

# 'Affirmative action' in Council policy statement defining contract status

A pledge of "affirmative action" to achieve equal employment opportunity highlighted a statement of policy approved September 16 by the San Francisco Labor Council.

The statement had been unanimously approved by the Building and Construction Trades Council, Harry Bridges of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union had okayed it. And Teamster Leaders too, had indicated their concurrence.

The six-point statement reaffirmed the labor movement's continuing commitment to the fundamental goals of equal opportunity.

**ITS CALL** for "affirmative action" was aimed at securing "more and better jobs for all, regardless of race, color, creed, national origin or sex."

It pledged cooperation with the Human Rights Commission, responsible civil rights groups, employers, and other interested city, state and federal agencies.

And it urged the development of specific plans for "the development of additional jobs."

**"THE STATEMENT** said the program should include motivation, improvement of qualifications, recruitment, training, apprenticeship, upgrading, evaluation of bonding procedures, improvement in job conditions, and all the other things necessary or desirable to achieve the basic purpose of providing more and better jobs."

At the same time, the statement went on, it expected "complete respect" for its union contracts and the rights of its members under them.

The statement said it would not recognize the right of any

employer under a union agreement to negotiate with any other private group or organization in any area affecting the conditions of employment.

**AND IT** declared that no public agency has a right to mediate or conduct negotiations of any kind, or approve any agreement or understanding between a private group and a union employer without the consent and participation of the union involved.

It added that it would not recognize picketing or demonstrations by other groups "where an objectivity of such activity is in any manner to affect the employment conditions, covered by a collective bargaining agreement."

"In view of its responsibilities," the statement said, "organized labor considers such activity to be unlawful, anti-union conduct constituting a threat to its members."

**"ORGANIZED** labor stands committed to the fundamental goals of equal opportunity," the statement concluded. "In countless ways it has served these goals. This statement of policy is further testament of its intention to continue to do so."

Council Sec. George W. Johns, in asking the Council to approve the statement, declared "we are not giving the pledge (of affirmative action) in bad faith."

"We're going to have to improve where we can improve. . . . If we adopt it, you're going to be called on for production."

A number of delegates raised objections to the paragraph of the statement dealing with the refusal to recognize picket lines or demonstration.

**DAN JACKSON** of the Teachers' Union contended that it was

a violation of the right of free expression. Anne Draper of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers said she was "saddened by the entire posture of the statement."

Mrs. Draper said she would like to see affirmative action, but it would "take more than noble words; it would take action."

Leon Olson of the Typographical Union argued that calling any picket line "unlawful" could be letting the labor movement in for future trouble in defending its own picket lines and its own rights.

**ED KEMMITT** of the Bakers reminded the delegates that the

paragraph in question objected only where the picketing was aimed at affecting employment conditions already covered by a union contract.

Secretary Johns said no one was "trying to infringe the first amendment or the traditional position of labor on civil rights."

"But if the union contracts were set aside," he contended, it would work the greatest hardship on the minority groups.

**DELEGATES** rejected amendments aimed at deleting the clause relating to picket lines and demonstrations, then gave strong approval to the statement as it was originally proposed.

