

# Bank of America

NATIONAL BANKING ASSOCIATION

SAN FRANCISCO HEADQUARTERS

R. A. PETERSON  
PRESIDENT

SAN FRANCISCO 20, CALIFORNIA

March 12, 1964

The Chairman  
Fair Employment Practices Commission  
332 West First Street  
Los Angeles, California

My dear Madam Chairman:

As you are painfully aware, San Francisco has been the scene of severe disturbances of public order caused by demonstrations designed to force employers to sign agreements with various groups.

It is the conviction of this bank that law and orderly processes must be maintained. It is the further conviction of this bank that it should not sign any agreement or furnish any reports on the racial characteristics of its employes to any nongovernment agency. Nevertheless, the bank recognizes that a sincere and dedicated attempt to improve the economic opportunities of minority groups has been and should continue to be part of its civic responsibility. We also recognize that there is legitimate reason for the public to be fully informed as to the bank's progress in discharging this civic responsibility.

The purpose of this open letter to you is to publicly affirm the equal opportunity employment policies of Bank of America N.T. & S. A. and to outline the practices which this bank will follow to provide a continuing program of assuring minority group members equal employment opportunities in the bank.

They are:

1. The management of the bank has for some time had an established employment policy as follows: "To employ personnel who are qualified to perform the duties which may be expected of them, and to do this without regard to their race, religious creed, color, national origin, or ancestry." This statement is a quotation from the manual of instruction which is a standard item in every branch of the bank.
2. As in the past, FEPC Equal Opportunity signs will continue to be posted on all bank bulletin boards and places where employments are made.
3. As in the past, all classified advertising for employments placed by the bank will continue to carry the statement "An Equal Opportunity Employer."

4. When advertising for applicants in papers of general circulation, ads will also be placed in the Negro papers published in the same areas.

5. The bank will continue to endeavor to increase its input of qualified minority group personnel through contact with the minority specialists of the California State Employment Service. The bank will also continue to actively seek the assistance of minority group organizations in referring qualified personnel to us.

6. The bank will, within the next 60 days, and every 90 days thereafter, analyze its staff to ascertain the aggregate number of employes and the aggregate number of such employes who are of minority racial groups. Such information will be broken down into its components of Negroes, Orientals, Latin Americans and "other" and will be reported by area, e.g.:

- (a) The state as a whole;
- (b) Metropolitan Bay Area (San Francisco, Alameda, and Contra Costa Counties);
- (c) The City of Los Angeles.

The figures will be delivered to the offices of the Fair Employment Practices Commission in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Sacramento so that this agency, which is charged with responsibility for enforcement of the Fair Employment Practices Act, may be fully informed on the status of the bank's staff.

7. Because our experience has clearly shown that a large proportion of minority racial applicants have not completed high school and cannot pass simple clerical tests, we cannot in good faith agree to the establishment of a definitive percentage of our employes who shall in the future be members of minority racial groups. However, we shall be glad at any time to cooperate with representatives of responsible minority group organizations and discuss specifically the progress being made and shall entertain such constructive suggestions as they may be able to offer to increase the number of such employments. As evidence of the progress the bank has made in this regard you will be pleased to know that a survey conducted this week in San Francisco revealed that 15% of our employes in this city are members of minority groups. A previous survey conducted one month ago revealed that on a state-wide basis 11% of our employes are drawn from minority groups.

In sending this open letter to you we hope we have demonstrated:

Our willingness to cooperate in providing opportunities for members of minority groups.

Our dedication to the democratic processes and to law and order.

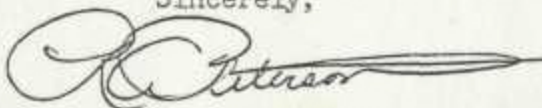
That our policy refusal to sign agreements and provide reports to nongovernment agencies such as the Ad Hoc Committee to End Discrimination is not an attempt to hide our policies and practices in respect to employment.



Chairman, Fair Employment Practices Commission  
March 12, 1964  
Page 3

In common with all good Americans we are anxious to do all we can to end the ugly specter of racial prejudice which has for too long scarred our land. But also, as good Americans, we will not now or in the future capitulate to illegal pressures of the type prominent in San Francisco over the past weeks; and we are confident that we can count on the full and effective support of law enforcement agencies in the maintenance of this position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. A. Peterson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

R. A. Peterson  
President