

# Black Workers Present Demands

Joe Check

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The week of Oct. 5 through 12, the Ad Hoc Construction Coalition presented demands to 8 agencies that 50% of all workers in construction and construction-related projects in the Detroit area be black.

Spokesman Hank Rogers said that the Coalition represents an affiliation of approximately 50 community groups, including the West Central Organization, Urban League, Metropolitan Contractors Association, and black construction Local 124.

On Oct. 6 and Oct. 7 special proclamations were hand delivered by the Coalition's couriers to the Association of General Contractors, Building Trades Union, US Dept. of Labor's Detroit office, Wayne State University, the Detroit Housing Commission, the FHA, the Board of Education, and the Mayor's Office.

The proclamations demanded that each agency immediately take specific steps outlined in the proclamation to insure that 50% of construction workers in Detroit would be black.

It also required the appearance of a representative of each agency at a meeting Wednesday, Oct. 8 at the offices of US Representative John Conyers.

At the Wednesday meeting, which was attended by all the groups mentioned except the FHA and the Building Trades Union, Coalition spokesman Hank Rogers presented figures showing the present illegal inequity in the construction industry.

He revealed, for example, that while 58% of Detroit's public school enrollment is black, union apprenticeship programs which utilize public school facilities and draw most of their trainees from the public schools have less than 5% black apprentices in their programs.

The purpose of beginning with a series of meetings, Rogers said, is to allow the white dominated construction and enforcement agencies to react in a more enlightened manner than they have in other cities, thereby extending to the black community an option other than that which was necessary in Pittsburgh.

However, he made clear the intention of the Coalition to take whatever direct action is necessary to insure that the construction and construction-related industries in Detroit employ 50% black workers in the very immediate future.

# fifth Estate

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