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Council for Democracy, includes paper by executive staff member, "Experiences in Negro Employment", 1942-1943.

# COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRACY

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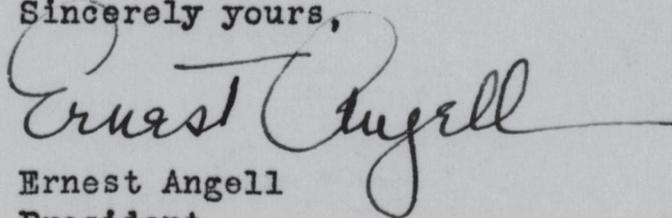
December 18, 1942

Dear Rabbi Silver:

I am very glad to send you a confidential advance statement of our report on experiences in Negro employment which developed from the series of meetings held in a number of northern and middle west industrial cities.

We hope the results will aid in the manpower mobilization problems by making available a large reservoir of Negro labor so vitally needed. This may well be accomplished if the findings will interpret to others who have not explored the use of skilled Negro labor how it may be successfully initiated.

Sincerely yours,



Ernest Angell  
President

EA/wb

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# COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRACY

11 West 42nd Street, New York

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March 17, 1943

WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH GERMANY AFTER THE WAR?

- (Note: In order to keep the discussion within bounds and to confine it to the one question: "What should we do with Germany after the war?", various related problems, important though they may be, have been eliminated, viz:
- a. The effect of public discussion of the peace terms on the actual military conduct of the war. Such discussion necessarily enters the sphere of strategy in so far as it provides propaganda for use by us, or by the Germans, to weaken or strengthen their will to resist.
  - b. How large a share the U.S.A. will actually have in determining the conditions imposed on Germany, in view of possible conflicting desires of Russia, Great Britain, etc.
  - c. Questions of World Federation, treatment of other countries, etc.

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FOREWORD

For practical purposes, the question: What Should We Do With Germany After the War? has been sub-divided into the following specific topics:

- |                       |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Punishment         | 4. Disarmament                   |
| 2. Reparations        | 5. Re-Education                  |
| 3. Form of Government | 6. Relationship to Rest of World |

\*\* It is urged that these questions be considered from a purely OBJECTIVE, UNEMOTIONAL point of view. The problem is - not what we might like to do to Germans, or what the Germans deserve. It is - What treatment of Germany is most likely to produce the kind of world we want, 10 - 20 - 50 - years after the war?

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I. PUNISHMENT

(CONSIDERED ALWAYS FROM THE OBJECTIVE VIEWPOINT)

A. Why Punishment?

1. Effect on Punishers...
  - a. Would quick blood-letting relieve pent-up emotions in invaded countries, thus permitting a calmer approach to the main problems of the Peace?
  - b. Would harsh punishment of Germany give us a guilt complex later on? Viz., Anglo-Saxon conscience after the last war, which through sympathy for Germany contributed to permitting Germany to re-arm.
2. Effect on Punished...
  - a. Will punishment act as an example - deterrent - cure?
  - b. Will it convince Germans (and others) that Nazi philosophy of aggression and race hatred does not pay, or
  - c. Will it root permanently in the German soul the desire for revenge?

B. Punishment - For Whom?

1. The whole German people?
2. Army Officers?
3. Junker Class?
4. Government Officials?
5. Members of the Nazi Party?
6. Leaders of the Nazi Party?
7. Gestapo?

C. Guilt - How Defined?

1. General Responsibility?
2. Personal Responsibility for Particular Crimes?
3. Determined by what Judicial codes?
4. By Whom Tried?
  - a. Anti-Nazi Germans?
  - b. Allied Powers?
  - c. Courts of Invaded Countries?
  - d. Neutrals?



D. Form of Punishment?

1. Death?
2. Imprisonment?
  - a. Where?
  - b. How Long?
3. Forced Labor? (See also Reparations)
4. Fines, deprivation of property, of civil rights, etc?
5. Withhold food or other supplies from Germany at end of war?
6. Any diminution or cancellation of punishment for those who aid us between now and the end of the war?

II. REPARATIONS

- A. Desirable, in any respect?
- B. Amount
  - 1. Fixed?
  - 2. Indefinite?
- C. Method
  - 1. In Cash?
  - 2. In Kind?
  - 3. By furnishing Labor and Materials for Reconstruction in Holland? Belgium? France? Russia? Great Britain? Norway?

III. GOVERNMENT

- A. Divide ("Balkanize") Germany into pre-Bismarckian States?
- B. Do not Divide, but:
  - 1. Stipulate Form of Government?
  - 2. Let the Germans decide without interference?
  - 3. Let the Germans decide but by referendum with voting supervised by the Allies?
  - 4. If a strong Communist movement develops in Germany, what shall we do?

IV. DISARMAMENT

- A. Military - Guns - Planes - Tanks, etc.
  - 1. Total?
  - 2. Partial?
  - 3. How supervised and enforced?
- B. Economic
  - 1. Eliminate heavy industry from Germany?
  - 2. Control the use of certain strategic materials, such as alloy-metals, which are necessary for armaments?
- C. Political
  - 1. Shall we or shall we not allow Germany to contribute its share to hypothetical International Police Force?

V. RE-EDUCATION

- A. Can the Spirit of Naziism be wiped out (broadly speaking)
  - 1. From all Germans?
  - 2. Only from Germans over 35 years of age?
  - 3. Only from the young under 12 or 15?

B. Methods

1. Leave "Re-education" entirely to Germans?
2. Leave to proven anti-Nazi Germans?
3. Take it over ourselves?
4. Leave it to Germans, under our supervision and control?
5. If under our supervision and control, do we:
  - a. Select teachers?
  - b. Specify courses and contents of text-books?
  - c. Control and Censor - press - radio - publishing?

VI. RELATIONSHIP TO REST OF THE WORLD

A. Economic

1. Equal access to raw materials?
2. Control of rates of foreign exchange?
3. Loans to Germany for food, rehabilitation?

B. Political

1. Shall Germany be admitted to the Society of Nations?
  - a. At once?
  - b. After qualifying for membership?
  - c. If so, what qualifications?

# COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRACY

11 WEST 42nd STREET • WISCONSIN 7-1616 • NEW YORK

August 27, 1943

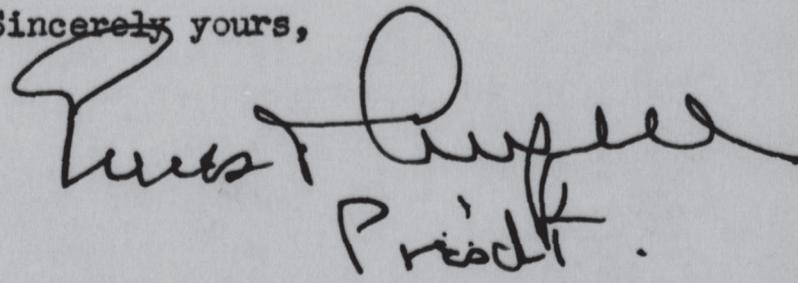
Dear Rabbi Silver:

As one who has, for a great many years, been familiar with your name and reputation - and I say this without the intention of flattery, for I first heard of you when I, myself, lived in Cleveland well over twenty years ago - I always regretted that, at least since I took over the helm here at the Council, we have had no active contact with you, even by personal correspondence. You are one of the distant members of our Board to whom we send our publications but with whom we are on terms of formal intercourse only, yet I am sure there is genuinely much of common interest between your personal beliefs and that which motivates the work of the Council. I would like to feel assured, if possible, that you do know about our work and can take some interest in it, even at this distance.

Mr. Jenkins, our vice-president, was in Cleveland and tried to see you, among others, early this week, but found that you were away. He did talk to a couple of men there who want one or two of us to come out there early this fall to endeavor to help them with the white-Negro racial situation. One of these men was Mr. Clarence L. Collens, president of the Reliance Electric & Engineering Company, 1068 Ivanhoe Road, to whom I have written that we would endeavor to arrange this in September. Mr. Collens, I understand, is very apprehensive over the situation in this respect in Cleveland and appears to believe that as the Council has done some work in two aspects of this racial field, we could be of some practical assistance there. When we come, we would naturally think of turning to you as an outstanding Clevelander to sit in on the conferences and help in the guidance.

Under separate cover I am sending you a few pieces of our output on these two phases of the Negro-white problem, the Negro-in-Industry and aspects of the press, both white and Negro. I hope you may find the time and interest at least to look these over in the meantime and, perhaps, read them fully if you can. These may, in turn, serve as an introduction to a closer contact between us.

Sincerely yours,



Ernest Angell  
President

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
East 105th Street and Ansel Road  
Cleveland, Ohio.

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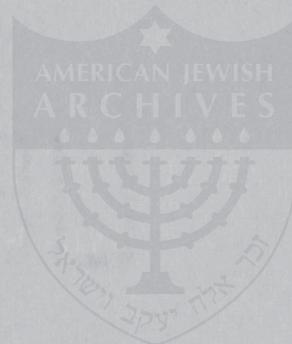
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Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

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P. S. I am sure Mr. Collens should, in the meantime, welcome any word from you as to the active interest which I hope you will take in what he has in mind with respect to the local Cleveland situation, as I know that your name was mentioned in the talk between him and Mr. Jenkins with cordial response on the part of Mr. Collens.

E.A.



## Experiences in Negro Employment

As a member of the executive staff of the Council For Democracy, I was recently assigned the task of assembling first-hand information about conditions of Negro employment, especially in the war industries. The Council, a representative body of outstanding citizens which is concerned with effective civilian participation in the war effort, has a highly practical interest in the fuller employment of Negroes: in some areas the pressing manpower problem would be solved, for the time being, if the available Negroes were to be employed in work for which they are fitted or can be trained. A second consideration, no less realistic, is the fact that the Japanese have been using the traditional treatment of the Negro as a propaganda weapon to poison the minds of the peoples of Asia against the United States. It is interesting to note, for example, that when a Negro boy was lynched in Sikeston, Missouri on January 26th last, the event was reported by Radio Tokio the following day.

"Democracy, as preached by the Anglo-Americans, may be an ideal and noble system of life," said a Japanese commentator recently, "but democracy, as practiced by the Anglo-Americans is stained with the bloody guilt of racial persecution and exploitation."

A previous general study of Negro-white attitudes made by the Council pointed to the conclusion that the chief bar to the integration of Negroes in industry is the resistance of white workers, based upon familiar prejudices which have little foundation in fact. Management has been extremely reluctant to risk work stoppages and strikes by employing Negroes except as maintenance workers or common laborers. Speaking generally, organized labor has not taken up the cause of the Negro. At the present time there are nineteen major unions affiliated with the AFL which refuse membership to Negroes. In principle the CIO bars discrimination, but actual practice differs widely among its constituent unions, and even within a single union. Efforts of the Federal Government

to prevent discrimination against minority groups by companies executing war contracts have been relatively unavailing.

Under these circumstances, it appeared to us that the most effective approach to the problem was to confer with representatives of management in industrial organizations which have actually faced and dealt with the problem of Negro employment. It was our purpose to discover the various procedures which have been used to introduce Negroes -- especially in the skilled categories -- without causing undue disturbance on the part of white workers already employed. We hoped that, by pooling actual experience related to us by the men and women on the industrial firing line it might be possible to find some sort of general formula which could be widely applied.

In the past two months over 100 representatives of top management and personnel executives have attended informal, off-the-record meetings arranged by the Council and have exchanged their experiences with complete frankness. The area covered includes New England, the Atlantic Seaboard States, the Great Lakes Region and sections of the Middle West. Because the situation is so different in the South, no effort was made to cover that area, except the border states of Virginia and Missouri.

Some of the outstanding companies represented by their presidents, vice-presidents, or personnel directors were:

Chase Brass and Copper Company, Curtiss-Wright Corporation, Thompson Products, Western Electric Company, The Westinghouse Electric Company, Republic Aviation Company, Warner Swasey Company, National Smelting Company, Cleveland Graphite Bronze Company, Standard Oil Company, National Screw Company, Swift and Company, William Wrigley, Jr. Company, Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corporation, Glidden Company, Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company, Winchester Repeating Arms Company, Otis Elevator Company, and the Ford Motor Company.

Among the topics discussed were the nature and extent of the prejudices which had to be overcome, the means used to secure the cooperation of supervisory employees, methods of handling Negroes within the plant (whether on a segregated basis or with complete integration), sanitary and lunchroom facilities, practices in upgrading, in-plant training, and sources of labor supply.

Most of those who reported stated that the whole question of Negro employment appeared to be more formidable in prospect than it was in actuality; once the initial steps were taken, difficulties which had appeared insuperable very quickly resolved themselves into relatively simple problems of human relations. On the whole these representatives of management expressed their satisfaction with the work performance of Negro employees. The experience of this group of employers has been reassuring.

It must be remembered, however, that the companies interviewed are by no means typical of American industry as a whole. Indeed they were invited to participate in the Council's discussions for the reason that they were known to be employing Negroes and because it was believed that they had met this problem intelligently and with some success. Under pressure of the existing manpower shortage employment of Negroes is increasing rapidly but the vast majority of the 184,000-odd industrial organizations in the United States have not made any pretense of offering Negroes equal opportunities with whites. The task of integrating Negroes into industry has scarcely begun.

To a very considerable extent our hope that a general pattern of procedure could be discovered has been realized. For example, the importance of conditioning white employees before the introduction of Negroes can hardly be over-emphasized. By reasoning with employees and appealing to their sense of fairness, many senseless prejudices can be overcome. The active cooperation of supervisory employees must be secured. Assurance must be given that

the employment of Negroes does not mean an undermining of good labor practices nor reduction in wages. Meticulous care must be given to the selection of the first group of Negro workers and they, in turn, must be given to understand that a special responsibility rests upon them. And there are several other factors which appear to have almost universal application.

Management is concerned with the labor market simply as a means to the end of keeping production up. It was no sudden interest in the welfare of the Negro that led to the opening of new job opportunities for Negroes; it was the growing shortage of labor.

One employer stated:

"About a year ago I realized that the draft was going to take a great many of our skilled and semi-skilled men and we would have to replace them from two sources -- from women and among colored people. I knew just about where these vacancies were going to occur and I began to look around for people for these jobs. Anyone handling personnel problems will realize that it is revolutionary to introduce women into a tool room, but when I took the chance and introduced women I thought I might just as well go the whole way and take colored women."

Said another employer, who had been faced with the necessity of immediately executing a government contract:

"We were shoved into hiring Negroes. The Quartermaster said that the soldiers were hungry, so we didn't dilly-dally."

One representative of management admitted that it was energetic local pressure which led to the introduction of Negroes in his plant. We have heard of other instances where pressure was exerted locally by civic organizations upon industry and labor unions to accept the Negro worker.

To A. Philip Randolph, who organized the Pullman Porters' union in defiance of the Pullman Company and in the face of discouragement from the AFL, belongs the credit for current efforts by the government to end employment discrimination against minority groups. Shortly following the creation of the Office of Production Management in 1940, this extraordinary Negro leader addressed an open letter to the President, calling attention to the fact that the industries of the country were not making use of, and would not consider employing Negro labor. In this letter Randolph suggested that the President's failure to act would inspire Negroes to dramatize this unfair treatment by marching on Washington en masse. The slogan, "March on Washington!" caught the imagination of the Negro masses and Randolph, creator of the idea was acclaimed leader of the movement. Negroes rallied to the "March on Washington" banner 100,000 strong. From the beginning this has been an all-Negro undertaking and it has been almost entirely financed with funds secured from Negro sources.

Some five months following the Randolph letter, in February, 1941, President Roosevelt issued a memorandum to the OPM asking that this agency prevail upon industry to end the discrimination practiced against minority groups. If this memorandum was intended to check the threatened descent upon Washington, it failed of its purpose for it served only to stimulate the zeal of the Negroes to march. Two weeks later appeared the now famous Executive Order 8802 which, in effect, was a proclamation expressly in behalf of all minorities and the first such Presidential proclamation dealing with Negroes since the appearance of the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. Executive Order 8802 had considerable effect in temporarily relieving the emotional tension which had grown up around the "March on Washington" and the Negroes have never marched. But the movement is far from dead, indeed of recent months it has gained new impetus.

Order 8802 also created the so-called Fair Employment Practice Committee which may examine complaints based upon discrimination and make

recommendations to the President but which lacks remedial authority of any kind. The FEPC charged with the responsibility of holding public hearings, does not even have the power of subpoena; those against whom charges are lodged can only be requested to appear. Nevertheless the companies cited for cases of alleged discrimination -- sometimes on flimsy evidence -- have put in an appearance and have been subjected to considerable embarrassment in attempting to defend their position. The FEPC has created antagonism and resentment on the part of industry and Negro leaders have been quick to recognize it as a half-hearted effort to deal with the situation. On the balance it may be questioned if the existence of the FEPC has served materially to improve the position of Negroes or the other minority groups it was intended to aid.

Not many companies will admit that their initial acceptance of Negroes was forced by the FEPC; some have said that the President's Executive Order created a situation whereby Negroes could be introduced with less hazard of conflict. But some managements are quite frank in stating that the fear of the President's Committee caused a change in their personnel policy. One representative of management said:

"My first interest in Negro labor was aroused when one of our plants was cited for discrimination and had to appear before the President's Committee, and listening to the presentation of charges against the company, I could see that (1) the company was vulnerable in this particular case and (2) it was not with the knowledge or any intention of the management representatives who appeared at the hearing, but simply because of their lack of knowledge of what was going on within our organization -- an understandable situation when you realize that this company has grown from a few thousand to over a hundred thousand and is still growing. They have simply grown too fast to keep up with all

the problems. As a result of that hearing and my own conviction -- my own conviction is that there are some things that should be corrected -- it occurred to me that rather than appear at some future date and try to present any case justifying our position, it would be far more sensible to get our house in order."

All the efforts of government to deal with the problem of minority discrimination have not proved completely fruitless. The in-service training program which has been urged upon industry by the OPM and its successor, the War Production Board, has had much to do with the broadening of personnel policies to include Negroes. The NYA centers have qualified for skilled and semi-skilled war production jobs many young Negroes who did not have the resources to pay for or were denied training in private industrial schools. The federalizing of the state employment agencies had its influence upon the radical departure of hiring Negroes for other than maintenance jobs. Field representative of the War Manpower Commission -- including some extremely capable Negroes -- have done yeoman service in ironing out difficult personnel situations which all too frequently turn upon the Negro question.

It has become the fashion to castigate management for most industrial ills. But I do not believe that we have been overly naive in reaching the conclusion that the failure of industry to integrate the Negro is not to be blamed primarily upon management. Not all management has been guiltless, by any means, but in the final analysis the resistance to Negroes came from white workers. Threats of slowdowns, work stoppages, and strikes that might follow the introduction or upgrading of Negroes into skilled categories has shaped the attitude of management where the Negro worker is concerned. In these hectic days management is not seeking new headaches and, where it has been possible, industry has simply backed away from the Negro employment question.

What, specifically, are the reasons why white workers object to working with Negroes?

There is the widely prevalent notion that Negroes have a peculiar body odor; that it is unpleasant to remain in close proximity to them. Yet a traditional occupation of the Negro in America -- indeed it is still the only one open to Negro women in most communities -- is that of domestic servant. It hardly seems likely that the Negro would make an acceptable domestic if this particular legend were true.

It is generally supposed that there is an extraordinarily high incidence of social disease among Negroes. While this may be true enough in certain depressed areas of the "Black Belt" in the South, there is no evidence that this condition obtains generally throughout the country. In most well-regulated industrial establishments today a complete physical examination is a prerequisite to employment and on the basis of this experience, as reported to us, the incidence of the social diseases among prospective Negro workers is only slightly greater than among whites. Yet the myth that Negroes are riddled with social disease persists.

In spite of assurance by management to the contrary, white workers feel that the introduction of Negroes may presage a wage reduction or a general lowering of the standards of working conditions. This reaction is based upon something more substantial than most of the traditional myths which surround the Negro. The history of industrial strife is full of instances where Negroes have been used to break strikes, and there are countless cases where Negroes have been paid a lower wage for exactly the same work performed by whites. But the Negro worker has been in a position where he had little choice in his conditions of employment or his wage.

Spokesmen for companies which are breaking new trails in Negro employment are unanimous and emphatic in asserting that an effort must be made

to dispell the traditional myths and legends about the Negro, -- before Negroes are first introduced. And if this is intelligently done the whole problem is enormously simplified. In opening employment to Negroes, management must take a firm stand but no mere edict from the top will suffice. In industry's own language, the Negro worker must be "sold" to the white worker.

Logically the first step in the selling process is to call in plant foremen and other supervisory employees and broach the matter to them with complete frankness.

At one plant in the Great Lakes area, where it had been decided to employ Negroes, the local representative of the Urban League, a national welfare organization, was asked to address the foreman group. He invited the foremen to put any questions which they might have on their minds.

"I have heard them all before," he said, "you can't hurt my feelings!"

The result was a two-hour barrage of questions which were answered with the utmost self-possession and good humor. The foremen at that plant were completely won over to the company's new policy; it has been conspicuously successful.

The personnel manager of a large plant in central New England relates this story:

"One day I walked into the office of the tool-room foreman and suggested that I had something for him to see. Upon his assent, we visited an NYA training school and without saying a word, I indicated to him girls, Negro and white, working on milling machines. The outstanding operator in the room was a Negro girl; Joe stood watching her, perfectly fascinated. My only remark later was, 'Joe, are you sold?' Later I suggested that we call in one of our technicians and explain to him that he was going to see white

and colored people being trained for skilled operations, but we couldn't hire these people and put them in without a little groundwork. So, Bob and Jim, being representatives of the workers' council, were told of the plan. They didn't like it five cents' worth. They threatened to walk out. They wouldn't stay on the job if Negroes were employed. I asked Joe, the foreman, how many of his men would really walk out and his reply was that he didn't think any of them would. We hired the colored girls and the white girls -- four of them -- and put them on the afternoon shift. We had no separate arrangements for sanitary facilities, lunchroom, coat rooms or anything. They don't have them on the railroad trains. They don't have them in the schools in our section and there was no reason for us to inaugurate the plan of segregation. We selected tops in the way of skills and training for that operation. They were tops so far as reputation and social standing in their own group were concerned. From the tool room, we went to the lesser skills right on down to piecework and then to helpers. Again, I went back to the defense training schools and selected women from among those who had been trained in that work. I took older Negro women because they are more stable and can stand the pressure of discrimination. The youngsters are apt to go off whereas the older person holds her ground. Jim was the president of the workers' council and his influence is pretty good. Jim himself was sold. I had to sell him on the idea that when the "man" collects levys and taxes he doesn't look at the color of the skin. The same is true when it comes to giving out uniforms. They are put on blacks as well as

whites. But with some of the other men I have never used that argument. It was just a matter of how much fair play existed in the individual himself."

Severely practical arguments are sometimes used to sell Negro labor to the supervisory staff. In one case reported to us the supervisory staff was under terrific pressure to get out airplanes, propellers and engines, and the labor resources of the community were running extremely thin. The personnel director dealt with the situation thus:

"I pointed out that we all knew that the labor market was getting very short and that there was a large reservoir of Negro labor that somebody is going to use sooner or later, and I recommended that we get in now and make our selection while we still can get the "cream of the crop." That has been a very appealing argument to many practical minded supervisors."

In a large organization the task of integrating new Negro workers must necessarily be left to foremen and supervisors. But where the plant population is not so large as to be unwieldy the matter of Negro employment may well be put before the entire employee group, preferably by a spokesman for top management. Comments of several employers are in point here:

"Resistance on the part of the white workers was manifested in the fear that the coming of Negroes would mean a lowered pay scale. As president of the company, I guaranteed that this would not be the case, nor would the shop become all-Negro. We also guaranteed a rigid health examination . . . We called all the workers together and talked to them."

"The lessening of race consciousness is very important.

Emphasis must not be placed upon the Negro as a member of

a race, but as an individual. Where whites impress race upon the minds of workers it does a lot of harm."

"We had a representative from the Urban League talk to our women in the shop and permitted the women to ask questions.

Of course, most of the questions asked dealt with myths.

Believe me, that talk did a lot to clear the air."

In plants where Negroes have not been previously employed, the first Negro employees should be selected with meticulous care. A great many white people, I have discovered, are prone to think that all Negroes are much alike. Each one of us is supposed to possess in about the same degree the vices (and possibly the virtues!) that are traditionally ascribed to us as a race. Of course this is manifestly absurd, as any reasonable person will grant upon a moment's reflection. But, like so many other odd notions about the Negro, this myth persists and it must be taken into account. If the first Negroes taken into an industrial organization are the sort of people who will make good on the job, and who, at the same time possess personal qualifications which make them acceptable co-workers, they create a first impression that is likely to endure.

In a great many plants where Negroes have been successfully introduced as workers, personnel people have sought the assistance of Negro leaders in the community in the selection of the first workers. The Urban League is especially well qualified to render such assistance and many representatives of management have warmly praised the helpful and intelligent cooperation of this organization.

One of the first industries to integrate Negroes in an eastern city had a frank and straightforward discussion of the problem with a representative of the local unit of the Urban League. From this conversation it was decided to employ the first Negroes in jobs that were traditionally known to be manned

by them. The management first transferred all whites out of maintenance jobs and replaced them with Negroes. Later, two or three Negroes were made supervisors. After three or four months, whites became aware of the Negroes around the plant and their advancement into skilled jobs was accepted as a matter of new personnel policy. With slight variations, this plan has been followed by a large number of companies. Responsibility is placed upon the Negro to sell himself to the white workers. At the beginning, one employer stated:

"Nineteen Negroes were hired as maintenance men. We told them, however of their opportunities and possibilities for upgraded jobs. Persons in this original group are now in responsible positions and will become supervisors when upgraded."

One employer placed a Negro in the boiler room as an assistant engineer and another in the receiving department. No difficulty was experienced and later on Negroes were put on assembly lines; they now appear in practically all skilled categories in that plant.

Where industries have their own in-service training programs, Negroes are graded with more facility than when outside training facilities must be used. In certain communities in the border states, public industrial training courses are closed to Negroes; in others Negroes are segregated in training courses; frequently the Negroes have less adequate equipment on which to train and less able instruction.

However carefully the ground may be laid for the integration of Negroes, the possibility of conflict must be recognized. But invariably there is less "trouble" over the Negro question than has been anticipated. Usually the difficulties that arise can be ironed out in one way or another.

In one case we were told of, truck driving was turned over to Negroes. As a result, white crane operators refused to unload the trucks, and their representative stated that they would quit unless the Negroes were taken

off the job. The foreman of the receiving department said --

"Those guys on the trucks are just as good Americans as you are; if you don't want to work with them, why then, \_\_\_\_\_ you, quit!"

The crane operators returned to their jobs and there has been no further conflict.

Many employers have told us that they have frankly appealed to the patriotism and the spirit of fairness of their white employees on the question of Negro employment although one gathers that the appeal has usually been couched in less violent terms than in the incident just related!

In some communities, especially in the border states, separate toilets and eating facilities are maintained as a means of avoiding conflict. In order to avoid disturbance, one employer found it necessary to have constant supervision in the plant washrooms; this is an exceptional case. There have been instances of white workers declining to stand in line with Negroes to punch the time clock.

On the other hand, one hears stories of unusual cooperation by white workers. In a certain Detroit plant the management announced to union leaders its intention of hiring Negroes for the production line. The comeback was --

"All right, but why the hell don't you fellows hire some Negroes in the office?"

The challenge was one that could not be ignored and (with some misgivings) a Negro girl was immediately employed in a stenographic position. The first day she was on the job a group of white girls, sensing her embarrassment as being the only Negro in a large white group, escorted her to the lunchroom. This friendly gesture broke the ice and the Negro girl has been completely accepted.

When employees in a midwestern manufacturing establishment objected to the presence of a Negro in the locker room, the foreman offered to share his

own locker with the Negro, there being a temporary shortage of locker space. The incident served to completely erase the resentment against the presence of the Negro.

Sometimes Negroes themselves have occasioned difficulty. We were told of a hair-pulling fight between a white girl and a Negro girl over the use of a mirror. In a New Jersey plant there was a threatened knifing over the use of a hand truck. But such cases are few and far between.

The representatives of industry to whom we have talked unanimously agree that the Negro has qualities which make him a desirable employee. He is said to be loyal, patient, good-natured, and appreciative; he conforms easily to company policies. Some say that, under good supervision, his work is likely to be superior to that of whites of equal training. Support is given to this viewpoint by the fact that Negroes have made good records in certain plants where they are employed in units working on a competitive basis with all white units. One manufacturer, engaged in the production of precision instruments, maintains that his best Negro workers invariably outstrip his best white workers.

We have heard some unfavorable criticism of the Negro worker on the ground of excessive absenteeism and frequent wage garnishees. Absenteeism is a problem which is seriously concerning industry; upon close examination the differential between Negroes and whites proves to be relatively slight. It is difficult for Negroes to secure loans from banks and other sources open to whites and once they become involved in financial difficulties it is extremely difficult for them to extricate themselves; as a result their wages are often garnisheed which is a source of considerable annoyance to the employer. Where this has been a serious problem, employers have met it by dismissing employees whose wages are garnisheed a certain number of times within a given period.

The attitude of organized labor has an extremely important bearing upon the whole question of the employment of the Negro in industry. Generally

speaking, we have observed that Negroes have been integrated with more facility into industrial units where organized labor does not have the upper hand. To be sure, the high command of the CIO has denounced discrimination against minority groups; yet in any local situation the governing factor is simply the prevailing attitude of the rank and file. Unless some unusual pressure can be exerted, local leaders are not disposed to risk their union posts by disregarding the wishes of the membership.

In some areas CIO unions have made the employment of Negroes possible and have helped in the process of integration. A notable case in point is the United Automobile Workers Union in Detroit. Negroes have attained positions of leadership in the UAW; one of the vice-presidents of this powerful union is a Negro.

Paradoxically, the Negro community in Detroit has displayed a considerable lack of interest in the UAW. This may be attributed in part to the influence of management, which in the past has been exerted through Negro leaders. Poor leadership within union ranks may also have been a contributing factor. But the situation in Detroit has been changing rapidly. Negroes who are willing to take an active part in union affairs find some of the UAW locals willing to accept them on approximately equal terms with white members; others are unwilling to accept them at all. The upgrading of Negroes in certain Detroit plants was brought about by the union. It is hardly necessary to observe that organized labor holds the whip hand in Detroit, not only in the matter of Negro employment, but in most phases of labor-management relations.

Quite apart from the special factors which have conditioned the attitude of Negroes towards organized labor in Detroit, the Negro has never been inclined to unionism. His lack of enthusiasm springs from the traditionally hostile attitude of the AFL. Even today there are nineteen of the major AFL affiliates, including the Machinists' Union, the Boilermakers and Firemen, and

the Brotherhood of Carpenters which absolutely bar Negroes from membership. There is a saying among union machinists that "a Negro must never be allowed to pick up a tool." Until very recent years, the Negro has had little enough reason to warm to the union cause.

\* \* \* \* \*

Recognizing the hazards of oversimplification, we believe that one sweeping conclusion may safely be drawn from all of these frank, off-the-record conferences between the Council For Democracy and representatives of industrial management. It is this: the problem of Negro industrial employment has been overemphasized. Difficulties which have loomed large in prospect have proved to be minor, once they were faced. And conflicts have been easily resolved.

One employer put it thus:

"Contemplation of change is the problem, -- not the thing itself. Once it is handled in a practical way, it ceases to be a problem. If you have colored people around for a while, white workers cease to think of them as colored, but simply as people."

The Negro worker asks nothing more.

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11 West 42nd Street, New York

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