



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Pamphlet: Old Jim Crow Has To Go!

Extracted on Mar-29-2023 09:52:20

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Hilterite "Race" Policy

This discrimination against Negro workers is a fixed policy of the trusts and corporations. Confirmation-- brutal and frank-- of this fact is to be seen in the case of Vultee Aircraft. The Executive Secretary of the National Negro Congress in Los Angeles, Robert S. Robinson, protesting this discriminatory policy, received the following reply from Gerard Tuttle, industrial relations manager of Vultee Aircraft:

"I regret to say that it is not the policy of this company to employ people other than those of the Caucasian race. Consequently, we are not in a position to offer your people employment at this time."

Joint action by locals of the C.I.O., the A.F. of L., and the National Negro Congress succeeded in forcing the management of Douglas Aircraft to reverse this policy of discrimination and hire Negro workers. The C.I.O and A.F. of L. locals resolved to break down these discriminatory barriers in Vultee. What Los Angeles has done points the way for every city securing equal job opportunities for Negro youth.

It is natural that Negroes should search for leadership which will help solve this problem. Fearful that the youth will follow a correct program in the struggle for jobs, all of the misleaders become exceptionally active in the service of their masters. Take Mr. Walter White, the Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He writes in the Dec. 14, 1940, issue of The Saturday Evening Post, notorious for its anti-labor policies:

"My survey indicates that many of the industrial concern which are reluctant to hire Negroes, or which bar them altogether, do so because of the objections of their own employees or because of labor union regulations."

Let us leave aside for the moment the real attitude of white workers and unions, which is distorted by Mr. White. Let us look into the "employer reluctance." Since when have employers fashioned their policies on the basis of workers' desires? The workers object to low wages-- do you see any

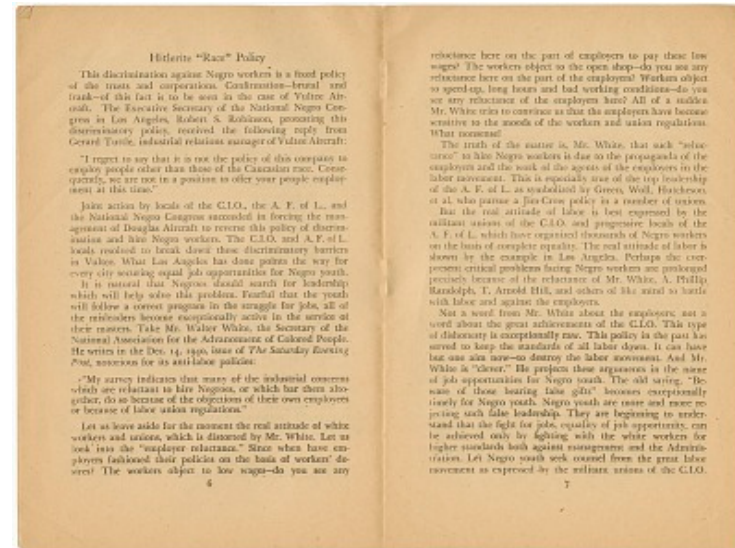
6

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reluctance here on the part of employers to pay these low wages? The workers object to the open shop-- do you see any reluctance here on the part of the employers? Workers object to speed-up, long hours and bad working conditions-- do you see any reluctance of the employers here? All of a sudden Mr. White tries to convince us that the employers have become sensitive to the moods of the workers and union regulations. What nonsense!

The truth of the matter is, Mr. White, that such "reluctance" to hire Negro workers is due to the propaganda of the employers and the work of the agents of the employers in the labor movement. This is especially true of



the top leadership of the A.F. of L. as symbolized by Green, Woll, Hutcheson, et al, who pursue a Jim-Crow policy in a number of unions.

But the real attitude of labor is best expressed by the militant unions of the C.I.O. and progressive locals of the A.F. of L. which have organized thousands of Negro workers on the basis of complete equality. The real attitude of labor is shown by the example in Los Angeles. Perhaps the over-present critical problems facing Negro workers are prolonged precisely because of the reluctance of Mr. White, A. Phillip Randolph, T. Arnold Hill, and others of like mind to battle with labor and against the employers.

Not a word from Mr. White about the employers; not a word about the great achievements of the C.I.O. This type of dishonesty is exceptionally rare. This policy in the past has served to keep the standards of all labor down. It can have but one aim now- to destroy the labor movement. And Mr. White is "clever." He projects these arguments in the name of job opportunities for Negro youth. The old saying, "Beware of those bearing false gifts" becomes exceptionally timely for Negro youth. Negro youth are more and more rejecting such false leadership. They are beginning to understand that the fight for jobs, equality of job opportunity, can be achieved only by fighting with the white workers for higher standards both against management and the Administration. Let Negro youth seek counsel from the great labor movement as expressed by the militant unions of the C.I.O.

7

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