

# Ruling upholds hotel contracts

San Francisco culinary unions stand ready to meet, they said this week, with the Human Rights Commission, with civil rights groups, and with hotel employers to tackle the knotty questions of civil rights in the city's hotels.

The Local Joint Executive Board of Culinary Workers made their readiness known in nearly full-page ads Monday in the Chronicle and Examiner and at a TV-radio-newspaper press conference.

The Joint Board's policy statement was its response to the clamorous—and mostly unfriendly—comment that had erupted two weeks ago when the Human Rights Commission announced that a hotel industry arbitration board had overruled the 1966 civil rights agreement.

"THEN the roof fell in," the Joint Board ad declared.

"The fastest lips in the West fired from the hip without pausing to look at any facts . . . We were clobbered."

But, it went on, "the Burns Arbitration Award is no obstacle

to fair employment or equal opportunity. Actually, along with the Union's proposal, it points an orderly and rational way to better understanding."

**THE JOINT BOARD** proposal declared:

"We welcome the recognition that our collective bargaining contracts are vital, living documents, an important and necessary part of economic life.

"We pledge our continued efforts to administer our contracts without discrimination and to work toward expanded opportunity and higher living standards for San Franciscans of whatever racial, religious, or ethnic background.

"We stand ready to meet with the Human Rights Commission, with the responsible representatives of civil rights groups and minority communities, and with our employers, to discuss, to explore, to help where we can in resolving mutual problems."

**BACK OF THAT** proposal was a 34-page opinion and award, handed down by Robert E. Burns,

an attorney and experienced arbitrator, finding the 1966 civil rights agreement in the hotel industry unlawful, void and unenforceable, and in sharp conflict with the Union contract covering the hotel employees.

And back of that was a rambling history that got its start in the massive sit-ins at the Sheraton Palace Hotel in 1964. Out of that demonstration had come the 1964—the original—civil rights agreement, emphasizing an equal opportunity employment policy in the city's hotels.

The Joint Board underscored two special points about the 1964 agreement: first, Union representatives took a hand in writing it; and second, it recognized the Union contracts in the hotels and avoided any conflict with them.

**IN 1966**, questions were raised about the renewal of that agreement. Civil rights groups used what the Joint Board called "a manufactured dispute" involving some maids and the Hilton Hotel

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# No discrimination in Hilton dispute, Award rules

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—with unions excluded from participation — after a dispute involving Negro maids at the Hilton Hotel. Davis pointed out that the arbitrator had found that none of the maids had lost jobs but that the union had represented them successfully.

That, said Johns, indicated that the culinary unions' anti-discrimination contract clause was working.

**THE 1966 AGREEMENT** was negotiated by the hotels and civil rights spokesmen after the latter had insisted that labor

representatives be excluded.

"The Human Rights Commission, mistakenly, we believed, suggested the bargaining to be continued without labor," Davis said.

The resulting agreement would mean that minority members would be hired to replace many now holding jobs, Davis.

**"THOSE WHO** would be placed would include members of minorities," he said. "It is simply trading jobs, not creating new ones."