

# **SURVEY SHOWS NO FRICTION IN PLANTS HIRING NEGROES**

## **Workers' Ability Proved**

Refusal of the large automobile firms in the Los Angeles area to hire Negroes on production cannot be explained away on the grounds that the employment of white and colored workers on the same job breeds friction, or on the pretended grounds that Negroes are incompetent.

Conclusive proof of these facts is contained in the experience of local employers who follow a policy of hiring men and women on the basis

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In connection with the campaign for jobs for Negroes in industry, particularly auto, the Sentinel has sent its labor editor, Grace E. Shomo, to Detroit for a first-hand account of employment practices in the nation's auto capital.

Look for her report in the next issue of the Sentinel.

of their skill and ability instead of on the basis of their skin color.

"Friction? No, we don't have any friction."

This is the unanimous opinion of officials of various plants queried last week by the Sentinel. The local companies which do not discriminate are too numerous to mention here. Those polled include Phelps Dodge Cooper Products, Aluminum Company of America, U. S. Spring and Bumper, the Sales and Service company of the same firm, and American Foundry.

In the light of the reports from these firms, the stubborn refusal of the large automobile companies in this area to hire Negroes on terms of equality must be laid to narrow-minded prejudice on the part of the employers—if indeed it is not the product of malicious anti-labor design.

As pointed out here several weeks ago all of the large local automobile plants combined have only four Negro workers employed on production. Two Negroes work at Ford Long Beach, two at Chrysler, none

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# ★ more about Workers

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of General Motors and none at  
Packard.

## PHILPS DODGE EXPERIENCE

In contrast, a fairly large number  
of colored people and members of  
minority groups work at the various  
plants here last week. William H. Hoctor, personnel manager  
of the Phelps Dodge Copper Pro-

ducts, stated that the experience  
of his firm with regard to their  
Negro employes has "always been  
good." He added that they have  
several colored assistant foremen.

"The Negroes are good workers,"  
he stated, adding, "Of course there  
are some exceptions—but that is  
true of other people too."

A similar picture was reported  
by E. R. Powell, personnel man-  
ager at the Aluminum Company of  
America. He stated, "We have  
had no friction because of em-  
ployment of members of minority  
groups. I would have heard of it  
if we did, and I have not heard  
of any trouble along those lines."

Walker Howell, business agent of  
the United Automobile Workers  
(UAW) local 809, which has con-  
tracts with approximately 26 firms  
manufacturing automobile parts,  
none of which discriminate, vehem-  
ently rejected the notion that the  
hiring of workers on terms of equal-  
ity and without prejudice causes  
antagonisms and bitter relations.  
**NOT CONCERNED WITH COLOR**

He told the Sentinel that he could  
not say just how many members  
of the so-called minority groups are  
employed at each of the score of  
firms. He explained that his union  
is not concerned with a man's color,  
or creed or religion, but considers  
only his fitness for a given job.

Some of the firms with which  
Howell's union has contracts were  
later contacted. At the U. S. Spring  
and Bumper company, R. A. Hicks,  
assistant to the personnel manager,  
reported that there is no friction  
in their plant as a result of hiring  
members of minority groups.

"Ability is the only criterion in  
hiring, and layoffs, such as the  
one now in progress at the plant,  
are strictly according to senior-  
ity," he said.

J. J. Sullivan, division manager  
of the U. S. Sales and Service com-  
pany, where 11 of the 50 workers  
in the shop are Negroes, stated that  
their policy of hiring without dis-  
crimination "has been working out  
all right."

Mr. Dominick Megha, employer  
at the American Foundry, which  
also employs members of various  
minority groups, was brief and to  
the point. Asked whether any fric-  
tion from his hiring policy, he sim-  
ply stated, "No." On the quality of  
the work of his Negro employees,  
he said, "No complaints."