

SW 350 EDUCATION

ASW 291.2 Negro Troops - Education

27 Apr 45

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Mrs. Eslanda Goode Robeson  
The Beeches  
Enfield, Connecticut.

Dear Mrs. Robeson:

In the absence of the Assistant Secretary of War from the city on official business, your letter of March 16th has been referred to me for reply.

The Army for sometime has offered material to troops that includes the matters referred to in your outline of a "Proposed Course in Democracy". Colonel Francis T. Spaulding, who in civilian life was Dean of the Graduate School at Harvard University, heads the Education Branch, Information and Education Division. This Branch has been responsible for the assembly of the educational material now offered to soldiers in many courses principally through the facilities of the Armed Forces Institute. Colonel Spaulding has received cooperation and assistance from Negro educators since the inception of the Education Branch. Several are now serving on advisory committees that assist in revising the material offered in the Army courses. Further, Negro officers have been assigned to that branch for the past three years. Needless to say, material on Negroes is included in the courses that are offered to both white and Negro soldiers and officers. In view of this, it does not seem that an additional course is advisable at this time.

I regret that your request to visit overseas installations cannot be favorably considered at this time. The type of activity you propose is now being conducted overseas by the Army with the assistance of specially

trained Negro officers. Further the War Department, at the request of overseas commanders, has drastically curtailed the number of official visitors going overseas on account of overtaxed transportation facilities and limited housing and messing accommodations for civilians.

Sincerely yours,

(SIGNED)

HARRISON A. GERHARDT  
Colonel, G. S. C.  
Executive Officer