the committee staff “has brought pressure on the department with respect to a variety of matters and I think our influence is being felt.”

The draft report was circulated early in September, and responses came from committee members within the week. Mrs. Alexander made twenty-five comments, especially in the areas of violations of rights and strengthening of laws, and she did it in a forceful and convincing manner. Bishop Sherrill’s comments were minor and aimed chiefly at pointing out that the problem of civil rights was not just a southern one. Mrs. Tilly believed that the draft put “too much hope on legislation as
a cure all.” All would not be well even if legislation were procured. She also felt that the report was too belligerent toward the South, not because the accusations were unjust but because they might “undo the social progress the South has made in the last twenty-five years.” Particularly she opposed an attack on segregation, because she doubted that Truman would accept the report, because of its political implications among southerners, and because “the South will stay ignorant before it will be forced to having non-segregated schools.”

Apparently the Justice Department was the only government agency given the opportunity of commenting on the draft report. Reaction came in the form of a pained letter of protest from J. Edgar Hoover to Chairman Wilson. The Federal Bureau of Investigation had been criticized in the draft for the laxity of its standards in a couple of cases, and Hoover complained that the PCCR had not inquired of him so that he could make available all the facts in those cases. The committee allowed the bureau to submit data that led to a change in the report. Specifically, allegations that the FBI was reluctant to handle civil-rights investigations and that it disagreed with the Civil Rights Section over investigatory standards were toned down, although not eliminated. Hoover had not swept the rug clean; he did not, and would not in the future, convince anyone that he was dedicated to the cause of civil rights.

The committee met as scheduled September 12-13 and disposed of all but two of its remaining disagreements—nonsegregation stipulations on federal grants-in-aid and school discrimination. Under Wilson’s and Carr’s smooth direction and with White House assistance, the report was quickly guided through the final editorial and printing stages, and a date for presentation of the document to the president was set for October 29, almost a month later than scheduled.

While the PCCR was doing its work, there had been much speculation among Negroes as to the results. At the end of May, James E. Boyack, writing in the Courier, indicated that “sweeping changes in the nation’s civil rights law will be recommended by the President’s Committee.” Charles H. Houston was pessimistic that the committee would be tough enough to try to “challenge the conscience of this country to the stark necessity of establishing true democracy at home.” Louis Lautier wrote that the committee had “been laboring ever since it was appointed last December and is about to bring forth a mouse.” The Chicago Defender believed, however, that the committee’s report would meet “squarely the issues which disturb us,” but asserted that its work, in order to mean anything, had to be followed up by President...
Truman and Congress. The conflicting speculation resulted from the fact that the PCCR had kept its work confidential. Perhaps secrecy was advisable, as Negro columnist Lem Graves, Jr., suggested, so that the committee could work outside “the glare of the public spotlight,” even though this had led to mediocre press relations.\textsuperscript{45} Certainly the fact that the committee kept out of the limelight enabled its report to receive considerable publicity when it was released, because it was not stale news.

The PCCR gathered at the White House on the morning of October 29 and submitted its report to the president. When Truman received the document, he told the committee: “I have stolen a march on you. I have already read the report and I want you to know that not only have you done a good job but you have done what I wanted you to.” Truman made the report public the same day. He urged all Americans to read it and suggested that it might be “an American charter of human freedom in our time,” one that would be at home “a guide for action” and abroad “a declaration of our renewed faith in . . . the integrity of the individual human being . . . protected by a government based on equal freedom under just laws.”\textsuperscript{46}

The PCCR’s report, which was called \textit{To Secure These Rights}, was divided into four main parts. The first part reviewed the American heritage, asserting that it was based on the premise that “all men are created equal as well as free.” This was a postulate that the committee believed had been recognized by the people in making their state and national constitutions. The committee further contended that there were four basic rights for Americans—those of “safety and security of the person,” “citizenship and its privileges,” “freedom of conscience and expression,” and “equality of opportunity.” These were the rights that the nation had to labor to perfect. The second section of \textit{To Secure These Rights} was the largest and dealt with the state of basic rights in America. It summarized the disparities between the promises of freedom and equality and their achievement—a roll call of the grievances of American minorities, particularly those of the Negro. The third part concerned the federal government’s responsibilities in securing people’s rights. As the PCCR saw it, the need for federal action stemmed from the inability of states to eliminate outrages, the prestige of the national government in showing the way for local communities, the necessity to offset the unpleasant international implications of America’s failure to achieve equal human rights at home, the tendency of people to look to Washington for protection of their rights, and the federal government’s direct responsibility for the rights of its employees, clients, and the
people in its territories. The constitutional powers of the national government to act were extensive, the committee emphasized; but to be effective they required specific legislative and executive action.

The committee’s recommendations, which made up the fourth and last part of the report, constituted the most eagerly awaited section. The reasons given for the recommendations were moral, economic, and international. The gap between America’s civil-rights aims and accomplishments, the PCCR said, created “a kind of moral dry rot which eats away at the emotional and rational bases of democratic beliefs.” It was also costly, for it drained off much of the nation’s “human wealth, its national competence.” Moreover, the country “is not so strong, the final triumph of the democratic ideal is not so inevitable, that we can ignore what the world thinks of us or our record.” The committee made thirty-five recommendations. In short, federal, state, and local governments, as well as private citizens, were called upon to enlist in a crusade for the elimination in America of discrimination and segregation, of intimidation and mob violence, and of violations of rights.

The PCCR’s specific recommendations were so significant that they will be reproduced here, although without their lengthy explanations.

I. **To strengthen the machinery for the protection of civil rights, the President’s Committee recommends:**

1. The reorganization of the Civil Rights Section of the Department of Justice to provide for: The establishment of regional offices; a substantial increase in its appropriation and staff to enable it to engage in more extensive research and to act more effectively to prevent civil rights violations; an increase in investigative action in the absence of complaints; the greater use of civil sanctions; its elevation to the status of a full division in the Department of Justice.

2. The establishment within the FBI of a special unit of investigators trained in civil rights work.

3. The establishment by the state governments of law enforcement agencies comparable to the federal Civil Rights Section.

4. The establishment of a permanent Commission on Civil Rights in the Executive Office of the President, preferably by Act of Congress; and the simultaneous creation of a Joint Standing Committee on Civil Rights in Congress.

5. The establishment by the states of permanent commis-
sions on civil rights to parallel the work of the federal Commission at the state level.

6. The increased professionalization of state and local police forces.

II. To strengthen the right to safety and security of the person, the President’s Committee recommends:

1. The enactment by Congress of new legislation to supplement Section 51 of Title 18 of the United States Code which would impose the same liability on one person as is now imposed by that statute on two or more conspirators.

2. The amendment of Section 51 to remove the penalty provision which disqualifies persons convicted under the Act from holding public office.

3. The amendment of Section 52 to increase the maximum penalties that may be imposed under it from a $1,000 fine and a one-year prison term to a $5,000 fine and a ten-year prison term, thus bringing its penalty provisions into line with those in Section 51.

4. The enactment by Congress of a new statute, to supplement Section 52, specifically directed against police brutality and related crimes.

5. The enactment by Congress of an antilynching act.

6. The enactment by Congress of a new criminal statute on involuntary servitude, supplementing Sections 443 and 444 of Title 18 of the United States Code.

7. A review of our wartime evacuation and detention experience looking toward the development of a policy which will prevent the abridgment of civil rights of any person or groups because of race or ancestry.

8. Enactment by Congress of legislation establishing a procedure by which claims of evacuees for specific property and business losses resulting from the wartime evacuation can be promptly considered and settled.

III. To strengthen the right to citizenship and its privileges, the President’s Committee recommends:

1. Action by the states or Congress to end poll taxes as a voting prerequisite.

2. The enactment by Congress of a statute protecting the right of qualified persons to participate in federal primaries
and elections against interference by public officers and private persons.

3. The enactment by Congress of a statute protecting the right to qualify for, or participate in, federal or state primaries or elections against discriminatory action by state officers based on race or color, or depending on any other unreasonable classification of persons for voting purposes.

4. The enactment by Congress of legislation establishing local self-government for the District of Columbia; and the amendment of the Constitution to extend suffrage in presidential elections, and representation in Congress to District residents.

5. The granting of suffrage by the States of New Mexico and Arizona to their Indian citizens.

6. The modification of the federal naturalization laws to permit the granting of citizenship without regard to the race, color, or national origin of applicants.

7. The repeal by the states of laws discriminating against aliens who are ineligible for citizenship because of race, color, or national origin.

8. The enactment by Congress of legislation granting citizenship to the people of Guam and American Samoa.

9. The enactment by Congress of legislation, followed by appropriate administrative action, to end immediately all discrimination and segregation based on race, color, creed, or national origin, in the organization and activities of all branches of the Armed Services.

10. The enactment by Congress of legislation providing that no member of the armed forces shall be subject to discrimination of any kind by any public authority or place of public accommodation, recreation, transportation, or other service or business.

IV. To strengthen the right to freedom of conscience and expression, the President's Committee recommends:

1. The enactment by Congress and the state legislatures of legislation requiring all groups, which attempt to influence public opinion, to disclose the pertinent facts about themselves through systematic registration procedures.

2. Action by Congress and the executive branch clarifying the loyalty obligations of federal employees, and estab-
lishing standards and procedures by which the civil rights of public workers may be scrupulously maintained.

V. To strengthen the right to equality of opportunity, the President's Committee recommends:

1. In general: The elimination of segregation, based on race, color, creed, or national origin, from American life. The conditioning by Congress of all federal grants-in-aid and other forms of federal assistance to public or private agencies for any purpose on the absence of discrimination and segregation based on race, color, creed, or national origin.

2. For employment: The enactment of a federal Fair Employment Practice Act prohibiting all forms of discrimination in private employment, based on race, color, creed, or national origin. The enactment by the states of similar laws; the issuance by the President of a mandate against discrimination in government employment and the creation of adequate machinery to enforce this mandate.

3. For education: Enactment by the state legislatures of fair educational practice laws for public and private educational institutions, prohibiting discrimination in the admission and treatment of students based on race, color, creed, or national origin.

4. For housing: The enactment by the states of laws outlawing restrictive covenants; renewed court attack, with intervention by the Department of Justice, upon restrictive covenants.

5. For health services: The enactment by the states of fair health practice statutes forbidding discrimination and segregation based on race, creed, color, or national origin, in the operation of public or private health facilities.

6. For public services: The enactment by Congress of a law stating that discrimination and segregation, based on race, color, creed, or national origin, in the rendering of all public services by the national government is contrary to public policy; the enactment by the states of similar laws; the establishment by act of Congress or executive order of a unit in the federal Bureau of the Budget to review the execution of all government programs, and the expenditures of all government funds, for compliance with the policy of nondiscrimination; the enactment by Congress of a law prohibiting discrimina-
tion or segregation, based on race, color, creed, or national origin, in interstate transportation and all the facilities thereof, to apply against both public officers and the employees of private transportation companies; the enactment by the states of laws guaranteeing equal access to places of public accommodation, broadly defined, for persons of all races, colors, creeds, and national origins.

7. For the District of Columbia: The enactment by Congress of legislation to accomplish the following purposes in the District; prohibition of discrimination and segregation, based on race, color, creed, or national origin, in all public or publicly-supported hospitals, parks, recreational facilities, housing projects, welfare agencies, penal institutions, and concessions on public property; the prohibition of segregation in the public school system of the District of Columbia; the establishment of a fair educational practice program directed against discrimination, based on race, color, creed, or national origin, in the admission of students to private educational institutions; the establishment of a fair health practice program forbidding discrimination and segregation by public or private agencies, based on race, color, creed, or national origin, with respect to the training of doctors and nurses, the admission of patients to hospitals, clinics, and similar institutions, and the right of doctors and nurses to practice in hospitals; the outlawing of restrictive covenants; guaranteeing equal access to places of public accommodation, broadly defined, to persons of all races, colors, creeds, and national origins.

8. The enactment by Congress of legislation ending the system of segregation in the Panama Canal Zone.

VI. To rally the American people to the support of a continuing program to strengthen civil rights, the President's Committee recommends:

A long term campaign of public education to inform the people of the civil rights to which they are entitled and which they owe to one another.47

These were the PCCR's recommendations. They were unanimously agreed upon by the committee except that a minority, at least Mrs. Tilly and Dr. Graham, believed that abolition of segregation should not be required to establish eligibility for federal grants-in-aid.
Another minority disagreed on the idea that states should pass laws to prohibit discrimination in the admission and treatment of students in public and private nondenominational educational institutions.48

The report was news—big news—and press commentary was widespread. Although many white southern newspapers condemned the report, others felt that there was much in it that was worth considering. Elsewhere, the Chicago Sun Times thought that To Secure These Rights would “be the book of the year.” The Washington Post called the report “monumental,” and the liberal New York newspaper PM hailed it as “unprecedented in the nation’s history.” The Washington Star believed that it was a “fine statement,” but grumbled because the PCCR placed too much “dependence on compulsion under law.”49

Negro commentaries usually recognized that the report would not satisfy all civil-rights advocates and that its words had yet to be implemented, but they hailed it generally and generously. Walter White, writing in the New York Herald Tribune, said the report was “the most uncompromising and specific pronouncement by a governmental agency on the explosive issue of racial and religious bigotry which has ever been issued.” He was pleased that Wilson and Luckman were among the authors of the report, because it meant that “for the first time, distinguished representatives of industry have spoken out on the subject.” The Afro-American called To Secure These Rights “one of the most significant documents of all time.” The Journal and Guide complimented the committee for a fine report and President Truman for his “moral courage.” The People’s Voice (New York) considered the report “of extreme historical importance,” because finally the government had admitted that “segregation and discrimination were cancerous sores sapping the strength of democracy and making it a mockery before the world.”50

The PCCR did not rely just on the press to give publicity to its report. With White House support, it kicked off its own campaign to educate the public. The committee ordered 25,000 copies of To Secure These Rights for distribution to the press; various federal and state officials; public libraries; diplomats; and farm, business, professional, civic, fraternal, labor, consumer, Negro, religious, international-relations, social-welfare, veterans, and women’s organizations. Other elements took up the educational task, too. The Courier and the Afro-American ran the report in serial form, with a maximum circulation of 500,000. By the middle of February 1948, 37,700 copies of the government edition of To Secure These Rights and 36,000 copies of Simon and Schuster’s one-dollar edition had been distributed. PM had circu-
lated 160,000 copies with its Sunday magazine and had sold another 230,000 reprints at ten cents apiece. The American Jewish Congress prepared and distributed 200,000 copies of a summary of *To Secure These Rights*. This group also assisted in the writing of the Public Affairs Committee pamphlet on the report, and went to great lengths to publicize the document through newspapers, publicists, the radio, and various organizations. The American Council on Race Relations published a fifty-nine-page pamphlet on how to achieve the rights referred to in the report. The *Pacific Citizen*, the organ of the Japanese-American Citizens League, gave much of its space to the report. On radio, CBS’s Peoples Platform, ABC’s Town Meeting of the Air, and Mutual’s American Forum of the Air devoted sessions to discussion of *To Secure These Rights*, as did the intellectual’s radio paradise, the University of Chicago Round Table. The Methodist Woman’s Society of Christian Service made the document part of its 1948 study program. Other organizations that helped publicize the report included the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Illinois Inter-Racial Commission, the CIO Committee to Abolish Discrimination, the Columbus (Ohio) Council for Democracy, the American Friends Service Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and the Council Against Intolerance in America. The Advertising Council issued one-minute spots on radio emphasizing racial and religious tolerance and understanding. In short, a great educational campaign had been set in motion by the PCCR’s report.

But there were other results. State civil-rights committees were established in Massachusetts and Michigan, chaired respectively by Charles Luckman and Bishop Haas. Civil-rights audits were begun in Montclair and Plainfield, New Jersey, and Minneapolis, Minnesota; and the American Association of University Women encouraged its local units to develop such projects for the measurement of the state of civil rights in their own communities. *Collier’s* published Charles Luckman’s article “Civil Rights Means Good Business” in its January 17, 1948, issue. Articles on civil rights appeared in other leading magazines. In December 1948 the Federal Council of Churches in America called racial segregation “unnecessary and undesirable” and declared that “as proof of their sincerity, the churches must work for a non-segregated church and nonsegregated society.” These were only some examples of the positive reaction that the President’s Committee on Civil Rights could claim to have set off or encouraged.

There can be no doubt that *To Secure These Rights*, as William L.
White wrote, "stirred America's conscience." It was widely distributed and publicized, discussed and debated. In that regard, it secured expanded recognition both of the dimensions of the problem of securing human rights and also of the potential solutions to that problem. As President Truman wrote, in 1949, it became "a charter of human rights for our time." As such, it has been drawn upon directly and indirectly for manifesto after manifesto over the years. Indeed, *To Secure These Rights* served for a generation as the basic statement of most of the goals of civil-rights advocates.

But the PCCR's report had more immediate effects. It galvanized civil-rights movements into greater activity in efforts to implement its recommendations. Not only did the report consolidate goals for these movements, but it gave them a yardstick by which to measure their success. The document also gave President Truman and other members of his administration a blueprint to work with. Truman, in his press conference of November 6, equivocated on the report, indicating that he had not yet read it carefully. When asked if the report would be used as part of his 1948 State of the Union message, he replied, "It could be used as a foundation for part of the message—some of it, maybe." As far as public appearances were concerned, the president was wise in going slowly. He would have an abundance of public reaction to bear once his intentions were fully revealed. He certainly knew, as Mrs. Tilly had written earlier, that "the political implications of the report could be terrific," that "the South knows how to REBEL." For the time being, he was not above muddying Suwannee's waters.

Yet Truman was about to launch an unprecedented civil-rights venture. Not only was the need to act strong, but the pressure was intense. Within a matter of days in the fall of 1947 had come the NAACP petition to the United Nations, the report of the PCCR, Henry Wallace's opening appeal for Negro votes, and Attorney General Tom Clark's warning in dedicating the Freedom Train that "all over the world, now, people are watching us Americans...They want to know whether we practice what we preach." Soon, too, would come the antisegregation recommendations of the President's Commission on Higher Education.

Truman and the White House staff were making plans. Clark Clifford has said that as soon as the president received the PCCR's report, he had wanted to send a message to Congress, which was shortly to meet in special session. Truman was counseled against haste, so it was planned to bring up civil-rights questions early in the next regular session of Congress. During November and early December, Truman
discussed with various administration officials what he should do, and, of course, he received a variety of advice. The die was cast when, on December 9, he asked Special Counsel Clifford to consult with Attorney General Clark in drawing up a recommendation. The president's spokesman on civil rights in the Senate, J. Howard McGrath, even earlier had begun to be briefed by Assistant Interior Secretary C. Girard Davidson on civil-rights matters. Truman, by putting himself in the hands of three civil-rights liberals—Clark, Davidson, and Clifford—made it plain that he did not intend to be stopped by threats of southern white opposition. He would risk their alienation in order to seek the national interest and the political support of civil-rights elements. A civil-rights program for action in both the legislative and executive branches was in the offing. The year 1947 had been one of relative relaxation, of preparation; 1948 would unleash a new offensive, the president's civil-rights program.