

CAPITAL REBUFFS GOLD STAR NEGROES

Secretary Davison Says Protest Will Not Alter Rule to Segre- gate Colored Mothers.

HE DENIES DISCRIMINATION

Negro Women in Petition to Hoover Assert They Will Not Sail in "Jim Crow" Ships.

WASHINGTON, May 29 (P).—The policy of grouping together all Negro Gold Star mothers and widows making the pilgrimage to their sons' and husbands' graves on European battlefields will be continued by the War Department despite protests against race segregation.

Following announcement in New York that a petition protesting the arrangement had been sent President Hoover by a group of fifty-five Negro mothers, Acting Secretary of War Davison said it was necessary to split into several groups the mothers making the pilgrimage and that the racial grouping, decided upon "after the most careful consideration of the interests of the pilgrims themselves" would be observed.

"No discrimination whatever," he said, "will be made as between the various groups. Each group will receive equal accommodations, care and consideration."

Separation into groups, he said, was necessary to provide suitable accommodations for all.

The petition to the President was referred to the War Department.

The petition sent to President Hoover by fifty-five Negro mothers and widows of American soldiers killed in the World War said they would decline to go at all unless the segregation ruling was abolished, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People announced yesterday. The association transmitted the petition last Friday and has received no reply as yet.

Walter White, acting secretary of the association, explained yesterday that the War Department has invited 219 Negro women throughout the country to take part in the pilgrimages which begin this month and will continue until October, 1933. Three months ago, he said, the association, having heard that the Negro women were to be sent on separate ships and to be entirely segregated from the white mothers and widows, wrote to the War Department and obtained confirmation of the ruling.

According to word received here by the association 151 Negro women have been invited to sail from New York for France aboard the American Merchant on Aug. 16, the remaining sixty-eight having indicated their desire to sail next year or thereafter. The association wrote to all of the Negro women invited and fifty-five replied, all signing identical petitions. One follows:

"As a Gold Star Mother who happens to be colored I wish to protest against the gratuitous insult in the attitude of the War Department of the United States in segregating colored Gold Star Mothers who are entitled to go to France to visit the graves where our loved ones are buried.

"When the call to arms came from our government in 1917, mothers, sisters and wives, regardless of race, color or creed, were asked to give their loved ones to the end that the world might be saved for democracy. This call we answered freely and willingly. In the years which have passed since death took our loved ones our anguish and sorrow have been asuaged by the realization that our loved ones who rest in the soil of France gave their lives to the end that the world might be a better place in which to live for all men, of all races and all colors.

"Twelve years after the Armistice, the high principles of 1918 seem to have been forgotten. We who gave and who are colored are insulted by the implication that we are not fit persons to travel with other bereaved ones. Instead of making up parties of Gold Star Mothers on the basis of geographical location we are set aside in a separate group, Jim Crowed, separated and insulted.

"We appeal to you as Chief Executive of our nation and as Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy, to issue an order abolishing this unjust ruling. If you as President of the United States refuse to abolish this ruling we respectfully decline to make the trip to France, preferring instead to remain at home and retain our honor and self-respect."

Women of twenty-one States signed, Mr. White said.