San Francisco's culinary unions in willing to do anything that's necessary to fight discrimination - but scuttling the union contract is not one of those things, Secretary Joseph Belardi of the Local Joint Executive Board of Culinary Workers, told a crowded press conference Monday that: "It seems to us that scuttling the union agreement would be the jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge to show your courage."

The conference was held to explain the whole picture involved in an arbitrator's award of a new agreement between the hotels and some civil rights leaders.

Some of the latter had been quoted as suggesting that open shop "right to work" laws could be the answer. Minorities - who make up 43 per cent of 5,300 workers in major hotels protected by the Joint Board's hotel contract - would lose the most if an open drive succeeded, Belardi warned.

He cited the example of New Orleans where upwards of 80 per cent of culinary employees are Negroes, working under open shop conditions.

"At that percentage," he commented, "there's no discrimination against Negroes. "But under the open shop, wages are horribly low and some people get no wages at all but must live on tips. "These people are leaving. They're coming to San Francisco and other places where there are unions and union shops - and living wages and decent conditions."

Belardi, Labor Council Secretary George W. Johns and Roland Davis, attorney for the Joint Board, pointed out that since they got their first foothold in the hotels in 1937, the unions have fought discrimination.

In their latest hotel contract, the culinary unions have secured a clause to aid them gain the upgrading of qualified workers bypassed for promotion.

"Up to now," Belardi said, "we had nothing to say about upgrading. It was entirely up to the employer. Now if a worker is discriminated against in promotion, there is machinery under which the union will help him to be upgraded."

In response to chamber of commerce criticism of the union position in the hotel situation, Johns noted that labor had long urged the chamber and city hall to answer the calling need for jobs.

"The answer to discrimination is creating additional jobs," he said. "We have been pointing the finger at the chamber of commerce and city hall and those with the money to create jobs, particularly the speculative real estate operators who have large slum holdings. Unless we get industry and eliminate the slums, the situation will get worse. The problem is poverty south of Market for poor kids, white or black."

"We had hoped for a healthy demand for additional jobs, but the city is not moving that way."

Johns noted that the arbitrator's award had found that there was no discrimination in the incident which triggered negotiation of the 1966 hotel-civil rights group agreement.

That agreement was negotiated -Continued on Page 4.
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 arbiter 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 believe, 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, he said.

“THOSE WHO would be placed would include members of minorities,” he said. “This is simply trading jobs, not creating new ones.”