The Department of Justice has primary program responsibilities in civil rights matters and deep and broad experience in the conciliation of civil rights disputes. Congress has assigned it a major role in the implementation of the Civil Rights Act of 1957, 1960, and 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Department of Justice performs related functions under other acts of Congress. Most of these responsibilities require not only litigation, but also efforts at persuasion, negotiation, and explanation, especially with local governments and law enforcement authorities. In addition, under the Law Enforcement Assistance Act the Department will be supporting local programs in the area of police-community relations.

The test of the effectiveness of an enforcement agency is not how many legal actions are initiated and won, but whether there is compliance with the law. Thus, every such agency necessarily engages in extensive efforts to obtain compliance with the law and the avoidance of disputes. In fact, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires each agency concerned to attempt to obtain compliance by voluntary means before taking further action.

Among the heads of Cabinet departments the President looks principally to the Attorney General for advice and judgment on civil rights issues. The latter is expected to be familiar with civil rights problems in all parts of the Nation and to make recommendations for executive and legislative action.

The Attorney General already has responsibility with respect to a major portion of Federal conciliation efforts in the civil rights field. Under Executive Order 11247, he coordinates the Government-wide enforcement of title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which relies heavily on the achievement of compliance through persuasion and negotiation.

In the light of these facts, the accompanying reorganization plan would transfer the functions of the Community Relations Service and of its Director to the Attorney General. In so providing, the plan, of course, follows the established pattern of Federal organization by vesting all the transferred powers in the head of the department. The Attorney General will provide for the organization of the Community Relations Service as a separate unit within the Department of Justice.

The functions transferred by the reorganization plan would be carried out with full regard for the provisions of section 1003 of title X of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 relating to (1) cooperation with appropriate State or local, public, or private agencies; (2) the confidentiality of information acquired with the understanding that it would be so held; and (3) the limitation on the performance of investigative or prosecutive functions by personnel of the Service.

This transfer will benefit both the Department of Justice and the Community Relations Service in the fulfillment of their existing functions.

The Attorney General will benefit in his role as the President's adviser by obtaining an opportunity to anticipate and meet problems before the need for legal action arises.

The Community Relations Service, brought into closer relationship with the Attorney General and the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, will gain by becoming a primary resource in a coordinated effort in civil rights under the leadership of the Attorney General. The Community Relations Service will have direct access to the extensive information, experience, staff, and facilities within the Department and in other Federal agencies.

Finally, the responsibility for coordinating major Government activities under the Civil Rights Act aimed at voluntary and peaceful resolution of discriminatory practices will be centered in one department. Thus, the reorganization will permit the most efficient and effective utilization of resources in this field. Together the Service and the Department will have a larger capacity for accomplishment than they do apart.

Although the reorganizations provided for in the reorganization plan will not of themselves result in immediate savings, the improvement achieved in administration will permit a fuller and more effective utilization of manpower and will in the future allow the performance of the affected functions at lower costs than would otherwise be possible.

After investigation I have found and hereby declare that each organization included in Reorganization Plan No. 1 of 1966 is necessary to accomplish one or more of the purposes set forth in section 2(a) of the Reorganization Act of 1949, as amended.

I recommend that the Congress allow the reorganization plan to become effective.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 10, 1966.

§ 2000g–1. Functions of Service

It shall be the function of the Service to provide assistance to communities and persons therein in resolving disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to discriminatory practices based on race, color, or national origin which impair the rights of persons in such communities under the Constitution or laws of the United States or which affect or may affect interstate commerce. The Service may offer its services in cases of such disputes, disagreements, or difficulties whenever, in its judgment, peaceful relations among the citizens of the community involved are threatened thereby, and it may offer its services either upon its own motion or upon the request of an appropriate State or local official or other interested person.

(Pub. L. 88–352, title X, § 1002, July 2, 1964, 78 Stat. 267.)

§ 2000g–2. Cooperation with other agencies; conciliation assistance in confidence and without publicity; information as confidential; restriction on performance of investigative or prosecuting functions; violations and penalties

(a) The Service shall, whenever possible, in performing its functions, seek and utilize the cooperation of appropriate State or local, public, or private agencies.

(b) The activities of all officers and employees of the Service in providing conciliation assistance shall be conducted in confidence and without publicity, and the Service shall hold confidential any information acquired in the regular performance of its duties upon the understanding that it would be so held. No officer or employee of the Service shall engage in the performance of investigative or prosecuting functions of any department or agency in any litigation arising out of a dispute in which he acted on behalf of the Service. Any officer or other employee of the Service, who shall make public in any manner whatever any information in violation of this subsection, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than $1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year.

(Pub. L. 88–352, title X, § 1003, July 2, 1964, 78 Stat. 267.)

§ 2000g–3. Reports to Congress

Subject to the provisions of sections 2000a–4 and 2000g–2(b) of this title, the Director shall, on or before January 31 of each year, submit to the