Resolution in Support of a Federal FEPC Law

Despite the tremendous advances which have been made in recent years in the field of civil rights throughout the country, discrimination in employment based upon color, race and religion still remains to be wiped out.

At the present time 11 states have enforceable Fair Employment Practices Acts which prohibit such discrimination. These states are Colorado, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington and Pennsylvania.

This progress on the state level is to be commended and to be encouraged. If all of the states would do likewise there would be no need for any federal legislation in this field. The truth of the matter is, however, that those states with the most discriminatory patterns—especially against Negro workers—are the very ones which oppose state FEPC laws.

The vast majority of Negro workers live in states below the Mason-Dixon line where they are relegated to the most unsavory and menial type of work at the very lowest wages. Studies show that little change in employment practices has been noted in the southern states in the past 15 years. Negroes still are kept at the bottom of the employment ladder. It is apparent that in the absence of any federal action the South will move at a snail's pace in ending discrimination in employment.

It is, of course, true that many good jobs are not filled by Negroes because they simply do not have the training required to fill them. An effective federal FEPC bill would not bring a complete change overnight, but it would at least make it possible for qualified Negro workers to obtain jobs which they now find barred to them.

Therefore be it resolved: That the IUE-CIO Civil Rights Conference here assembled urges the Congress of the United States to give immediate consideration to this problem of discrimination in employment and to enact an enforceable Fair Employment Practices Act in 1956 when Congress convenes. Such action is long overdue in view of the great injustices suffered by America's Negro citizens.