

E D W A R D L . D O T Y

called as a witness, having been first duly sworn by Mr.

Harewood, testified as follows:

Q What is your full name, please ?

A Edward L. Doty.

Q Your address, Mr. Doty ? A 248 East 38th Street.

Q You are connected with what organization ?

A I am secretary of the American Consolidated Trades
Council and Affiliates.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Doty, do you have a statement to make in reference to the problems and difficulties of Negro craftsmen in attempting to gain membership in various craft unions ?

A Yes, I have, and some recommendations, I have the facts right here, if you want me to read it, I can read this to you.

Q Go right ahead and make your statement, if you will.

A (reading) "I, Edward L. Doty, on behalf of the American Consolidate Trades Council, wish to present to your Commission the following statement of the problems which some Negro workers engaged in the building trades are experiencing in Chicago.

"The American Consolidate Trades Council, of which I am Executive Secretary, was founded in the month of February, 1928, under a charter issued by the State of Illinois.

"The purposes of the Organizations are stated in its Constitution as follows:"

A (interrupting) I might say at this point that the general formation of the trade union was not to form an organization with dual purposes, this is not a dual organization, we formed this organization on the basis of self defense.

REP. GREENE: What do you mean by that ?

A The formation is that it is intended for those districts known as Negro districts, or the "Black Belt."
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Q By that you mean that section of the City known as the Negro section ?

A Yes, that is it.

Q All right.

A (continuing): " 1. To give Negro workers in the building trades in Chicago, the protection of trade union organization, particularly in those trades controlled by Unions which bar Negroes from membership.

"2 To improve the wages and working conditions of Negroes engaged in the building trades. Not a dual organization.

"3 To increase their opportunities for employment in the building trades.

"4 To pool the resources of building trade workers for the purposes of working more effectively to break down segregation against Negro workers in the building trades, and in the trade union movement generally.

"The Council has an affiliation, comprising 1200 members engaged in the building trades as plumbers, electricians, bricklayers, steam fitters, building laborers and lathers. The Council over a period of 12 years has been involved in numerous negotiations with various unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, and which have jurisdiction in the building trades in Chicago. Almost exclusively these negotiations have concerned such matters as the right of a

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Negro worker to belong to various building trades unions; to his right to work unmolested on jobs which he has been fortunate enough to find or secure for himself, and the right to work for an employer any place in the City.

"These endeavors have been productive of limited results. Here and there the dominant building trade unions in the City, notably the Chicago Journeymen Plumbers Unions, Local #130, the Steamfitters Protective Association, Local #597, and the Chicago Electrical Workers Union, Local #134 have made meagre concessions to the Negro plumbers, Steamfitters and electricians. As will be seen later, these concessions virtually deny to the Negro workers an opportunity to make a decent living in Chicago. However, the present relations between members of the American Consolidated Trades Council and the Plumbers, Steamfitters and the Electrical Unions definitely limit the economic opportunities of several important groups of Negro Building trades workers in Chicago.

"After years of negotiations carried on with Representatives of various local Building Trades Unions, Local representatives of the Chicago Federation of Labor, the American Federation of Labor, the National and International Officers of the unions themselves, and with the President of the American Federation of Labor, the following results seem to have been achieved:

"Generally, as of December 1939, the organized white plumbers
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and steam fitters, have, with varying degrees of regularity observed this make shift arrangement with the members of the Consolidated Trades Council to wit: that Negro Plumbers and Steamfitters will be allowed to work with organized white building trades workers, on construction jobs within definitely recognized Negro neighborhoods; that they must be employed by Negro contractors, even in Negro neighborhood. As this informal arrangement is administered, Negro plumbers and steamfitters and lathers are not permitted to work outside of the Negro neighborhoods, neither for a Negro employer, nor for a white employer. In this connection, it makes no difference to the Union or their agents, whether our members have licenses from the State of Illinois, they are deprived of the opportunity to work at their trade.

"The American Consolidated Trades Council has records of instances of the cases listed in this submission, in which Negro workers have been forced to give up jobs in the Negro community as well as in the white community to enforce this agreement.

"We submit the following cases for the consideration of the Commission: Instances of Discrimination:

A (continuing) Now this was a case of discrimination, which dates back to August 14th, 1922. I call this to your attention because it was not something that happened yesterday. This dates back a few years.

A (reading) "August 14th, 1922. St. John's Church, 62nd and Throop Street, August 14th, 1922, Intimidation, bricks dropped down stack."

MR. DICKERSON: What Union is that ?

A ,Plumbers. (continuing) "October, 1922 - two, two flat buildings - 6225-6227 Throop Street, Intimidation."

REP. GREENE: One question before you proceed. You mean you are only allowed to work in a certain prescribed area - 62nd and Throop is within that area, I believe - what was the reason for Union disturbance there.

A Not satisfied with the arrangements that had been made. This area was not passed upon at that time, as being a Negro area. Now last December, there was no trouble.

REP. GREENE: Prior to that, this arrangement was for a certain area ?

A Yes, that is in the area now - that is a matter I am leading up to now, this was previous to that being in the area, when I will point that out, relative to the area, I will mention that.

REP. GREENE: All right, next instance.

A (reading) "December 2nd, 1925 - 6559 Eberhardt Avenue. Bombed, December 2nd, 1925. No contract for completing job.

"1937 - Niles Center, Business Agent Local #597. Job stopped, owner sued, non-suit."

A Now this was a case where a suit was instituted against
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the owner, owner brought to Court, and no action on this. Now, in 1925 a Civil Service Examination was passed by A. H. Williams to work for the City, and he took the examination - made a good rating on the examination, and appeared before the board of examiners, was not permitted by the Union to work after passing this examination, the result, he didn't get the job he aspired for.

REP. GREENE: What was the next instance, lets get them straightened out first.

A (reading) "1931 - job of installing a heating plant in bungalow at 6639 Rhodes Avenue, Stopped by B. A. Brooks of Electricians Union."

A Now that business agent stopped the job because the plumber did not have a Union card, and the union electrician would not work on the job with him.

A (continuing) "February 1932. Negro plumbers and steam fitters in February 1932 were discriminated against in the remodeling of the old Chicago Lying In Hospital - 51st and Vincennes. A. Kilander, heating contractor; H. B. Barnard, General Contractor; Carl J. Stein, Plumbing Contractor. Conferences were had with officials of the Chicago Federation of Labor, Chicago Building Trades, - P. J. Sullivan, President, Conferences were had at the Urban League, comprising a Citizen's Committee, Labor Officials, including Martin P. Durkin, Thomas Ferrier, Dennis Egan, and
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to handle job. Told, he is O. K., and on this basis, A. Grindl, General Contractor concluded that a contractor agreeable to #130 would have to be found.

"December 1940, Negro Lathers were discriminated against in the construction of a cottage at 10036 Sangamon Street. Owner stopped job because steam fitters complained that lathers did not have an A. F. of L. card.

"December 1940 - 63rd and Langley, 6223 Cottage - December 8th, 1940. Job stopped by Thomas Durkin, business agent of local #130.

A Now, I have mentioned those, as the most outtsnading ones. As I said no Negroes are employed in the water pipe extension department as mechanics in the City of Chicago. Few and next to no Negroes are employed as mechanics in the whole department of public works of the City of Chicago, and many Negroes mechanics have taken civil service examinations for these mechanical jobs, some examinations have been passed by Negroes, but lack of union cards caused them the loss of the jobs.

I speak of this because it is so different in Evanston, which has a worse reputation for discrimination than Chicago. Negroes are employed in the Water Pipe Extension Department as mechanics in Evanston, Illinois.

MR. DICKERSON: Hold your point. Mr. Williams you say in 1925 ~~1921~~-took and passed successfully an examination ?
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A Yes.

Q Then there was another oral examination in connection with the appointment ?

A As far as I understand yes. They ordered Mr. Williams to take it, he passed the examination, and for one reason or another he was not accepted, and they gave the reason that he should be referred to the Union to get a card.

Q Do you know of any other case where colored persons in recent years have taken examinations, passed them for electricians, and steam fitters and plumbers, where they had not been appointed because of union activity ?

A There are none I can think of because they quit taking the examination five or six years ago, one was had at Wendell Phillips.

Q For what ? A For Plumber.

Q Who took it, did you take it ? A Yes.

Q Did you pass it ? A As far as I know, we all took the examination and never heard any more.

Q Never heard from this ?

A No.

MR. FOSTER: Was that conducted by the Union ?

A No, the City.

MR. DICKERSON: That is an examination directed by the City Civil Service Commission ?

A Yes.

Q You never heard from this ? A No.

Q Do you know of any colored persons during the last three, four or five years who have taken examination for plumber, steam fitter or electrician and who have passed ?

A One. I don't know if it got back in that period of time - but thats the one they had at Wendell Phillips, five years ago.

Q Well, my question is, have they given an examination within the last three or four years for these particular trades ? A If they did, we didn't take any more examinations. It was one some eight or ten months ago.

Q Why didn't you take that - you know what you say is rather serious, and needs investigating. I would like to know of a case where a man has been deliberate discriminated against in a situation like this. I am Alderman of the second Ward, and owe that to the people not only in that ward but throughout the City as well, to look into it.

A We have taken so many examinations and heard nothing, we just quit taking them. Over that period of years, they have all become disgusted, we have had them and we just ignore it now. We don't take them, as the results are never posted.

Q Going back to the Water Pipe Extension, what did you say about Evanston; that in Evanston there is a Negro at the head of the Water Pipe Extension ?

A Yes, many Negroes.

MR. DICKERSON: (continuing) That is not Civil Service ?

A I don't know, I passed by to see if it were true, and no that Negroes are installing pipes in Evanston, and seems to me they can do that in Chicago.

Q Not Civil Service in Chicago, is it ?

A Much of the information I get is that you must take the Civil Service examination to work for the Street Departments, yes. Now, there is some work that is let out to private contractors, in that connection, and this is not Civil Service.

MR. WIMBISH: Getting back to this thing again, we don't want to be vague here. A Yes.

Q When a man is taken from a job, do they give a reason for this, state definitely that he does not have a union card - or just because he is a colored man ?

A That he is not a member nor does he have an American Federation of Labor card.

Q Are these trade unions affiliated with the A. F. of L.

A Most of these building trades are.

Q Doing business under that guise ? A Yes, with the A. F. of L., they control all the building trades in Chicago.

Q Do Negro workers work all over the City of Chicago, or just in certain areas, and do white workers do the same, work all over the City, or just in certain areas ? They work all over ? A Yes.

Q Negroes work for colored contractors ? A Yes.

Q And only when the contractor is colored, is that right ?

A Yes, that is how it is going to be, that is the arrangement, and the way I understand it. So far there are no signatures attached to this arrange and has not been produced as yet.

MR. WIMBISH: This agreement ? A Yes.

Q Is this an oral agreement ? A No, it is written, we don't have a copy.

Q Authorized by who ? A By the Union, certain regulations has been submitted to #130 and been changed the last time - but as far as we are concerned, we operate under this agreement.

Q Most of these terms, well you don't know what the agreement is, but has there been some agitation as to pressure, means of operating, by the plumbers and steam fitters and so forth, they have tried to exercise some degree of force, is that right ?

A Yes.

Q Do the colored workers offer themselves or consider this as voluntary pressure to infiltrate in the white sections where there is work being done to which they feel they are entitled ?

A Yes, we go in white neighborhoods, when we take a number of jobs on the south side.