

No Union Men Attend Rights Group Meeting

Two of the 29 invited guests showed up at a meeting of the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations last night at the offices of Peoria chapter, NAACP.

Both were contractors. No unions were represented.

"We've gone all out. We've begged the unions and trades to assist," said John Gwynn, NAACP president. "Something has got to give," agreed James E. Peoples, who has been active in Urban League and other groups.

Difficulties in getting Negroes on the job in the construction industry were given a familiar replay in response to questions by Gwynn, who chaired the meeting.

Contractors hire the men sent to them by the unions, the contractors claimed, and unions send few, if any, black people. Both representatives agreed, however, that some present Negro workers might possibly be upgraded in their jobs, even though they're not in apprentice programs.

"Apprentice programs are where the least amount of (Negro) craftsmen have come from, even though that may be the best way to train them," asserted Frank Campbell, director of Tri-County Urban League.

Questioning also revealed that approximately 10 per cent of the contractors' total payrolls in Peoria consist of Negro workers. One contractor said that of his 100 men, about 10 are Negroes.

"There must be some contractors who do not even have 1 per cent," said Willie D. White.

Discussion went on to the March 12 meeting on black employment to which the Building Trades Council has invited Gwynn and three other Negro representatives. Feeling last night was that all concerned groups of the Negro community should be represented.

A decision will be reached at today's regular monthly meeting of the council as to whether a delegation will be sent to the building trades meeting. Also to be presented today are new proposals on housing, Gwynn said.