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NEWS from FEPC

DIVISION OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES Department of Industrial Relations State of California

State and Northern California Office: 455 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco UN derhill 1-8700
Southern California Office: 322 West First Street, Los Angeles MA dison 0-2610

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SECOND FEPC REPORT ON BANK OF AMERICA HIRING PRACTICES

Continued progress by the Bank of America in providing job opportunities for minority workers was reported today by the California Fair Employment Practice Commission.

The FEPC report was the second issued as the result of an affirmative action agreement entered into in June 1964 as a means of aiding the Bank in recruiting, hiring and promoting members of minority groups on an equal opportunity basis. The current report covers a four-month period ending November 30, 1964.

During that period the number of minority employees increased from 3,839 to 3,867. Total employment was 28,619, down because of seasonal fluctuation from 28,856, the total number of employees at the time of FEPC's first report last September.

Commissioner Louis Garcia, in charge of the affirmative action with the Bank, said "This second report lends strength to the tentative conclusions of our initial report--that the full original impetus in recruiting and hiring must be maintained over a considerable period if an affirmative program is to be effective."

FEPC's study indicated that the Bank's program was generally proceeding satisfactorily, although areas outside of metropolitan districts still need considerable help in bringing about full-fledged equal employment program.

During the four-month period, FEPC reported that the number of Negro employees increased from 826 to 864; other nonwhite employees from 531 to 540; Spanish surname from 1,841 to 1,854. The number of Oriental employees dropped from 640 to 608.

The report said that "intensive recruitment efforts in the minority communities undoubtedly contributed to the increase in the number of Negro and Spanish-surname employees....The slight decrease in Oriental employees is attributed to the same seasonal fluctuations which affect the overall work force."

The work of the Bank's human relations specialist, newly appointed at the time of the affirmative action agreement between FEPC and the Bank, was singled out by the FEPC as having been effective in those bank branches upon which he called personally. But the FEPC underlined the fact that the magnitude of the Bank's operation makes it virtually impossible for one man to provide the necessary guidance to all branches requiring it.

The FEPC report pointed out that one of the Bank's biggest problems has been to dispel doubts in the minority community that it really "intended to implement fully" its merit employment program. To overcome those doubts, bank spokesmen have met with the Urban League, NAACP leaders, ministers, church groups, San Francisco's PACT and others in efforts to get referrals of minority job applicants.

Commenting on the lack of minority group personnel in higher levels of Bank employment, the FEPC noted that a growing number of minority workers were being taken into training programs with the result that "an increase in minority representation in upper levels of employment should become apparent with the next few years."

The FEPC report said that subsequent published reports on the Bank-FEPC agreement would be released annually.

The Fair Employment Practice Commission administers the State laws against discrimination in employment and housing. Members, in addition to Mr. Garcia, are Chairman Clive Graham, Elton Brombacher, C. L. Dellums, John Anson Ford, Mrs. Audrey Sterling and Dwight R. Zook. Edward Howden is executive officer and Chief of the Division of Fair Employment Practices in the State Department of Industrial Relations, of which Ernest B. Webb is Director.

(NOTE TO EDITORS: Text of the above report is available from Education Officer, FEPC, P. O. Box 603, San Francisco 1.)

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