

Arms Work Reviving Cry of Prejudice

**Negroes Say Plants
Discriminate Against
Them; Ask Jobs
on Equal Basis**

Continued from Page One

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Of the companies approached, only two replied, according to Dr. McClendon. They were Chrysler Corp. and General Motors Corp.

GM Denies Discrimination

John E. Pierce, of the GM industrial relations department, answered that General Motors had no Negro policy and practiced no discrimination. However, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People contends that GM employs no Negroes in its Fisher plants, only a few in its Cadillac division, and that Negroes who had completed defense vocational courses were told, when they applied for work at Cadillac and Chevrolet, that no Negroes were being hired in those divisions.

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Interview Granted

In reply to the NAACP request,

SHAYS TO STREAMLINE

Ford Co. Is 38

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- 1—First automobile transportation
- 2—First modern production line.
- 3—First \$5 daily wage.
- 4—World War production of Eag caissons and tanks.
- 5—The resultant birth of the Rou
- 6—New plants now being erected and airplane engines.

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munity before you start importing workers."

Feel They're Shunted

Dancy declared that Negroes felt they were being shunted aside here and that the refusal of employers to hire them for skilled jobs was resulting in Negroes not taking full advantage of vocational training opportunities in the schools.

"Hundreds of young men are being called by employers for break-in jobs at skilled and semi-skilled trades," he said, "but less than a dozen have been colored boys.

"One of the few fields of the defense program where we have no complaint is in the defense construction industry. Our people are being hired for the jobs of building defense plants and raising Army camps."

Dancy added that while Negroes had been given equal treatment in the defense vocational educational program here, some cities were guilty of discriminating against Negroes in that respect. He named as places where Negroes have difficulty getting trade educational opportunities Pontiac,

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In reply to the NAACP request, Charles T. Winegar, Chrysler Corp. director of personnel, gave the McClendon group a personal interview in which he stated, according to Dr. McClendon, that Chrysler employed about 2,500 Negroes and that more would be hired when the tank plant was in operation.

The committee found that practically none of the Negroes employed by Chrysler were in skilled operations and only a few in semi-skilled.

While not satisfied with Chrysler's treatment of the question, the Negro spokesmen rated Chrysler above most other employers, however.

Survey Conducted

Dancy conducted a survey of 384 industries in Detroit, of which 80 per cent were engaged in defense work, he said. He found that 273 employed no Negroes and 71 of those stated that they had no intention of employing any.

The Negroes' argument in general is that they are not employed by industry in proportion to their place in the population and, secondly, that they are almost never employed in skilled trades but are relegated to menial tasks incidental to operating factories.

Dr. McClendon states his people's case as follows:

"We think that in view of the Negro's reputation for patriotism the attitude of the employers is unfair. You don't find the Negro in saboteur groups, Fifth Column activities or espionage conspiracies. Despite discrimination against him, the Negro is still willing to do his part to defend this country, even to die for it.

Ford Plant Exempted

"One of the troubles is that industry has always relegated the Negro to certain jobs, the whites to others. Ford's is the only factory in Wayne County that has colored people integrated throughout the plant—in the personnel departments, as foremen and as star men. Ford is the only employer who accepts Negro boys in a trade school.

"We feel that if Ford can do these things the other employers can, and we don't put much faith in some of the explanations that are given by employers who don't hire Negroes in proportion to their place in the population or don't hire them for skilled occupations.

"Some people say that the Negro lacks skill, but how is he going to acquire skill if he isn't accepted for apprenticeship training or given skilled jobs after he has acquired training?"

Cites Union Pledges

"Another reason advanced for discrimination is that the unions won't treat the Negroes on the same level with whites. This is true of some unions but we have assurances from leaders of the auto workers locals that they are doing everything they can to break down prejudices and that they want to see the Negro take his place in the plants on a par with the whites.

"We hear a lot of talk these days about a labor shortage in Detroit and importing thousands of workers from other parts of the country. But we know that thousands of our people are unemployed and we say: Use up the labor supply available in this com-

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Resentment Reported

Marshall described the attitude of his race on this subject as "very resentful" and declared that sentiment was increasing.

"The Negro's position in industry is catalogued," he said. "He is listed for a certain type of job—the dirty, unskilled, marginal work—and isn't accepted for apprenticeship to skilled work.

"He wants to do his part in the defense program and his interest and value to it are reflected by the fact that quite a number of Negroes have come through the vocational courses with excellent records.

"We want to see these boys get a fair chance. It's a matter of bread and meat for men who simply want the right to share in the defense program."