

FORD HIRES 20 NEGROES

Twenty Employed By Ford

The Ford Long Beach plant this week reversed its traditional illy-white policy in the hiring of employes. With the resumption of production, about 100 new workers were taken on. Of these, approximately 20 were Negroes, according to Arthur Gotham, personnel manager for the company.

The colored workers were not placed on the usual sweeping and other menial jobs, Gotham stated, but were assigned to practically all departments. He added that the company will follow a strictly non-discriminatory policy in all future hirings.

Sentinel Launches Drive

In adopting this attitude, Ford is breaking through the Jim-Crow pattern that has existed heretofore in the automobile industry in Los Angeles. In a recent survey conducted by the Sentinel, it was found that in all of the large plants, only four Negroes were employed in production. Two of these were at Ford, two at Chrysler; there were none at General Motors, none at Studebaker.

At that time, the Sentinel, in view of the vital importance of jobs to the Negro community, launched a campaign to try to combat this prejudicial and harmful situation. In an endeavor to prove the short-sightedness of the illy-white policy, the Sentinel sent one of its reporters to Detroit, heart of the automobile industry.

A survey conducted there showed that on October 1, 1945, the latest date for which the company had accurate figures, the Ford plants in the area employed 11,833 Negroes out of a total employment of 67,618, or approximately 17.5 per cent.

Ford spokesmen, moreover, declared that Negroes were assigned to all types of jobs, that their work was satisfactory, and that there was no friction between colored and white workers.

The reversal in policy at Long Beach is a heartening and welcome sign. The Sentinel is more than confident that the performance of the Negro workers will adequately justify their continued employment.