

GCS2 – George C. Scott, “Discriminatory Hiring Practices”

Transcript: pp. 28-29

**Time-Line: Decade V, Local and National Events, Points of National Interest, 1941,
“March on DC Movement...”**

I: Tell me a little bit about the different jobs that were here in Bridgeport at the time. The different companies and factories and the type of work that—especially the type of work that African-Americans were doing here, in Bridgeport.

GCS: Well, there were three shops in the City of Bridgeport.

I: What were they?

GCS: There was the Bridgeport Brass Company, Aluminum Company of America and Bassick Company. And Sikorsky came in later on.

I: But those were the three that were there when you got here?

GCS: Yes. You’d take those three outfits—no, Stanley Works. Not Bassick. Stanley Works. Those were the only ones that would hire black people.

I: Those were the only three that would hire black people?

GCS: At that time, yes.

I: The other companies were all—

GCS: When you went to the Aluminum Company, all they wanted to do was put you in the knock-out room, and the knock-out room—you used to go and get so much dust in there that you couldn’t see the next person that works around you.

I: And that’s where they would put most of the black people?

GCS: Yes. But when I got started there, I was working up in Hartford at the time, and Governor Cross told me, “Look, I’m not going to run next year. You need a job.” I said, “Well, Your Honor, what do you intend to do for me?” He said, “I’m going to send you out to Aluminum Company of America, out in Fairfield, and you ask for so-and-so, and they’ll see that you get a good job. Which I did, you know? I went out on a Monday, and I saw—I can’t remember his name. But by the same token, he was real

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nice to me, you know? He wanted to give me a job as, say, office help, delivering mail and stuff of that sort.

I: So when did other companies open up to hiring black people?

GCS: Well, the other companies—during the wartime, they had to hire you.

I: Okay. So, then, what companies starting opening up hiring us at that time? The ones that were not hiring us—what were some of the names of them that would not hire us?

GCS: Some of the names of the companies that weren't hiring people were, say, Bassick Company, Bridgeport Casting. You see, the only time that I worked at Bridgeport Casting was—you see, they passed a law in the State of Connecticut, under Roosevelt—they used to say that whatever you do, they had to hire you.

I: Regardless of your race?

GCS: Yes. Regardless of your race, they had to hire you. They couldn't hold back on you.

I: And that's how we started getting into these jobs.

GCS: That's right. That's right.

I: When jobs opened up, did you see a lot of people migrating from the south, too, to Connecticut?

GCS: Oh, yes. They were coming in here—I used to say Georgia, Tennessee, Carolina, South Carolina. A lot of people came up here from—they had relatives working there, and they used to get jobs.