

6 of 7 Unions Boycott Meeting on Phila. Plan

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Six of the seven unions affected by the Philadelphia Plan for hiring Negroes stayed away yesterday from a meeting called by the Federal Government to get labor's viewpoint on the controversial plan.

"I regret that they didn't find the opportunity to meet with us," said Vincent G. Macaluso, assistant director of the U. S. Labor Department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance, as he scanned a near-empty meeting room at the Adelphia Hotel.

"We wanted, in the interest of all parties concerned, to get the various points of view," he said. "Of course, I'm disappointed especially since practically all civil rights organizations were represented at a meeting we held to discuss the plan with them."

Only 6 on Hand

Only six persons were on hand as Macaluso spent an hour discussing aspects of the hiring plan which calls for a non-negotiable, standard for use of black manpower on federally-funded construction projects of \$500,000 or over.

Three of those attending were representatives of the Operating Engineers Union, which isn't covered by the plan, and two others represented the Plumbers Union, one of the seven trades

which the Federal Government has cited as not having a significant number of Negro members.

The trades which stayed away were iron workers, steamfitters, sheetmetal workers, electrical workers, roofers and waterproofers, and elevator constructors.

Denies a Boycott

James L. Loughlin, business manager of the Building and Construction Trades Council, an invited guest, denied that the unions boycotted Macaluso's meeting. He said the building trades had previously scheduled its election of officers for yesterday.

Loughlin said the election was over at about noon, but the elected officers were guests at a "social gathering" at an area motel for several hours afterward.

Macaluso said he sent telegrams to the six unions not present and asked them to submit presentations of their viewpoints by July 14, four days before the hiring plan goes into effect.

"The civil rights organizations made it painfully clear that men who are trained for various trades can't get into the unions," he said. "I wanted to hear what they (unions) had to answer."

At the meeting, Macaluso said a range of hiring or goal for Negro hiring in the eight trades will be set before any bidding is accepted on federal contracts. The goals would be determined in each contract according to the extent of minority participation in the trade, the availability of minority group members for employment and the impact of the program on the existing work force.

However, Macaluso said, unions and contractors would not be bound by the ranges of the hiring plan if they can submit suitable areawide or indus-

trywide "affirmative action" programs with commitments to training and hiring spelled out.

"We are receptive and desirous of having the industry solve its own problem by giving us a program we can accept," he said. "But I don't want to mislead you. We're looking for a program with at least as much promise (for minority group members) as the goals of our plan."

Robert G. Kelly, lawyer for Plumbers Local 590, said the plumbers, steamfitters and sheetmetal workers had already submitted "affirmative action" programs in an effort to comply with the Philadelphia Plan.

He said Macaluso's office has said it will study the plans and point out any deficiencies.

The plumbers plan, Kelly said, calls for the formulation of a new testing system to take into consideration the problems of

the disadvantaged.
Hits 'Vague Goals'

Kelly said he is confused by the "vague goals" of the Philadelphia Plan.

"When they're talking about numbers, we don't know if they mean percent of population or percentage of men on the job or the number of men in the union," he said.

Macaluso said the goals to be formulated will not be rigid and will be subject to change to take into consideration changes in activity in the industry.

He said the government believes the plan is legal and not a quota system, as critics have alleged.

"The plan was approved by the solicitor of labor before it was put into affect," Macaluso said. "The Justice Department also gave us an opinion that it was consistent with the Civil Rights Act of 1964."