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PRESIDENT SHANKER: Thank you very much, Cecil, and thanks to all of you for your warm welcome.

Our theme, not just today but certainly this year, and perhaps for a number of years to come, will be the professionalization of teachers. Now, for many years conferences such as these were around the theme of collective bargaining or they were focused around the theme of organizing. And to some moving to the theme of professionalizing teachers might seem to be a rather sharp turn, or sharp change. And I will suggest during the course of my remarks today that while it does represent a change in the substance of what it is we will be concentrating on, it certainly does not represent any change in purpose.

After all, for most of the years that the AFT existed, from 1916 until 1961, the AFT did not press for collective bargaining. As a matter of fact, it didn't even have

a policy in favor of collective bargaining.

For many years we tried to organize teachers on the basis of being a good organization and saying to teachers they ought to be affiliated with an organization that was affiliated those that represented other workers, and we took many good positions, principal positions on a whole host of educational and social issues.

Over all those years we did not succeed in organizing very many teachers. From 1916 to 1961, we managed to organize 50,000 teachers over all those years. That was the membership of the AFT.

In 1961, we took a very strange and radical position. We came out for collective bargaining. Now, why do I say that was strange and radical? Well, it was strange because generally an organization that represents 50,000 people out of about one and a half million doesn't call for an immediate election. Your chances of winning an election are not very good.

Minority organizations usually call for systems of proportional representation or systems of consultation. Very rarely do they demand an immediate vote in which only the majority will have the right to exclusive representation.

So it was a daring step, and there were many

arguments within the organization on whether it was an intelligent step at all. Many people in the organization believed that it spelled suicide. That immediately the NEA would pick up the call for majority votes and that everywhere in the country, with the exception of perhaps one or two or three places, that they would have the majority and that we would have had a brilliant idea which would put us out of existence in no time at all.

So that some of the same fears that are being expressed today, fears that maybe if we come out for testing, maybe if we come out for peer review and for other things that teachers will be driven away from the organization and that these will be suicidal positions for us to take because they are not popular.

We ought to think back that we once took a position which would have been suicidal if things had remained the same. And one of the things which leaders of the organization, the AFT, knew around 1961 was that by proposing collective bargaining and by taking leadership in the idea of collective bargaining that things would not remain the same, that the balance of forces would change, that many teachers would move over and come to us as a result of it, and that we would be able to win majorities in many places where we had had nobody at

all before.

Now that leads me to the second item, and that was that collective bargaining was not at the time that we proposed it a popular notion with teachers. If teachers in the United States of America had been polled in 1961 as to how many of you want collective bargaining, I would venture to say that under 5 percent of the teachers in this country would have said that they want collective bargaining.

The AFT did not see which way the wind was blowing, did not merely go out and take a poll to ask teachers and then go out and offer it to them. What we did was to provide a vision of something that we believed teachers should want, and we went out and explained it to them. And we turned out to be good leaders and good teachers, but essentially we were standing up and saying that teachers ought to be using a technique which in their minds was not a technique used by either government employees or professionals. It was a technique used mainly by blue collar workers in our society.

And we were up against an organization which went from one district to another to say that collective bargaining was unprofessional and inappropriate, and that the government would never allow it to happen.

So at a time like this when we are thinking, considering taking a series of new positions and new stance, we ought to think back to the time when we adopted collective bargaining. We tend to forget how unpopular it was. I would go from one meeting to another trying to explain collective bargaining. Somebody would always get up in the audience and say, "Well, I don't want collective bargaining; I want a salary increase."

Collective bargaining is an abstract concept. It's a process. It's a change in relationships. Most teachers were saying, "Well, what are you going to get me tomorrow?"

Now, look at what we were able to do from 1961 to the present time in terms of collective bargaining. If this were not a single talk, if this were the beginning of a three-credit course at some college, I would devote probably two or three weeks to a minute analysis of what teachers thought then and how difficult it was to take this step. Because I think an analysis of that spectacular, and brilliant, and courageous, and crazy move that was made at that time is something that we need now and which would give us hope as we begin to take some rather dangerous positions and positions which in many ways we fear could result in some losses as well as gains.

Now, why is it that we need this change in emphasis? Why is it that we need to move toward professionalism? I'm going to cite a number of reasons. Again, if this weren't a single talk, I could cite many more, and you will get many more in some writings and some conferences, but let's just start with a few.

First and foremost, public education in this country is in very great danger. It may not survive another 10 or 15 years. If we don't start with that, then we are living in some sort of fool's paradise.

We've gotten some improvement in the polls this year as to what the public thinks about education, but remember that by and large the public believes that the schools have not done a good job over the last 10 years, that we've had declining scores, that schools are very expensive, that private schools are better than public schools.

About half the population believes that parents ought to have the right to take their children out and get some public support for it. We've got more and more businesses and industries setting up their own higher education institutions, and now many of them even award degrees. A total new industry is growing up there.

All the signs are there. The signs that are similar to those that existed in other industries that are now endangered, like auto, steel, rubber tires and others, where 10 years ago they could see what was happening but they made no changes.

So the first thing is we better do something because we may not end up with much of a public school system, and the move toward professionalism is related to that.

The second reason for moving to professionalism is to ask ourselves whether continuing the emphasis and sole pursuit on collective bargaining is going to get us what we want for public education and for teachers.

Now, there is no question that if you are in a State where you don't have collective bargaining yet, or if you are in a State where collective bargaining exist but you don't have it, there is no question if you don't have bargaining you got to move to get collective bargaining, otherwise you do not have the power, the money, the voice to be able to accomplish anything.

But now let's address ourselves or let's look at those locals that have had collective bargaining for 10 years, 15 years, 20 years. And I would ask the leaders of those locals

"Why did you try to win collective bargaining for teachers in the first place?"

Write down sometime on a piece of paper the things that you hope to achieve as you are dreaming of victory as you are organizing teachers. What are the things that you believe that collective bargaining would achieve. And then next to that list put down the things that collective bargaining actually did achieve.

I think that when you make those two lists you will find that collective bargaining certainly did some things, but it didn't do others. I will get to these in a few minutes. And I would arrive at a conclusion, which is that after a group has collective bargaining for a period of time that initially collective bargaining improves the lot of teachers, but that after you practice collective bargaining for awhile the improvement really stops and that collective bargaining mostly becomes a process of holding on to what you have, defending what you have, or running on a treadmill; that is, you work hard as anything to stand still. Because the cost of living goes up, so you work like anything, you go back into negotiations and when you come out you have the great victory that what you came up with is you restored, you took care of the erosion that took place over the last couple of years.



And so I ask you, is that what we want to devote the rest of our lives to, running in order to stay in place? I don't know about you, I don't.

I think we all moved to collective bargaining, we joined the union because we wanted to change things. And you do change them through collective bargaining. Then you come to a plateau, and then if you want to change them even further, you've got to do something else. You can't just keep doing that because you don't want to lose what you have.

But you have to go beyond that. And just as collective bargaining provided a structure that broke things up and changed relationships and brought us to a higher plateau, so in talking about professionalism, we're talking about a new breakup and a new series of changes and relationships which will bring us to a still higher plateau. Otherwise, we have ritual.

And I would say that it is really not the treadmill that we're on, that we're not just running to standstill, but in many cases we are running very hard and things are eroding and getting a little worse constantly. We're not getting better or even standing still.

Well, what is it that we wanted originally? We wanted status for teachers. We wanted teachers to have a voice.

We wanted teachers to have the public recognition and dignity and respect that is accorded to other professions. We wanted teachers to be respected to the point where, since they are on the front lines in education, that they like other professionals would be able to make major decisions in education. We wanted them to be compensated the way other professionals are. And the question is did collective bargaining achieve this?

Well, let's take a look at those locals that have had it for the longest period of time. Yes, it increased salaries. Yes, it put some caps on class size. Yes, it created some fairness in the sense that teachers who feel aggrieved and wronged are able to appeal generally to some independent authority to take care of those grievances. It did a good many of those things.

But by and large in State after State where we tried to bring professional issues to the bargaining table, management has said these are professional issues and these are not subject to collective bargaining. So we really have two sets of issues: those that are in a strict sense working conditions, and we have made progress on those, but we have not at the bargaining table been able to deal with the professional issues.

Now, I would like to talk about, or mention a fourth reason for entering into this field. I'm sorry I had to be in Washington yesterday and came back only to hear the last 15 or 16 words uttered from this platform in the evening session. But I have been studying many, many polls, not just of what teachers want but of what all people who work for a living in this country want. Workers, what they want.

And once upon a time when workers worked in sweatshops and coal mines and jobs where the only -- there was a time and throughout most of our history, perhaps, most of the people in this country worked for only one reason, and that's to feed themselves and feed their families. Very few people throughout our history ever thought that the purpose of a job was anything else. And it wasn't anything else in those days, that is all it was for, was to feed yourself and feed your family and provide some shelter.

But look what we've done through education. We've educated everybody, and people are no longer satisfied with jobs that merely give them money. People want satisfaction and enjoyment from their jobs. People want a job which allows them to express some of the talents which they have. People want recognition.

People do not want jobs -- in the old days where everybody was doing dirty work and the only reason that you were working was to make some money, people wanted clearly defined rules as to what they had to do and what they couldn't be made to do. They wanted them either in laws or in union contracts.

But more educated people don't want to be hemmed in and told what to do whether it is by State laws or by Boards of Education or by union contract. They want to be respected enough to be able to exercise judgment and discretion. And these polls nationally show that most workers today think that the boss is a pretty nice guy. That wasn't true years ago where the boss was running the mine or the sweatshop. If you went out and tried to organize people and said some nasty things about the boss, you could organize a lot of people.

But the polls today show that if you use the same techniques and go out and try to organize on the basis of saying that the employer is no good, you're going to lose 70 percent of the workers who are there. Most people enjoy their jobs, even if they've got some problems with it. Most people who work for a living today recognize that it is very important for them to do a good job and for their coworkers to do a good job, otherwise the industry that they're in is going to go out

of business, and that that's going to have a negative effect on their own standard of living and their own security.

But what does that tell us about how to organize teachers into the AFT and how to appeal to teachers? To what extent are we still bringing a message, which is a message that worked as long as school systems were really authoritarian. When school systems were like the old coal mines, not too long ago. Maybe there is still a few like that.

But are we bringing the wrong message? And then, of course, related to the issue of how to preserve public education is the issue of how to attract and keep good people in this field. We all know that you can have all the reform reports in the world, we can have "Nation At Risk," and all these other things, and if you can't get and keep good people, outstanding people, then over a period of time there will be greater erosion of public support. And if there is erosion of public support for public schools, the public will seek alternatives. This is an educated public. They are not going to say we're stuck with these schools forever, even if we think they're no good.

The interesting thing is just think of the arguments that we've used against tuition tax credits in recent years. Almost all the arguments we've used are negative

arguments about what might happen to society if we lost public schools, but I think they're good arguments. But very rarely does anyone stand up and come out against tuition tax credits because public schools are outstanding institutions.

Now, isn't that a terrible thing to say? Wouldn't it be better if next year or the year after that we could stand up and argue against tuition tax credits on the basis that it's ridiculous to abandon an institution which is performing marvelously, instead of a bunch of negative arguments.

Well, how do we attract good teachers? Well, if people who are educated basically want a place where they can get satisfaction, a place where they are given dignity and respect, a place where their judgment is respected, they don't want a factory where the rules and regulations are laid down, where they are timeclocked, where they are supervised and "snoopervised" and respected every minute of the time, they don't want that.

And they don't want -- you used to build it in for them, and they don't want management to build it in for them. If you do that, we're going to lose those people. And if we lose those good people, we are going to lose public education.

So how do we change the nature of the job? Is there going to be a shortage of teachers? Well, I'll give you just a fascinating indicator. Yesterday I got up at 5:30 a.m. because I had to get to Washington for a meeting, turned on the TV as I was getting dressed, and there it was: there was the teachers strike in Mississippi.

Now, one fascinating thing, obviously, was, I mean whoever thought I'd live to see teachers striking in Mississippi. That was -- and NEA teachers, mostly.

But the next thing that was fascinating was that the minute the strike took place several school districts in Texas, the largest one of which is Dallas, took radio commercials saying to the teachers, "If you don't like the district you're working in now, if they're mistreating you, we pay good teachers much more in Dallas. Our team of recruiters will be here to interview you tomorrow."

Now, whoever thought that Dallas would be hiring strikers from Mississippi. Well, I assure you they wouldn't be hiring strikers from Mississippi unless there were a teacher shortage.

There is a teacher shortage, and it's going to get very, very big. And the teacher shortage is not just a

problem for school management and it is not just a shortage of bodies, it is a shortage of people with certain qualities. And if we increase the quality, we even increase the shortage. That is one of the problems that we face.

So we've got the question of how do we make it attractive? And I submit to you that educated people find those positions in which they do have -- their judgment is respected, the kinds of professional jobs, odd jobs that people will take but jobs that are routinized, they are going to stay away from. So that is another reason.

Well, those are some of the reasons why we ought to be considering and why we are considering professionalism. And they're very big reasons. They deal with the future of public education. They deal with our ability to organize members. Essentially, I'm saying that only a minority of teachers in this country can be organized on the basis of the old conflicts and the old slogans, and that many more teachers can be organized on the basis of the appeal to dignity and professionalism and the respect that they will get from a new role within the school system. And that we are missing a big bet if we essentially appeal to something which once went over very well, but just doesn't fly that well anymore, or it flies



well with some people but not with the overwhelming majority.

If we stick to the old slogans, the old way of doing things, we'll find that every place we go we're going to organize 20 or 30 percent of the people who are angry, and we will not appeal to the 70 percent of the people who really want more of a voice and a better way of doing the job and who are not seeking a way to organize in order to fight and in order to engage in conflict, but are seeking an organization which will help give them power and dignity in the daily decisions that they make.

Well, let me now move from these reasons to a few of the issues before us in professionalism, and these issues are just a beginning. As we move into this, there will be many, many others that come before us. And I want to start with the question of standards.

There is no profession, except on the basis of maintaining high standards. I had an interesting experience a couple of weeks ago. I spent a day, actually half of one day and part of another, in Utah. And the first day I went out there was the day after I gave my National Press Club speech on the creation of a national teacher exam. And the first day I was there this was on the front page and the headline read: "Union Boss Wants Tough Mandatory Teacher Exam." "Union Boss Wants

Tough Mandatory Teacher Exam."

The second day I was there it was: "Speaker Repeats Call for Teacher Exam."

And the third day I was there it was: "Educator Calls for --"

Well, I think those three headlines over those three days really tell us what it's all about. Which of those headlines would have greater appeal to the public in terms of supporting public schools, and which of those would have greater appeal to teachers in terms of joining an organization?"

And standing for something, and being willing to make some sacrifices for what we stand for is what is called for. Now, there is no other profession in the United States that one can enter without taking some form of examination. The more difficult the examination, the more the profession is rewarded. The more difficult the examination, the fewer people leave or drop out after they pass it. How many people become doctors and then decide after three years to go into some other field? Very few.

How many people become actuaries, how many people become lawyers and decide to leave the field. Now, if you just look at the number of ex-teachers in this world, it will tell

you something about the nature of our profession. You get something cheap, it stays cheap. And what we've got to do is -- and not only that, but we know as a result of the fact that there is no testing, that there are some among us who should not be there. There always will be. But a test allows you to screen out in a fairly easy way those who should not be there.

Now, I don't know why it's a controversial issue. I don't know why it hasn't happened in the past. But the announcement of the support for the creation of a national examination and the announcement that after its creation that the American Federation of Teachers would consider making -- not accepting into membership any teacher hired by a school district who did not pass the examination, gave this organization more publicity and more favorable support than we have ever had in the entire history of the organization.

The number of organizations, the number of individuals, the number of editorials, because it was a signal to the public of what we stand for. And I might say that all the polls show that it is overwhelmingly supported by teachers as well, not just by the general public.

Now, the testing issue is just one. A very important one. If you have not read my full speech, you should, because the idea of it is not just a short answer, memorization

type of minimum competency test. I'm talking about a lengthy and difficult and complex examination that has three parts, and the first is subject matter at a level substantially above that which the teacher will have to be teaching the students.

A second part deals with pedagogy and policy issues.

And the third consists of an internship. Actually teaching for one or two or three years, so that the performance is measured as well.

Now, what are the other professional issues before us? The other professional issues involve, really, whether teachers will be professionals? What is a professional?

I used to have a favorite line in a speech that I think I used a variation of that speech probably for nine or ten years. And those were the days when I had to go around convincing teachers that collective bargaining and unionism was not unprofessional.

And of course we went around admitting that we were really union, and the other organization went around saying support us because we are a professional association, don't join the union. And after going through what collective bargaining

is about and what unionism is about, I would always go then to the question of professionalism.

And it seemed to me that the word "professional" was always used in an Orwellian sense in American public education. You remember George Orwell's 1984 in which in this totalitarian society where they wanted to prevent people from being able to think, from an early age they drilled it into children that war is peace, and freedom is slavery, and they identified each word with its very opposite, so that by the time people became adults within that society they were incapable of thinking. Because if you identify each concept with its very opposite, you're incapable of making distinctions.

And so for many years the word "professionalism" in schools was used to mean its very opposite. The first time I ever heard the word "professional" used in school was -- I started teaching, I taught three or four weeks, I was having a very tough time teaching in a very difficult school. Children were being flown in every day from Puerto Rico, and every day there were two or three more kids put in the class who spoke no English at all. And I was hoping someone would come in to

help me, and after four weeks or so the assistant principal was at the door, and opened the door and in my own mind I said, Thank God, he's going to come in and take a look and give me some ideas as to what to do.

And he stood there like that for what seemed to me -- I'm sure it was only 15 seconds, but it seemed to me like an hour. And I just, you know, was welcoming him, and he stood there. And I finally figured out what he was doing.

He was pointing to a piece of paper on the floor. And he then came over and whispered into my ear that having dirty floors was very unprofessional. And then he left.

The next time I heard the word was at a faculty conference. I was at a school -- I started teaching at elementary school, and one of the things we used to have to do was Snow Patrol. Snow Patrol, some of you wouldn't know about that.

But Snow Patrol meant that whenever it snowed, if you were a male teacher in an elementary school, that would never stand up under current legislation, but in those days the

male teachers in the elementary school were told that they had no lunch period and they had to walk around the building whenever there was snow on the ground to stop the children from throwing snowballs.

And I was the second male teacher in the school. And so the first fellow, who had been there for three or four years, we had just -- at this faculty conference they handed out the duty chart, you know, which days you're on cafeteria patrol, and yard patrol, and toilet patrol, and all these other things, and then on top was my name and that fellow's name on snow duty.

And so he got up, raised his hand, and he said to the principal, "Now that there are two of us could we rotate snow patrol?" You know he goes on out Monday when it snows, and I go out Tuesday, and so forth, so that we could at least eat lunch every other day.

And the assistant principal in charge of snow patrol stood up and said, "That's very unprofessional." Do you realize that a snowball might be thrown and some child could be blinded? Of course we were all silenced by that answer.

But really the word "professional" was used to beat

us down. It really meant "keep your mouth shut, don't ask any questions, don't rock the boat." It didn't mean think for yourself, it meant follow orders. Obey the system. So it was used in an Orwellian sense.

Because what is a professional? A professional is a person who is an expert, and by virtue of the expertise is relatively unsupervised and is permitted to make judgments on his or her own. No one stands over the surgeon telling him to cut a little to the left, or cut a little to the right. No one stands -- now that doesn't mean there isn't a system of accountability. There is a responsibility that goes with having that power.

The responsibility is you can't play with the lives of people. If you really don't know how to do something, it's your job to talk to somebody who does to find out, or not to take that patient and to send them to someone else. There are responsibilities that go with it.

But basically a professional is a person who is largely independent, largely self-directed. A person who is shaped up not largely through supervision but largely through peer contacts.



And so that leads us to, if we're really talking about professionalism, then we're talking about the kind of things that are being done in Toledo. And what Toledo is doing is a first step because to use a system of peer support and peer training and peer teaching to help new people, to use systems of peer review after peer assistance, and we must always remember we're not talking about peer review in the sense of sending a bunch of judges in to execute somebody. The review comes only after a long process of assistance and help. That's the most important part of it.

If you've got a tremendous amount of help from your colleagues, the only people who really end up getting negatively reviewed are people who are absolutely hopeless. Whereas right now there are a lot of people who fall by the wayside because they never got the help that they should have gotten.

And the emphasis that is always placed on the review part rather than the assistance part and the collegiality is an incorrect emphasis.

So that is a very important issue. But not just the peer review question. Now, how are textbooks selected for

schools? Well, just think about it. In the last 20 years we have had committees talking about textbooks should be easier so the kids can read them. So they dumbed them down. Now comes a review system; they say textbooks are too easy, let's get longer words in there. Then comes a committee and says not enough women are in the textbooks, change the pictures. Next comes not enough blacks, not enough Hispanics, not enough labor history, and that's how we decide on which textbooks.

Does anybody ask is the book any good? Can the kids learn from it? Does it ask clear questions? Is there a proper progression? Are there answers in it? Nobody asks those questions.

Well, we ought to have teachers who are expert in what is a good textbook, and they ought to be sitting and discussing and they ought to be making those decisions, not some committee of the State legislature or some committee on a State Board of Education or some committee on a local Board of Education. These ought to be professional decisions.

No one decides for any other profession what the tools of the trade will be, what is the appropriate medicine, what is the appropriate instrument to use, what is the appropriate prescription -- those things are not -- I mean

operations are not medicine, or what one does with teeth is not a part of State legislation anywhere. But how one is to teach children becomes a part of State legislation. And why? Because we haven't done it ourselves.

And if we don't do it ourselves, then it constantly comes to us through State legislation, we're not going to get any good people to come into this field. Because that tells you something. If the legislation has to tell teachers what to do but no other professional group, anybody with any sense is going to know what they're really saying about us.

And John Cole had a good line when I was in Texas a few weeks ago. He says, "You can understand why there is a system now where teachers are constantly observed and told what to do; after all, if you hire them at the rates that we are hiring them right now, now you better watch them very closely. People who are going to work for that kind of money, you're not so sure you can trust them. So you better get one guy up there who is paid pretty well who can watch these other people, see what they're doing."

You see there is a whole system that's involved here. These things are all connected. The low pay, low

standards, not trusting you, telling you what to do -- they are all together. And if we don't break out of these things, all of them, which includes the testing, it includes the peer work, we're not going to break the salary barriers, either. It's all together.

I should add as a footnote there that not only will we attract better people that way, but you know when people are involved in helping others, as they are in Toledo, what do you think it does for them? They learn how to be better teachers.

Also, how many topnotch, bright people can you get in this world who are willing to be locked in a room with a bunch of kids for 35 years? Well, there is a small number of dedicated people, and a lot of crazy ones. Intelligent adults want a life with other adults, and the peer system means that part of the time you're in there with the kids but you've got a life with other teachers. And not just in exchanging war stories about what this horrible kid did in your class and what he did the period next when he came into mine, but real discussions of professional issues of what works and what doesn't work, and what we might do together in a school to change the

nature of the school.

And everything we know about Japanese management and why they're whipping the pants off of us in terms of production is that they have a system throughout all their factories which involves all their workers in a lot of decision-making and participation, whereas we have a system where we tell people what to do and we watch them, and then we reward the good ones with merit pay and we fire the others; and we're not looking at the system which they use, which is one of saying that everybody who works has a responsibility and exercises judgment and to elevate every employee in a sense to professional status.

So we're talking about attracting good teachers. We're talking about saving public education. And if we attract teachers who are viewed by the public as being outstanding people, and if we convince the public that we are really getting outstanding people, and these people are not just good teachers with the children in the classroom but they are also spending a lot of time helping their fellow teachers, developing new materials, selecting new textbooks, and coming up with all kinds of new ideas. You're always reading about how a doctor

discovered how to do this, or another professional discovered how to do that. When did you ever hear the teachers ever came forward with an idea? It's always a college professor, or a writer, or a reformer, or a national commission, or a legislator, or somebody else.

Until educational ideas start coming from teachers so that we are viewed as the brilliant intellectuals as the seekers, as the thinkers, as the discoverers, as the inventors, we are going to be something less than respected and not rewarded in a way in which we should be.

You don't have to pass me that note; I know.

Well, now that I've gone through the first five minutes of my speech -- (Laughter) -- let me conclude with this. We'll have time in some of our smaller sessions to explore some of these things.

I would like to go back to the beginning, and that is there is a good deal of concern, a good deal of fear on the part of many of our leaders and on the part of our staff, which is part of our leadership as well, that well maybe these are interesting ideas and maybe these are good ideas, but can you really organize teachers on this basis? Or can you only

organize them on the basis of traditional conflict?

And I would like to suggest that years ago I had many of these talks about how do you organize teachers when they were still unorganized, and I remember discussing this with my predecessor Dave , and he said organizing is simple, you just have to find out what people want and the second step of organizing is you have to give them hope that they can achieve what they want through the organization. It's really very simple.

Well, it wasn't that simple because we really, as I indicated before, did not go to teachers with what they wanted. What they wanted was a salary increase the next day, they didn't want collective bargaining.

What we went to them with was a vision. Those who believed that we really organize teachers on the basis of fear or on the basis of conflict or on the basis of dislike or on the basis of criticism, yes, there were elements of that. But I urge you very strongly to look into the recent election.

Fritz Mondale had most of the issues. People agreed with him on ERA, and they agreed with him on abortion, and they agreed that they didn't want a nuclear war. And you go down a whole list, and they agreed with him on all the

negative criticisms of the Administration, and then they voted for Ronald Reagan. Why? Because being against a lot of things is not enough. What Ronald Reagan provided was a positive image of where this country should be. And even though the public disagreed with him on almost every one of the specific issues, they did not want to go with a person who was negative and carping and criticizing. They ended up going with a person with whom they disagreed on the issues but who presented to them a vision of what this country ought to be like.

Now, I would suggest that that organization will end up being dominant with teachers. Not the organization which plays on the fears of teachers, not an organization which constantly hits on the negative things. I suggest that over a period of time the organization that presents an image of what teaching could be like in the future or what the status of teachers could be and their position in society, and what their salaries are, an image which is -- it's very easy to dwell on what's wrong in school today. Yes, you should have higher salaries, and a lower class size, a better pension. You should be able to retire earlier. You should be free from these chores and those chores. Those are all fine. We don't have to abandon those.



But those things really constitute getting rid of annoyances in a sense. They are negative. They're necessary. They do not constitute a vision of what teachers believe and think about themselves. And what we need is both.

Yes, we want to get rid of the things that are very bothersome. But we need more than that. We need a vision and we need an image of what teaching can be like, and that's what we're talking about when we talk about professionalism.

Any organization that appeals merely to the narrow and the negative is really selling teachers out. Teachers want more than just not to be abused, and not to be underpaid, and not to be overworked, and not to be all those things.

Teachers want to be something that's very positive. They want that word to conjure up something in the minds of people in this country that is similar to what comes to mind when you think about other professionals and what their contribution is to society.

That is what this is all about, and it really is exactly the same as what we did when we moved for collective bargaining. We had a vision then of what the power of teachers could be collectively. We wouldn't be moving toward professionalism if we didn't have that collective power now,

if we didn't feel a sense of security. If we didn't feel in a sense, those of us who have collective bargaining, that what you can do with it has kind of reached its limit and has run out, and we will fight to protect those things, and this is a time to reach new heights.