



# news release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **PRESIDENT JOHNSON SAYS THERE IS NO "WRONG" COLOR AMONG U. S. CITIZENS AT CEREMONY FOR CLIFFORD ALEXANDER**

WASHINGTON, D.C., August 4 (Special) -- "There is among us no such thing as a 'wrong' religion or a 'wrong' nationality. There is among us no one with the 'wrong' color. We are all equal before God. We are equal in the eyes of the law. If I have anything to do with it in this country, we are all going to be equal in seeking a job."

These words of President Lyndon B. Johnson climaxed the colorful ceremony in the East Room of the White House Friday as Federal Judge Leon Higginbotham swore in the new Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Clifford L. Alexander.

The full text of the President's remarks follows:

"Mr. Alexander and family, Judge Higginbotham, distinguished Members of the Cabinet, Members of the Congress, distinguished guests:

It was a little over three years ago that we met here in the East Room to sign the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

That historic achievement was the product of the very long and soul-searching debate. It was a very proud victory -- and it was a bipartisan one.

An overwhelming majority of the Republicans as well as the Democrats had voted for this measure in the Congress of the United States.

Insisting the bill, I said:

"That purpose of the law is simple.

"It does not restrict the freedom of any American, so long as he respects the rights of others.

"It does not give special treatment to any citizen.

"It does say the only limit to a man's hope for happiness, and for the future of his children, shall be his own ability."

To say this is merely to reaffirm the original promise of what we call the American system. We are a nation that is founded on the belief that the greatest achievement of the human spirit is to live up to one's opportunities -- to make the very most of one's resources.

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We have come here this morning and are about to swear in a new Chairman for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission of this government. This Commission -- like the Civil Rights Act that created it-- exists for one reason, because millions of Americans are still barred from full participation in the American dream.

The doors to opportunities most of us take for granted seem to remain closed to them. Some are barred because they are of the 'wrong' religion ... or because their parents came from the 'wrong' country... or because they are the 'wrong' sex. But above all, avenues to achievement remain closed to millions of our countrymen because they are of the 'wrong' color.

Yet if we Americans, with all of our differences, share one fundamental, bedrock proposition, it is this: there is among us no such thing as a 'wrong' religion or a 'wrong' nationality. There is among us no one with the 'wrong' color. We are all equal before God. We are equal in the eyes of the law. If I have anything to do with it in this country, we are all going to be equal in seeking a job.

I do not believe there is anyone in the United States who is better qualified to achieve that goal for this government than Clifford Alexander. He knows what prejudice is. He has endured it himself -- and he has fought it with every resource at his command.

He has been an outstanding student of the law. He served in our Army. He served as Assistant District Attorney for New York City. He led one of that city's successful programs for slum rehabilitation. He helped to discover new ways to help the children of the slums.

Cliff Alexander joined the Government in 1963. He came here as a Foreign Affairs Officer of the National Security Council. A year later he became one of my own assistants. For more than three years now he has given his President, and his country a wise and creative counsel that belied his years.

We are reluctant to see him do any work except work at the White House -- though we know that we will always use his counsel in the critical days ahead -- and there may be a good bit of them here at the White House. We seem to attract crises sometimes.

In Cliff Alexander, the country gains an able and devoted public servant in a place where a man of his understanding and where a man of his commitment is needed a great deal right now.

The Commission is in sure and skillful hands. It is above all I think in just and determined hands. My friend, Cliff, you will leave with our gratitude-- and you set forth in your new mission with our admiration, with our confidence and our trust.

Thank you very much."

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