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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

Local President's Meeting

Q & A

with Al Shanker

"Organizing Media"

AFT Press Meeting

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. SHANKER: Thank you very much for coming. I think it would the atmosphere of the meeting would be a lot better if everybody got up close, I'd even get down there and not use the mike and we'd be closer to each other. That's important.

No, not like a school teacher, like a person who does a lot of public speaking and knows what the atmosphere of a room and where the audience is sitting does to ...

The purpose of the -- I'll tell you the purpose of the lights and if they bother you a lot, we'll have them turn it off anyway. The purpose of the lights is that a bunch of people who've been asked to do it by the AFT or --

(Recording interruption.)

-- has a whole bunch of these, plus a sample tape there that you can watch to see what the issues are, to pick the ones you want.

The purpose of this meeting is very simple. There are two of them. There's this one, then there's one with the higher education people, following this. And the purpose of it is for us to engage in a discussion about some of the key reform issues which will be before this convention.

The reports that came out about three, three and a half years ago; in a way, they were simple reports, "A

Nation At Risk," you know, just lengthen the school day, ask teachers to pass children and don't promote people automatically and you could just outline it very easily. The proposals that we're considering now, namely, Carnegie and our own task force, are much more complicated.

There is, you might say, a vision or scenario that if you just list, these are the changes, it doesn't mean anything unless you get a picture of the kind of school, the kind of career path and processing, and everything else is -- it demands a context. And it's not easy on the floor of a convention with -- there'll be close to about 4,000 people at this convention. This is not going to be like the last one, a lot bigger. It's very difficult, with time limits and with today's discussion, to have, to create that sort of a picture.

And many of you did not receive a copy of it so you came here when you registered, there is a copy in your package. I hope you've had a chance to read it. Once you do read it, I think you'll find that no matter how good your local or national or other newspaper, that they did a good journalistic job, but they probably did not come close to building a picture of what the whole thing is about.

I'm not -- my speech is tomorrow morning to the convention. I'm not going to give it to you a day in advance. I don't even have it yet.

(Laughter.)

I'll do that tomorrow morning. So the way we'll do this is just to -- you raise concerns if you have them, things that can come up from what you've read, what you've heard, what other people are saying, what you think, your reading of the report, and let's just raise these issues so that -- and I think it'd be very important to you, first of all in terms of the discussion at the convention.

I also think it's very important because adopting a resolution here is less important than implementing a lot of these things back in our locals, and also, you are going to be the front lines, as you always are, but you'll be in the front lines again because the NEA will certainly not take a very positive view of Carnegie. They may approve one or two items in this and then what they'll do is put out a lot of literature hitting us for being bad teachers of the profession. And we at least ought to know why we take the certain position so we can handle ourselves in terms of any kind of organizational confrontation.

You'll also be asked by legislators in your communities say the AFT has now taken its position, assuming that we take a fairly favorable view toward it, and you'll be hit with teachers and membership who will want to know why did we do this or legislators or newspaper people, so this is the kind of information session, two-way

information.

I'd like to, you know, get the feelings that you have, if they're strong and negative I'd like to hear that, and if they're positive, if you really don't have enough information. If there are things that we can do to make life better in terms of things that we get to you that you need, that's the kind of meeting it is. So who's first? Yes?

MS. _____: President Shanker, in your proposal for the task force, there is a question about funds it mentioned that you have for changing the structure of the public schools. Your answer has been that if you reduce the administrative staff, et cetera, there will be funds available. Would you elaborate on that?

MR. SHANKER: Yeah. Did everybody hear that?

AUDIENCE: No.

MR. SHANKER: I'll repeat it. The question was, it's going to cost a lot of money to implement the vision that's contained in Carnegie, and I have -- the questioner says that I have stated that you could fund a lot of it or most of it or all of it by reducing administrative staff; would I please elaborate on that.

Yes, I will elaborate on it. First of all, the report says that it will take some 40-plus billion dollars. However, if you read it carefully, it's not

really \$40 billion as I expected. The report says that if the economy grows at the same rate that it's grown in the past, if that's the kind of money that will be coming in anyway, and therefore this is going to be done.

However, --

(Recording interruption.)

The task force, to its credit, said even if you could finance all of them without another penny, we think that no major report on education should fail to call for more money, because American education is underfunded and therefore, even if we don't absolutely need it to put this plan into existence, we should still call for greater funding. And so it's in there.

Let me explain the position in this way. In American -- traditional American factories, for every hundred workers there are about 15 inspectors, 15 managers. And those managers go around checking to see whether you made a mistake or you're a little late or -- they do all of these things. They give you a little bonus if you're good and they try to -- you know, it's the merit pay things, the awards and punishments, it's a traditional type of management.

Japanese factories, both in Japan, and Japanese or modern-style management factories in the United States have about one manager for every 100 employees. And the

interesting thing is that the plants with one manager for every hundred employees do a better quality job than those that have 15. Now, they don't just get rid of 14 managers and then don't do any -- they do everything else the same. That obviously wouldn't work.

They take the money that would have been spent for the other 14 managers and they give time to the employees to talk about what's going wrong, so they can find out if there's light hitting somebody in the eyes and that's why he doesn't put the part on right, or they could talk about the fact that a a new type of metal had come in and it isn't exactly the same as the other one, and essentially, the new style says that the employees do the quality control and the manager is not the inspector; the manager's just the guy who gets the information from the employees as to how change things so that they'll get better.

Now, there are two philosophies of management. One is the oldfashioned, Taylor philosophy. Under the Taylor system, you hire people for their hands, and the boss is the brain. And you reduced your labor costs as much as possible by getting people as cheap as you could because all they're going to do is turn a screw or fasten something or that's all they're responsible for doing. You made the job as simple and as unthinking as possible, you worked the line as fast as you could, and you paid them as

little as you could. That was the whole thing. And there was a guy up on top who figured out how to make you work a little faster.

All those businesses that operated that way are now going out of business. The new view is that you don't hire people that you consider to be dumb to do simple things. You hire smart people, and you let them figure out how to do it. And basically you -- the job of top management is first of all, decentralize, allow people who are actually doing the job to make as many decisions as possible; don't tell them no.

Secondly, in order to trust them to do that, hire someone _____ good people, pay them more. You're better off not hiring the cheapest people but hiring better people because then you don't have to spend all the money to watch people that you don't trust.

Our top management is supposed to offer some sort of a vision as to what the whole thing is about and then to help people when they need it, and because the smart people who end up sort of bumping into each other, because they're doing things that are cross-purposes, to meet with them and to resolve disputes so that everybody is not falling over everybody else.

Well, look at it this way. Why do we have -- I'll give you the story. I'll give you an extreme. New York

City has 960,000 students and a budget -- the operating budget is over \$5 million. So expect over \$5,000.00 per child.

New York City teachers have about 30 kids in a class since the fiscal crisis. Some of them have more. So when you figure a class has got 30 kids and each kid brings oh, \$5,000.00, there's \$150,000.00 in the classroom. How much do you get as the teacher? Well, you get your salary and your pension and your fringe benefits, everything else, so maybe let's be generous and say that the teacher gets \$50,000.00 for that.

Where does the other hundred thousand go? Do they all have brand new shiny textbooks every year? Is the school really painted nice and spiffy? A lot of them are pretty depressing places. Where does all the money go?

Most of it goes to the management and administration. So you've got a lot of school districts in this country where 40, 50, 60 percent of the money goes to management.

Now, in the old days, the teacher was a high school graduate and the principal was the graduate of a normal school. Later on, the teacher was a graduate of a normal school, the principal was the only college graduate in the school, and the other administrators.

But if you have a plan where you hire a lot of

really good teachers, then why do you need all the -- and a lot of the time those good teachers, but don't put them all in self-contained classrooms to work. Develop an institution, which is why a hospital or a law firm or an accounting firm or an architecture firm where people work more in teams so that if you had a lot of outstanding people and some who are very good but not that outstanding that they shake each other up because they work with each other, then you don't need all those managers.

Now, you have to add to this vision the fact that this is -- it may be hard to believe right now, but in a few months you're going to see a lot of these things. There is a lot of new technology that's going to be on the way. It's not going to replace teachers, but it's going to mean that teachers will not have to stand and lecture or teach as they do now all the time. There will be a lot of things that will be available and will be fairly reasonable and will be effective and under the control of the teachers.

Now, in that sort of a system you just -- well, is it better to have a hundred teachers in the school and let's say 15 administrators or 10 administrators, or are you better off having a hundred teachers and make sure that out of a hundred teachers, 20 or 25 are let's say advanced board-certified, top-notch, and have one or two

administrators in the school, because the 20 or 25 teachers who've been certified in this way work in a _____ relationship with everybody else and serve in a way the same function that all those -- a better function, because they still work with kids.

Now, the model, by the way, is the professional partnership. Teaching is the only field where when you advance, you advance out of teaching. In a law firm, if you become the senior partner in a law firm, you continue taking cases. Matter of fact, you take some of the most difficult cases because you're considered to be one of the best lawyers. If you're a board-certified physician, you don't stop practicing medicine. If you're a senior partner in an accounting firm, you don't stop accounting. You may take the most interesting and important accounts.

So the notion here is that we should not have a career path in teaching which takes people out of teaching. Now teaching is viewed differently. They are not viewed as classroom instruction. The school is viewed as a school in which you don't have classrooms in the normal sense but where there's more of a team approach and where students are more on an individual basis, moving through various tasks that the curriculum defines.

But what this says is stop spending a lot of money for people in a central office and people in the school

office who are supposed to watch and inspect teachers, and spend most of the money on getting highly qualified teachers, and take those jobs that have to be done where they're now done by supervisors and administrators, and have these teachers share the responsibilities. There's no reason why they can't do that as part of the time, if they're not busy teaching all the time because there are other ways in which to involve the students educationally that are worthwhile. I mean, that's basically the concept.

I must say that's exactly what's happening in the better automobile plants, it's exactly what's happening in some of the newest steel plants, it's exactly the kind of thing that happens in some of your high-tech industries. If you take modern companies that are doing a terrific job, you're going to see very lean management and you're going to see a lot of outstanding employees who are hired, and those employees share among themselves a lot of the things that management used to do.

(Begin Tape 2.)

This will be a company that's producing a lot of products that are not coming out that well. People -- everybody's unhappy with them, including the people who are working there. And as you look at the budget, you see that 40 cents out of every dollar that's spent on the production line and 60 cents is spent on inspectors. If somebody

comes up with a bright idea, let's take all this inspector money and let's make life better, improve salaries, let's improve working conditions, let's make sure that the productive process is where we put the money. That's taking money away from overhead and putting it up front.

Yes?

MR. : Mr. President, some concern's been raised on some issues vis-a-vis AFT positions in the past; for example, specifically on merit pay, or you could comment on _____ in the AFT position on merit pay. How is the lead teacher in the federal role _____ and what's another category _____ career ladders, which we've had some question about in the past. And, thirdly, what's your evaluation concept of the union involvement, does this present a potential conflict between the union's role as advocate of the rights of every (Inaudible). I'd like you to respond to each of those three concerns.

MR. SHANKER: Well, okay. Merit pay. Let me say first of all that if the American people turn the schools over to teachers then there will have to be some way for teachers to be accountable. Now, right now the theory is that we're accountable because the principal will come in and evaluate us. You're accountable to the principal and superintendent.

But if basically the principal or superintendent

is either weakened or disappears, there still has to be some way in which highly removed who absolutely fall apart, let's say, if there's a school that's operating with teachers who are running it and there is no principal, or what happens if a teacher goes absolutely berserk. Who brings charges, who does anything, who says anything, who tries to help the teachers. We need somebody to play that role.

So there is a discussion in the report. The original report it says, no systems of merit pay worked anywhere. And it says that there've been numerous efforts at doing that and they've all failed. And then it says, however, we should try, experiment with things.

Well, considering the fact that I was not the only member of the task force, and there were people from the business community and management and other places, and considering the popularity of the merit pay idea to have a major national report that comes out and basically negative toward merit pay is pretty good.

Now it does, however, and I must say that I feel the same, because there is an example of a place where a sound system of merit is at least semi-successful. I think it's too early to say that, but in Florida, when the teachers there were faced with a strong merit pay push, the teachers came up with an alternative proposal, and that was

a school merit pay thing which would be negotiated, which would have to be voted on by the teachers of the district, and which would not be individual merit pay. That is, that one of our arguments against individual merit pay is if I'm _____ you, I'm not going to help you as a teacher if you might beat me in a merit pay contest, so it gets people not to work with each other, it gets them to compete with each other.

The school merit concept was that any union local that wanted to negotiate such could do it. If you didn't want it, you didn't have to. It was _____ money. The money was sitting there. If your local negotiated a procedure then you could have that procedure. It would not be individual rewards, it would be school awards.

Since you're the president of the union, you're obviously going to represent all your members. You're going to represent those of your members who are in schools with a lot of difficult kids. You're going to represent those in schools who have kids who've got all sorts of advantages. Well, how would you do that?

Well, obviously, you wouldn't make the only standard what your final score is on the examination. If you did that, you could probably tell who would get the prize before they got started because there's probably one school in the district that's had the highest scores for

the last ten years. You might as well forget the whole thing. So you would probably put a whole bunch of standards in there and then finally, on these exam scores, you'd probably say it's not the absolute score but the percentage increase from the previous year. So that a school that had a lot of difficulties would have the same opportunity -- they'd need a smaller absolute increase than a school where the kids were _____.

Well, we've done this down in Florida for a year. Some of it worked very well and some of them have had some very severe problems. We will have -- at this convention, we actually -- we sent a film crew down and we had them go into a school in Dade County that was a winner in this and we had them interview people. And you will see _____ and we also intend to bring you a case study of a place where it created some conflicts among the faculty, and some problems. But we think one of the larger _____ is to show that sometimes some of these things can work if they're done the right way.

Some of you who are sitting right here, you might want to, you know, give a few minutes (Inaudible) I don't know how it worked in your particular district, but I'm sure some of them worked very well and some of them didn't. But here's -- so that there's a group merit concept there, a school concept.

One, it doesn't go into effect unless it's negotiated.

Two, it has to be separately ratified by the teachers, and not part of another contract. So if your teachers don't want it, you don't have it. If they do sign, I think -- didn't they require a better than majority vote? What'd they require?

MR. : (Inaudible).

MR. SHANKER: For the majority? Okay. Some of them required more than that.

So what I'm saying is, our traditional opposition to merit pay is right in that report. The notion that we could experiment with some group incentives -- now, the group incentives are arrived at through negotiations, they're agreed upon by the people, and the report says it might not work. So it's there in a very soft form. It would be nice if the _____ really did work, 'cause then we'd have an answer for the public. We would get rid of this whole problem in such a way that would be --

But I think the nice thing about our plan if it works is that it doesn't pit one teacher against another. If all teachers of a school are paid because they're all -- (Unintelligible) all going to get the prizes or not, it gets them to work with each other. It gets them to talk with each other. And some of the better places where they

developed this, everybody was in it, the principal, the school secretary, the guidance counselor, the bus driver, so you start talking about the bus drivers and how things might happen on the bus to give kids a better attitude when they got into the school and how -- it's a _____ teamwork. Nothing wrong with that.

So that's part one. You can get back in just a minute.

Now, is there a career ladder here? Yes, there is a career ladder. However, the career ladder is not a career ladder made up of teachers picked by the principal or superintendent to be master teachers. The career ladder is a national board, dominated by teachers with a national examination, much like a national board of surgeons or pediatricians or anesthesiologists that _____ first the state licenses you and that means you're qualified to be a teacher in your state.

And now, if you want to show that you're more than an M.D. -- now, being an M.D., that doesn't mean that you're a _____ person. That's not what it says. You're a teacher. You're licensed. Fine.

But now if you want to show that you are the -- need to be at a certain level of excellence, that you're also fresh _____ develop, then you go and become board-certified. And there's a first board certification

and advanced board certification. Now, all this is going to depend on is the board certification exam going to be a really good exam.

Is it going to be like a medical board. Is it going to be like a bar exam. For somebody who passes that, is that person going to be distinguishable from somebody who hasn't passed it. Are people going to say, "Hey, those people that I talked to are board-certified teachers. The way they talk and the answers they give and the things they think of and the things they do are really different and terrific."

Now, if that happens, what's wrong with saying that people who distinguish themselves not by being recognized by the principal or the superintendent but through an objective mechanism by their own profession, why shouldn't they be able to advance and remain a teacher, but a teacher who's got more knowledge about the research base, more knowledge about textbook evaluation, more knowledge about how to groove with the classrooms and how to organize with the schools and everything, well nothing wrong with that, and we didn't.

We would still oppose any notion that said you're going to have a career ladder which really isn't a career ladder at all. The principal says, "Five of you are really terrific, now you're -- you're master teachers, you go

right back into the same classroom and teach a class but you're now on a career ladder and you're being paid more, and you'll do a little curriculum work at night."

I mean, that's a merit pay plan. Subjective merit pay plan, based on management manipulating and controlling teachers.

Is there anything wrong with teachers themselves saying, "Hey, all of us agree we all have high qualifications, some of us have become outstanding specialists and outstanding practitioners as measured by a national exam which was developed by the profession itself." Well, that's what we're talking about. We may still not like it, but it's not what we were talking about before. Very different. So that is the second one, on career ladders.

The third one, are we an advocate of all our ranks. Well, sure we are. We now have people who have -- we represent people who are paraprofessionals, we represent school-related personnel, we represent people who have bachelor's degrees, we represent people who've got extra credit for their masters or they have doctorates or they have --

Now, one time, if we -- if this meeting were taking place in 1945, at least half of you would be from places where elementary teachers, most did not have to,

95 percent of you if we were meeting in 1947 would represent unions where elementary school teachers, dominated by women, would have been receiving one or two thousand dollars less than secondary school teachers. That was considered the natural order of things. And if we had talked about all teachers getting the same salary, that would have been viewed as radical.

MR. : Shank, with all due respect, I think the question (Unintelligible). What I'd really asked there was in terms of peer evaluation --

MR. SHANKER: Oh, okay.

MR. : -- and then we have this board of members for every --

MR. SHANKER: Okay.

MR. : (Unintelligible) and so on.

MR. SHANKER: All right, peer evaluation. All right. Peer evaluation, I believe, does not appear in _____ in this -- it does appear in our task force report.

What exists in other places, about to exist in Rochester. Now, we stand for due process. What does due process mean? It means that if you're tenured you have a

right to your job unless somebody can prove that you shouldn't have it. Now, what's the system we now have?

Well, the system we now have is the principal or the department chairman or somebody looks in on you once or twice or three times, and then he gives a few comments and then if that person thinks that you're inadequate, you're brought up on charges. And you have a lawyer, and the school board has a lawyer, and depending on the nature of your arbitrator and whose got the better lawyer, your fate hangs in the balance and I can tell you one thing, that the final decision will really be based on (Inaudible) whether you're a good teacher or not. Because nobody in that room knows you. It will be an adversarial proceeding.

Now, in Toledo, that doesn't happen. In Toledo, if everybody recognizes that a teacher is falling apart, three teachers come and say, "Listen, Jack, you were great all these years but a lot of your colleagues here know that the kids are swinging on the chandeliers and you're in pretty bad shape and in the old days, the principal would have come to get you, but we're here to do everything that we can to help you."

And they will work with that teacher for a long, long time to try to help them. Who gets real help right now when he's in trouble? Nobody. _____. That teacher gets a whole lot of help. And in most cases, the

teachers improve. Sometimes the teacher doesn't improve, in which case the fact that three colleagues tried to help that teacher and if the teacher wasn't finally helped, undoubtedly in one way or another it does have some bearing on the dismissal of that teacher later on. The teacher (Inaudible), the teacher _____ lawyers, the teachers thought of everything else, but the fact that there was an unsuccessful effort to help the person is a piece of evidence.

Well, is that less of a protection? I mean, right now you can be a great teacher but if somebody has it in for you, the arbitrator's not going to know you were a great teacher. It's just going to be one lawyer against another. But in this system, once these three teachers help that person, they say he's okay, that's the end of it. There's no way the principal's going to succeed.

So, will it mean that some teachers will be ousted? Yeah. Know who will be ousted? Teachers who should be. Teachers forgetting their -- well, first of all, teachers who are having a miserable time _____, teachers who are really harmful to kids, teachers who are destroying the reputation of the profession, but you know what will happen in this system? An innocent person, where the principal has it in for them, will never go under in a system where three of his colleagues come in and have a

look at him, and see that he's doing perfectly fine. Which is a system of better justice, the one where one arbitrator and a couple lawyers argue it out in the absence of anything but their arguments at the table, or one where a person's colleagues --

MR. : What makes you think the three colleagues who walk into somebody's room won't want to get rid of him?

MR. SHANKER: If you look at every other profession, the problem isn't that the lawyers are getting rid of their colleagues every day, or the doctors are dumping their colleagues for incompetence every day. The problem in every profession is that the colleagues generally are so -- lean so far to protect the members of their own profession that one can question whether it's a good system. But it's a fairer system. It's a better system. It's more professional system than the one we have now.

Yes?

MR. : Appearances perhaps to the contrary, I'm the father of a one-year-old boy, and --

(Laughter.)

-- recently bought a home in a district with very high school taxes and with very expensive prices for the homes, and the reason that I did was based on my concern

for my son, and that was reflected by the fact that the district that he would be attending school in has an excellent staff of skilled and competent teachers with low student/teacher ratios, because my sort of oldfashioned notion of education, the quality of an education, is based on the interaction between students and a topnotch teacher.

When you talk about lead teachers being the expert teachers having a supervisory role and perhaps subordinate level of teacher doing a good portion of the classwork and then the discussion of machines or computer technology or followed by his lectures and whatnot, assuming a portion of that load, I become uneasy. Because it runs counter to some of the decisions that I've made as a parent and counter to some of my beliefs about the profession.

I am caught in quandary because I like the mentor teacher concept. On the other hand, to me the key to quality education is the interaction between students in small groups and the highest quality teacher you can manage to provide them with. How do you see a way out of that dilemma?

MR. SHANKER: Well, I think you've found a way out. If you have enough money --

(Laughter.)

-- you can buy a good quality school education in some public schools in this country. I don't -- I mean I'm not

-- that's, and I don't blame anybody for doing it. I think that's exactly what everyone who is able to do, does within our society. I think that if you say that you can take a select number of students in a school district that is very affluent that brings other pretty affluent and advantaged kids together, as a result of those people pooling money and they have the best buildings and the best ratio and the best individuals, then you have defined a situation which is clearly abnormal.

Now the question is, is there any conceivable way, outside of rhetoric, that one can believe that this could happen to all the kids and teachers of America, first of all. Forget about everybody not having the money. Suppose that somehow we could find some more money tomorrow. A part of the -- major part of both the Carnegie Report and the AFT Task Force Report are based on the fact that we're about to lose 1.1 million teachers, about one-half the teachers in the country are going to leave in the next six or seven years. And that we will need 23 percent of all the college graduates coming into teaching in the next ten years just to maintain current levels, not to improve pupil/teacher ratio, in less advantaged school districts.

And that in the most recent poll of undergraduates, only a little over 6 percent of the students in college said that they wanted to become

teachers and we need 23 percent, and while there are some brilliant people and some saints and some wonderful people who are heading our way, that very large numbers of people who are heading our way are in the lowest quartile of all college students and are likely to be the ones you read about who fail a sixth grade arithmetic test that's given to them to certify and license them in their states.

So the fact is, the fact that you can create a wonderful classroom and, you know, it is very much like the argument that people use for vouchers and pass credits, and we say, "Sure, if you get parents who are willing to pay for the kids' education and the school is willing to kick out all the kids who don't fit, the school -- you're going to end up with a good school." It's like a hospital that doesn't take any tough cases is going to have a terrific record.

(Begin Tape 3.)

Students have them come into school on the same day when they're five or six years old. Why do they have to come in on the same day? Because that's when the teachers start teaching and the class starts learning, and if you miss some time obviously you're not going to know what went on before and some of the learning is sequential.

Now, therefore, you have to be a certain age to get into class. Now, we all know that kids are not all

born on the same day. They're spread out over the year, so in the same class you have kids who are essentially a year younger or a year older. Now, I think a year younger or a year older when you're five or six years old is an awful lot. It's a lot in terms of your physical endurance, it's a lot in terms of your mental capabilities.

And you know that there's very, very _____ research that shows that if you take kids who are 17 and 18 year olds, you will find a disproportionate number of those kids who were the oldest kids in their first class. They were the oldest kids all the way through in that class. They are successful. Why? From the day they came into school, they got messages and feedback saying, "You're smarter, you're swifter, you're stronger," all sorts of positive reinforcement saying, "That's the boy," or, "That's the girl. Keep it up, you're great."

Whereas, the youngest kid is weaker, slower, smaller, not as smart, doesn't have -- a whole year behind at the age of five or six. Those kids get constant messages telling them that they're not as good. And it has a permanent effect on them.

So we have very, very strong evidence that schools organized on the basis where kids are forced to compare each other and they're a full year apart, creates . tremendous learning problems on the part of some of them

that are not bad as part of nature, but this is a problem created for children by the way schools are organized.

I'll give you a second one. Let's say I'm a student in high school. I enter high school, I come back to high school this September, and I say, "Hey, Teach, when's the final report card?" And the teacher says, "Next June." So I'm a pretty smart student, I know that if I don't have to shape up until next June and I don't have to do tonight's homework. It's not that important.

And so I let that go. Maybe two days later, I don't come to school for one day, and I let things go because, after all, this is September and I don't have to worry until next June.

Now comes the middle of October and I realize I'm hopelessly lost. Every time the teacher calls on me, I'm embarrassed. I stand there and I'm sitting there. I know what school prayer is: I'm praying every second that I'm not going to be called on.

(Laughter.)

And so, by the end of October, I'm now -- what's the smart thing for me to do? Drop out. I can't succeed this year. There's no way. I've lost. I was a jerk. I did not do the work I should have; I made a terrible mistake; I was arrogant; I was too self-confident, but now I know there's nothing I can do, it's the end of October

and I'm two months, a month and a half behind, and there's no way I'm going to catch up.

Now, what are the chances that next September I will come back to school if I leave school in November and stay out the rest of this year and come back to school and go into a class with the group of kids who are one year younger than I am and leave all of my colleagues that I've been in school with up till now. The chances of doing that? You know what the figures are. They're almost zero.

Now let me ask you, suppose you had a school that was organized not on an annual basis, but suppose semesters lasted three weeks. There is such a school. One of my sons goes to such a school. It's called _____ Institute of America. It trains chefs. And every three weeks is a new semester.

You know something? The day you walk into class you know that three weeks, 14 days later is the final exam. Boy does that concentrate the mind.

(Laughter.)

For teacher and for student. But, furthermore, if you should drop out for that three weeks, you know, you can drop back in every three weeks without being a year behind. And how much have you lost if you flunk? You've lost three weeks, not a whole year.

What I'm saying is you can't take the greatest

example of good education and say, " if you put everything together it'll be just right; you don't need any changes." The fact is, we've got huge numbers of dropouts, we have large numbers of kids who when they're sitting in a class and you've got 30 kids there and you try and talk to them or ask them questions, one-third of them are far ahead of you and they're bored. And another third is so far behind they've given up.

I mean, you've got all these problems. And then what do you do at the end of the year? Promote them even though they don't know? Well that's no good. Leave them back? That's no good.

Carnegie is an attempt to say that we should turn over schools to teachers so that teachers can start thinking about how to organize school to overcome these problems. And that's what it says.

The answers are not all there, but it does very, very strongly imply that just as you wouldn't get very good medical care if you had 30 patients walk into a doctor's office at the same time and he prescribed the same thing for them simultaneously, so you're probably not going to get very good education -- I mean, don't we always talk about individualizing? Three percent, we might be 35 or 37 percent.

Now, there are other fields in this country. We

still need engineers, we need doctors, we need lawyers, we need businessmen. The United States of America is not going to devote 50 percent or 40 percent of all of its college graduates to elementary/secondary school education. I mean, you could always get the ones who are at the very bottom. They can be spared. Nobody else is competing for them. But in a very real sense, Carnegie says that if you hire an awful lot more people to work at the schools that you're probably going to have to dig lower into the talent pool, and while you get more people coming into the schools, you may very well get people of lower quality.

I'll get back to you, but I want to give the people who haven't asked any questions -- all the way back there. Yeah, Doug.

MR. : A question that still bothers me and you spoke about it earlier. I've been reading the Carnegie Report, and it addresses the ills as far as the profession's concerned in terms of money, and that's fine. But still, this is a very high stress, high anxiety profession, and what I see happening with the report is that it will become an even higher stress profession with the additional kinds of things that teachers will be required to do and the additional kind of work that will be required.

But the report does not stress how we deal with that situation so that we don't push our colleagues over the edge. So what would be a response for that? How can you deal with that?

MR. SHANKER: Well, the response is that -- I think the response is one that's very clear. It would be very contractory if the report says that teachers are the professionals, teachers are the instructional leaders of the schools and, therefore, teachers should be designing and shaping and reshaping the schools in order to have the school be more effective and then say, "and by the way, we happen to have a plan here which every one of these teachers has to put into effect because we ..." I mean that would be like having the new superintendent of schools tell you what to do.

Now, it does give an outline; that is, in general form it says that schools ought to be run like every other institution in society. And every other institution is run by having a certain mix of people. Good institutions are run by a lot of the people at the local level to make the decisions by hiring good people and trusting them and giving them the tools that they need and letting them exercise judgment.

But what answers you're going to come up with, I can't give you. They can show you that doing what's

happened up to now, that there are lot of things that have not worked.

Now, what we hope to do, we're not going to put a full stamp of approval saying we agree with everything in Carnegie. It's unnecessary. Besides which, a lot that Carnegie says is, "Go out and try a lot of things." And so, what we hope to do is to say, "Look, we think this is a terrific report. It emphasizes teacher professionalism. It's motivation is good and it's got a lot of good ideas that we've agreed with for a long time; it's got some ideas that we've disagreed with for a long time. We aren't going to buy these things hook, line and sinker because a lot of them haven't been tried yet, and what we want to do is first of all say we think it's a terrific report; we're going to try to make it work, and what we're going to do is those locals that want to engage in experimentation and want to try some of these things, the AFT is going to support them and help them and we're going to monitor it very closely. And if the ideas turn out to be terrific, we'll come back at a convention and say, well, now we're going to modify our policies a little bit. If the ideas turn out not to be terrific, to be disastrous or not to make any difference at all, we'll come back and say well, it was interesting; we tried, but there's no reason to change the positions that we've had for a long time."

So I think it's very important that the position we're taking here is we're not coming here saying, "Hey, here are a bunch of people who've got the answer to everything _____." No, first of all, the findings aren't that explicit; it's a general structure. It's going to be worked out over a period of time. It's got to be viewed as a general -- do you like the idea of professionalizing teachers, do you like the idea of a national board like a national bar or a national -- every other profession has a comparable thing to that, a national exam, and then, no other profession has a bunch of principals that are no such -- there are no principals or superintendents or assistant principals in any of these other major professions; that basically there is a way that the profession has of recognizing outstanding people within the profession and other people have more decisionmaking but actually everybody within it has decisionmaking power. That's the structure.

And then you find the answers yourself.

MR. : Okay, I understand what you're saying here. I don't have any problem with that. The thing that bothers me is that we don't seem to be approaching this in a way so that we can say that whereas the things that are in the Carnegie Report may be good and should be tried, we're not coming up, it seems to me, with

a position that what is tried and presents more stress, more anxiety, pushes more of our people towards nervous breakdowns and all other kinds of ailments and heart troubles and what-have-you, that we should be monitoring for that kind of thing so that -- it just seems to me if we don't say it now, someone is going to come up later and say, "Well, you didn't say that before so why are you bringing up this question now?" And I -- it's just an area that I believe that we should address at this particular point.

MR. SHANKER: Well, I'm willing to address it. My view of it is that if you had an educational situation where you had a large number of adults, you've got paraprofessionals, you've got interns and residents, you've got college graduates who are preparing to become teachers, you've got licensed teachers and you've got board-certified teachers, and you have some kids working on individual projects with books or technology and so forth, that the major thing in relieving stress is that you no longer have to control 25 or 30 kids and force them to do the same thing at the same time and to sit still from 9:00 o'clock in the morning until 3:00 in the afternoon. This is very unnatural.

We askea bunch of little kids to do something which very few adults could do. We ask them, 30 of them to

do exactly the same thing for six straight hours, and to sit still and listen to somebody talk, and copy notes and answer questions about it and so forth. And if they missed a day or two or three days, it's very hard to figure out ways -- I mean, the stress is created -- I'll share with you a situation that I had in a different light.

Once upon a time, to make a little extra money and also because I enjoyed it, I spent my summers as a camp counselor in different types of camps. And I was at one camp where it was a day camp; that is, the kids lived with their parents in a hotel and a bungalow colony. And in the morning we, the counselors, would come down and all the kids would be thrown out of the bungalows by their parents and we took them all to have breakfast and then we started the camp activities and then we brought them back at night.

Well, guess what happened the first day? One of these kids who was out there playing in camp decided that he wanted to see his mother, and so he wandered down to the hotel where his mother was playing canasta. And he said, "Hi, Mom." And his mother looked up and she was really shocked. She thought to herself, "I'm paying for this?" That's one thing she thought. Another thing she thought was, "Hey, there's no supervision here. They haven't informed me that my child was missing. My kid could be at the bottom of the lake, could have drowned, and they

haven't informed me."

And then she looked at all the other parents saying, "Do you know where your child is? I know where mine is, but they haven't told me. They don't know where he is."

So what happened was that the next summer, instead of hiring teachers who were the counselors at this camp and there used to be one teacher to every five or six kids, the camp owner then hired high school kids and hired one counselor for every three kids. And the counselors during the opening session were told that basically there are two types of children in this world: there are good kids and there are wanderers. And wanderers are the most evil thing in the world.

(Laughter.)

Because they undermine the faith and the confidence of the parents in our institution. They won't come here any more. And we don't care how great your instruction is in nature or in swimming or in baseball or basketball; under no circumstances should any kid ever be permitted to wander back to his parents. So you've got three kids, and when you turn over your three kids to the next counselor you point out that, "Johnny is a wanderer; watch him."

Well, that is what happened. A situation where usually you have relaxation and the kids can go running

around and catch butterflies and they can catch frogs or they could take two of their buddies and walk down the road and sing, a place where you could commune with nature and be happy, all that was turned into a situation of a tremendous amount of stress because the teachers, the counselors, were now turned into guards. And their relationship with the kids was destroyed because their main job was to provide a kid who saw something nice and wanted to involve himself in that...

I submit to you that the stress that comes in school is not from the educational relationship that teachers have with kids, or the sharing their knowledge and their expertise; it comes from compelling kids to do things that are very difficult to do and that are artificial: to sit still for that many hours, to be quiet, to learn at the same. I mean, those are the things. It's the institutionalization, it's the prisonlike, it's the school board that kind of says to the superintendent, "You're going to be in a meeting every two weeks and if anything goes wrong in one of these schools, we're going to have your head," and then the superintendent says to the principal, "You keep things in order," and the principal gives you the rulebook and where everybody is kind of bearing out -- I mean, that's the situation of stress.

I don't think Carnegie's going to add to it. I

think if we -- I think one of the main things that Carnegie says is you get away from these control things where you get away from the prison things and get into a situation where your turn schools into an educational institution.

By the way, one of the major things, it says, "Don't hire any more uncertified teachers." Why do you think it says that? If it were mainly interested in babysitting and controlling kids, that's what kids are interested in now, that's why they don't care. You have a teacher shortage? Go out and hire anybody.

But if you say, "The only people who will be called teachers are people who really are qualified," you get away from that notion that schools are mainly a place of control.

MR. : I'd like to go back to the vision that you shared with us, and the comment you made about the opposition of principals. The Japanese model of doing things has a very tightly focused goal --

MR. : We can't hear him.

MR. : The Japanese model of doing things seems to have a very tight focused goal. This is a role that sometimes principals can fulfill. I think (Inaudible) -- don't get me wrong, but we may be asking for trouble and preventing some of these things from becoming implemented as soon as they might be by suggesting that the

principal's role isn't important.

I think your comment on (Inaudible) that their role is actually quite important and because why those, you know, those schools with effective principals show up as being good schools. If we could encourage principals to become -- to see us as teachers as their constituents, not the board, public administrators, et cetera, the kind of coaching, facilitator model, the issues for teachers is maybe not so much decisionmaking down the line -- that could get really boring, but it's ownership. And I don't think that principals necessarily have to be choked out the back door for us to have ownership.

MR. SHANKER: Well, I think that's a good point. The report, by the way, does not -- it leaves open the possibility that some schools would be run by teachers. It doesn't say that that's going to be the model choice. It assumes that there will continue to be principals.

I believe that it strongly assumes that management will be _____, that you won't have the huge overhead component. I think it's good for most institutions to have, you know, a good person in leadership. I don't think, however, for instance, that it's necessary for every principal in every school to make a higher salary than every teacher in that school. I think that that sends the wrong kind of message.

I don't think it's necessary for principals to have an authority relationship over teachers, any more than president of the university has an authority relationship over any faculty member of the university.

(Begin Tape 4.)

-- the smart person on top, you're going to have a disastrous system. That's what that research says. But it doesn't say that you have to have a system where the person on top is the only one who is viewed as having any brains. I don't know of a law firm in this country where one lawyer is considered the legal leader of the law firm. A good law firm will have a couple of people who are terrific at criminal law, tax law, real estate, 15 other types of -- libel law, et cetera. I don't know the law firm that has one person who is the expert in every field of law and is considered the legal leader of the law firm.

I don't know of a university where the president of the university is considered the intellectual leader of the university. I don't know of an accounting firm like that, an engineering firm. I think it's ridiculous. I mean, that concept is.

I know where you get it. If you've got a dictatorship, it's better to have a smart dictator than a dumb one. I mean, that's what that says. I agree with that. Or a more benign, benevolent dictator, et cetera.

But it doesn't say that you have to run things in a dictatorship.

I'll give you another camp experience. At one time, I was a manager and I had to hire counselors and I had to hire a music counselor. I hired somebody that was very good. A woman who was a teacher, who wrote music and who ran musical productions in school and so forth, and she was terrific, and I hired her as the music counselor.

And the opening night of camp came and all the kids were in this recreation hall and there was the music counselor at that end of the recreation hall, playing the piano and trying to get kids to sing. And at this end was a young kid who was a junior counselor. He had a banjo and he was singing songs. And there were three kids next to the music counselor, singing the songs, and 350 kids next to the guy with the banjo.

Now, I could have gone over to the guy with the banjo and said, "You don't understand that the music counselor is the musical leader of this camp. Turn off the damn banjo. Stop." Well, that would have been foolish, right? It's obvious the kids were enjoying it. She did wonderful things. She did music productions and it wasn't a waste, but the fact is that -- and if you're running a smart institution, you don't go around saying foolish things like one person is the instructor. There are a lot

of instructional leaders in a school. There are a lot of great teachers. And there are a lot of them who are good at one or two things and not good at something else, and why not -- the very concept that a school is going to fall apart that has one person as the instructional leader of the school is devastating. It's just -- it's very demeaning, for teachers count for nothing. The teachers are mere reflections of the elegance and brilliance of this one person who is the head, and they are the mere -- and if he doesn't shine on, there's just darkness in the rest of the institution.

Now, it's very flattering for principals. But it's dead wrong. And certainly neither true nor is it something -- if it were true we would have a problem accepting it as teachers.

(Laughter.)

Fortunately, it's not true.

MR. : Well, that's my point.

MR. SHANKER: Yes.

MR. : Now, we're in here, all of you have bought the massive campaign of obfuscation. They are already projecting that the recommendations of the Carnegie Report, the problems of _____ in California, were resolved in the loss of tenure, probationary protection, and so on. To be a little more specific, you're saying

that if they're refusing to distinguish between traditional merit pay schemes which we have always opposed and such concepts as mentor teachers and career ladders, which we're open to.

My question is, are the national columnists, the syndicated columnists, the educational writers, on to this campaign as yet? Are they going to come out with explanations, distinctions between what is actually said in the report and what the NEA has been claiming?

MR. SHANKER: Some of them will, some of them won't, and some of them are on the side of the NEA. So I don't think you can count on the columnists.

But look, we've been in this situation before. The NEA opposed collective bargaining at a time when they had over a million members and we had only 50,000 members. They took the wrong position. We took a tough one. A lot of teachers didn't like the idea of union. What's collective bargaining? Is it going to make us just like other workers and all that, and we won out in that, obviously. And we've got a similar campaign now.

If we're convinced that the notion of teacher professionalism is the right one, they're going to do what they've done to attack it, I think that that's just a new basis for competition with the NEA and I think that they may very well lose a lot of teachers. I think -- you know,

we're not, again, going to have an opportunity like this. It's not every day that somebody comes along and says that a profession that's been treated in a very poor way, both in terms of salaries and status and working conditions, that somebody comes along and says, "Hey, we're going to take you from where you are now, which is being treated worse than a lot of workers are, to a place where you're treated like some of the best-paid, best-treated professionals and we're going to support this," and guess who turns it down.

Now, it's not a surprise that the school boards don't like it. It's not surprising that principals don't like it. And to me, it's not a surprise that the NEA gets together with the school boards and the principals to defeat it. But there's no reason why teachers should like the fact that they're working against it.

Now, in California, State Senator Gary Hart, in terms of trying to implement the _____ Report, which is sort of the California version or earlier version of the Carnegie Report, a great report, they've got very high class size in California, and he put up money to start reducing class size and he says, "You can't do it all at once because it costs a lot of money," so he started doing it for secondary school teachers in English and social studies, I think was the proposal.

NEA said, "Unless we get it for everybody, we don't want it." So that got shot down.

Then they had money in the legislation that if teachers in a locality want a program for peer assistance, the state will provide money for it. And they went and fought against the notion that even if the local union wanted it and bargained for it, there'd be no state money for it. They opposed that.

Well, I think we ought to be able to beat them on it. Now, there's some things that are going to happen with Carnegie whether they like it or not. Carnegie Corporation has a lot of money. It's going to spend about 10 to 25 million dollars on this in the next ten days. It's going to establish a board of professional standards.

Now, you know what the NEA is saying about that? They might go along with a national board, but they're going to every state to beef up their boards because they want state standards, not national standards. Now, do you have separate state standards for surgeons in Alabama and Illinois? You don't. You have a National College of Surgeons, American College of Surgeons, so you know when you're operated on by a surgeon anywhere in the country, it's not a Mississippi surgeon, it's not a temporary surgeon or substitute surgeon, or emergency surgeon --

(Laughter.)

-- he's an American surgeon. And there are state variations in the bar exam, but basically it's a national examination, or a certified public accountant or somebody who's an architect. What's this Mickey Mouse thing that every state decides what standards they can have. Why should a teacher organization be --

By the way, do you really think you'll be able to move from one state to another and get your salary credit, your pension credit, if state standards prevail rather than national standards? You'll never do it. And the reason you can go into other professions from one state to another is that is basically a national standard, so somebody in one state doesn't have to say, "I'm taking somebody who's rock bottom in some other place."

So if we want the ability to move from one place to another, to have a national market, to have states compete for us, to have some states say, "Come on down here and we'll give you more money, because we favor education," will you be able to make one -- a state that's treating teachers poorly pay for their mistreatment of teachers because you have a free market. Right now, you're stuck. You have to have a national standard.

Look. They're taking a wrong point of view on this. They're taking a point of view which is against teachers, just as they were against teachers when they took

views against collective bargaining. And we're going to have to beat them on it. And I think we will.

We've got to get to their members. Gotta get to our members. I mean, first we have to focus on it. One of the reasons why we're here.

MR. : I think opportunity -- you know, you said that word a minute ago, is the key. I mean, locals can take these concepts. You don't have to buy into anything you don't want to buy into in terms of a specific plan whether it's peer appraisal or whether it's career ladder or whatever it is, but the opportunity's enormous.

I can envision taking not only the Carnegie Report but the Committee for Economic Development's Report, all business people talk to their school boards to argue against and cite the kinds of recommendations they're making about teachers being able to make decisions about having adequate preparation and conferencing time, about having clerical assistance, less non-teaching duties, putting them into radio ads and putting them into literature and putting them into letters to the editor and press releases, and creating a whole climate in the community where it's pretty tough for the school board to say no to things that they have sat at the table and said no to for a million years. It's not as if these are new ideas. Some of them are simply old bargaining goals put in

a new contract, and that's why the opportunity is so enormous. That's what I look forward to about all this, and I think the other business about the NEA opposing it or maybe the temptations of our own members to oppose it, I think some of the arguments I've heard opposing the professionalization, differentiated kinds of responsibilities for teachers, "Well, that's going to undermine union solidarity."

We take that view, I think what's going to happen is teachers are going to view us as trying to hold on to an artificial kind of power, holding back, you know, "We want to remain white collar proletarians because that way we're all alike and it's easier to have union solidarity." We're not going to be seen by teachers as the people that are trying to get them a better break. Up till now, obviously, that's what we have been, but they're not going to see us that way. They're going to see us as holding back progress and holding back something that they naturally are going to want to say yes to.

But the key is up to negotiated locally, because concept is one thing, execution is, you know, most of the battle. You gotta keep control over it and make sure these kinds of things are jointly administered, if not teacher administered, jointly controlled.

MR. SHANKER: Very well put. You gotta remember,

you got a differentiation now. You got teachers and you got principals and you got superintendents. I mean, there's a lot of it. The question is, should you keep most of this inside of teaching. Should you create a possibility for advancement among people who continue to work with students. Or is the only way to advance, to get out of teaching. It's there now. It's just a question of -- and there's nothing we can do about stopping that.

But we can certainly say that advancement consists of professional recognition among people who continue to work with kids rather than people who abandon them and go off to do purely administrative work.

MR. : All, the question -- and everybody's been sort of skirting around and nobody's come right out and said it yet, the thing -- in fact, by the way, I've been in it a long time. Teaching 29 years, union officer 23 years, negotiated seven contracts, about six or seven collective bargaining elections, a strike, the whole nine yards.

I read in the Chicago papers last night, Al, and the preface to my remark, I don't know who said it but somebody once said, a smart person, "Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow. Don't walk behind me, I may not lead. Just walk beside me and be my friend."

So in the context of that, the comment that the

sharpshooters here in Chicago attributed to you last night, that maybe the time has come where we should -- they didn't use the word "abandon," but that's the general idea, the traditional union objectives, et cetera, et cetera, in the hope of achieving professionalism.

And the thing that bothers me a little bit, and again I'm not under fire --

MR. SHANKER: Let me stop you. It bothered me too, but I didn't say it.

MR. : Aha!

MR. SHANKER: And the reporter is here at the convention. She's a very good reporter, she's done very good stories, and she says that her story was cut and therefore it came out distorted. That came up at the press conference today and it was set straight and I hope it keeps set straight.

MR. : Well then you could say you're saying that ain't so, Al, right?

MR. SHANKER: It ain't so.

(Laughter.)

MR. : Okay. Anyway --

MR. SHANKER: The only thing about what we've done is, you know, without repudiating or changing anything we've done, we'd never be sitting at the table talking about professionalism if we didn't build a strong union, if

we didn't have collective bargaining, if we didn't have contracts, if we didn't have strong political action. They wouldn't -- I mean, we wouldn't count. We've been in here an hour and a half and I'm saying to myself, "Didn't anybody see that in the paper? Are we all going to sit here like good little boys and girls and nobody's going to jump up say, 'Al, why did you say that?'"

MR. : None of the others bought the Tribute, because it's on strike.

(Laughter & applause.)

MR. : Well, in any event, it ain't so.

(Laughter.)

MR. SHANKER: Glad you used the microphone there. (Inaudible) subscribe to a clipping service.

(Laughter.)

That's how I saw it.

MR. : My question pertains to comments by you in response to two previous speakers and questions that they asked. I'm going to operate on the assumption that this convention will adopt in all or part the substance of the document that is the AFT Task Force Report on Reform of Teaching and Reform in Education. And I'm a little less concerned about philosophy at the moment, and a little more concerned about tactics.

If, for example, we are interested in establishing

national standards, how is it that we proceed, how do we go forward in light of the fact that an organization that is larger than ours presided over by someone who is a signator to the report and yet had the brass to issue a disclaimer and a minority report of one, really, in light of the overwhelming sentiment of the Carnegie Report, how do we face it, what do we do as an organization, how does the AFT go implement what is likely to become organizational policy?

MR. SHANKER: Very good point. There are some things that require sort of a majority of the people in the country to go forward, and there are some things that don't. And since nobody ever really voted on collective bargaining when New York City decided to go for collective bargaining 25 years ago. I know when New York City got it and when Philadelphia got it and when Boston got it and a few other places got it, and the NEA was saying unprofessional and all that; meanwhile, they saw us getting contracts and getting good provisions and salaries and all of a sudden they started losing a lot of members. And after a while they said, "Well, we're still against collective bargaining, but we're for professional negotiations." And you all remember that.

And they ultimately modified their stand. There are some things in this world which you can advance without

having a majority, which you can advance by creating models that work. And if they work for us and a lot of people like them and if their people are looking at them and they like them, they will raise a big fuss. They'll either come over to us and say, "We want you to represent us instead of them," or they'll make so much noise in their own organization that they will compel a change of policy.

Now, there are some things you can't do; you've got to wait for. A national board is being put into place. We're going to cooperate on that. It's going to take three or four years to have national exams because we don't want to junk the exam that somebody's going to invent in three days that nobody would have any faith in. It takes a long time to develop something that's really good, so that's going to take time.

However, there are other pieces in here that you could start doing. Tom Mooney spoke a few minutes ago, he's done some -- he's turned around whole cities that used to be very anti the teacher, by doing things that many of them in this report, some of the ideas we got from his local, from other locals. I mean, some of these things that are being done, they're not being done in too many places yet, but you can negotiate some of these things. You can stand for them publicly. You can start -- there will probably be 40 or 50 districts in this country that

have some system of peer assistance, some beginnings of an internship program. There will be places that begin -- take one of the items of the task force. Now, it's revolutionary for a teacher organization to do it. It says that if you have an area of shortage that a school district can hire an -- on the salary schedule at a higher price than the minimum. Well, people aren't going to like that if they're not -- by the way, many -- area shortage will be objectively defined. We're not saying math teachers. Two years from now you may well have a shortage of English teachers or social -- you will, if the students in college do what they say they're going to do, which is they're not coming in sufficient numbers, but what's the alternative to not paying a higher -- on schedule. What's the alternative? The alternative is to hire an unqualified person.

These are things that can be negotiated. There are things in there that you can put into place, and I can't do it while I'm standing here, but the fact is that you will have -- there are two videotapes. We've done one on Toledo on peer assistance and peer review. That's here at the convention and we're not going to show it to everybody, but it will be available in a hall where you can watch it. It's about 20 minutes.

There's another one on the Dade County system of

merit schools. You'll have a chance to watch that. There'll be another one that comes out on paraprofessionals and career ladders in general, but mainly with paraprofessionals with that one.

We're going to take 15 or 20 ideas, we're going to go into Hartford, we're going to go into Cincinnati, we're going to go to different places where you tell us we're doing this, and we're going to interview teachers, we're going to interview your members, we're going to interview people who like it and people who don't like it, and we're going to disseminate these all over.

So I think the important thing to do in the next couple of years is take those things that you think you can do, those parts that you can believe in -- you can't do it all at once. Flexner made his report in 1910 and that hasn't -- didn't become a profession in 1911. We are talking about a process that's going to take a long time. It's not going to be completed until after all of us are gone. We're setting something into place that will move over a long period of time.

Start with anything in there that you like, that you think you can do, that you feel your members will buy into. Don't try and sell it to everybody in your whole local. Suppose you got hundreds of people, but the people in one school like it. There are things you can do in one

school. You may have a new building opening up. Talk to your board of ed and your superintendent and say, "Look, a lot of teachers don't like this but some of them would. Suppose we got the people who are excited and let them go into this new school and do it there?" We have a number of school districts across the country that are now saying that next year or the year after we will allow your local to take over one school. You'll run it. And the teachers there, they're not going to tell everybody to do it. They're going to say, "How many people want to work harder, work more and build a school that they are going to design?"

Not everybody's going to want to do it. There'll be some people who say, "Look, I'm happy where I am. I'm doing a good job, I enjoy what I'm doing." Nothing wrong with that. You know, go back to your -- and there'll be schools like yours around for a long time and there's nothing wrong with giving teachers and parents and communities that want that, the option of doing it. It's our job to create something that's better. If it's better, you'll come around and say, "Okay." If it isn't better, you'll say, "Well, I'm stuck with what I have," but we are not telling everybody, "Next year, the button gets pressed and every district and every school and every teacher is under the new plan." Not so. It's a process of growth.

We'll get back to you now.

(Begin Tape 5.)

MR. : I accept regretfully the demographic argument that you've posed is unanswerable and has to be answered. Unanswerable in terms of excellence next year. I have another question, and that relates to my (Unintelligible) that has a -- as an advocate of teacher interest, at least in my community.

I'm very concerned about the nature of this national exam. I would be even more concerned if I learned that a dominant role in it were to be in the hands of the teacher educators, basing their content of the exam on the latest shibboleths enshrined in compelling research findings. I would want that committee, if I had my druthers and was Czar of Public Education in this country, I would like that committee to be dominated by experienced classroom teachers, recognized for excellence by their peers, not by people from the academic community _____ classroom teaching, writing various notions of what excellence in teaching is, based on their own academic interests and directing their own search.

That committee, it seems to me and that's just as important, I would like to see it not merely be a paper and pencil test, but have to do with what a teacher does in an

actual classroom.

MR. SHANKER: Well, I think the question -- there's certainly going to be a very major teacher involvement and there'll be involvement by teacher educators. There'll also be involvement by the people who are involved in making up examinations for other professions and who understand what some of the problems are that have come up in those professions.

It's not intended that it be solely paper and pencil. A major point of the induction process will be an internship or residency, something which is an evaluation of actual experience, but the notion of what should ultimately be on the examination is please don't take any current teacher exam as a model for that. They're not very good exams. They're very bad. In fact, they're so bad that any person, whether trained to be a teacher or not could walk in off the street and if they're reasonably well educated, could pass the exam. They couldn't do that with a bar exam or medical exam or accountant's exam, but most reporters on most newspapers, they do it every once in a while, you know; they walk in and they take the NTE and they pass with flying colors, which shows you that it's not a teaching exam.

We would hope that the examination would be one which essentially tests a person's knowledge and judgment.

You have a lot of things that other professional exams, where there's no single right answer. The important thing is to see, are you able to think and bring to bear the kinds of thought process that would make you a good member of the firm, whatever that is, you know, whatever kind of profession that is.

Now, remember, that we're not thinking of teaching now as consisting only of lecturing to a group of 20 or 30 students. Last year, a book came out called "Becoming A Nation of Readers." It's a compilation of all of the most important research on what makes kids read or not read and what the strategies are, and it's a terrific book. In any other profession, if something like that came out and if you, a practitioner, didn't know what was in it, you could be found guilty of malpractice, because if somebody discovers some important piece of information or technology that helps to make your job more successful and you decide that you're not going to look at it or take it into account, you're in serious trouble.

And yet, practically nobody in the world of education -- most principals haven't looked at it, most teachers don't know about it, most superintendents haven't looked at it, and there are very few courses in American schools of education where even a person coming in tomorrow devotes a course to this very important topic. Now, that

tells you something.

I would hope that a system of examinations would make sure that the people who are to be board-certified teachers have the information as to what are the strategies and what is the knowledge base in this field. And once the examination is there, you can be sure that higher education will respond to the exam, and it also will certainly take into account in their education of prospective lawyers they it may not tell every professor, "Make sure that you answer the following three questions," but they do take into account the question of are we going to have everybody who graduates from our school fail the bar exam. I mean, that's an important issue.

Or medical schools. It doesn't mean you spend all your time with questions and answers from the last exam. Any good school would not do that. But once you have a good examination which does raise the -- I mean, talks about the real research base, that it should be that the exam is made up of those things the colleges now do. It should be made up of those things that colleges should be doing. And by setting the exam up, you essentially give information to people in the professional schools as to what they ought to be doing. That's one of the reasons it's such a powerful tool. Potentially. If it's a good exam.

If it's a lousy exam, it will die of its own weight. People will yawn and they will say, "Look, they spent all that money and it doesn't mean a thing; anybody who passes that is not a better teacher, doesn't know any more," and it will be a lost opportunity. But remember, it's like the -- when the bar exam first came into effect it had lots of lawyers in the country and none of them had padded the bar. People started taking it voluntarily, to show that they had this national certification.

Eventually, 50 states voluntarily said, "Hey, we want to protect the people of our state and we want to require the bar for anybody to practice." The same will happen with this teacher exam. If it's lousy, it's going to disappear. If it's a good exam, people are going to take it and your district in the future is going to say, "We're only going to hire teachers who are board-certified," and other outstanding districts will, and a couple of good states will do the same thing, and 50 years from now you'll have 50 states that will all require that as a basis for entering, because it will be a slow process. Every state will do it in its own time. But if it's a good exam, eventually that will happen.

We have time for one or two more. Yes.

MR. : The national office is kind enough to sell me 40 of these at \$2.00 apiece, and I hope

that wasn't a mistake.

MR. SHANKER: No, it's not a mistake. As far as the NEA is not giving a single copy of that report to any of its delegates, who are all discussing the report but nobody will have the report, whereby we bought thousands of them, we negotiated a very good rate, and we're going to make them available at what they cost us, to all the locals, so if you want to have discussions, you want to give school board members, parents, and everything else, we are in touch with Carnegie and we're getting it from them, at a good rate and we'll get it to you at a good rate, but I think that's one of the things we could do is to engage in a period of discussion and generate some interest and excitement all across the country on this.

MR. : I know this won't be easy, but to summarize something like this. My concern is, I think those 40 copies, two-thirds of the people I give them to are my leadership will read it over the summer, but for the other 7,000 teaches in the school district, could you explore some of the ways that you plan, or maybe some of the people -- to get feedback as to how we think we can get this message to all those people out there, not only our own members but especially the NEA members of my district and the other districts, in a way that we can effectively communicate to them and in a way they have time to get into

it.

I'm concerned that it is a bit long and I know it's difficult to summarize, but I'm hopeful you can share with us some of the plans we have for getting the story out.

MR. SHANKER: Well, we're going to try and do some videotapes, we're going to do some audiotapes, and we'll probably do -- we haven't decided yet, but we'll probably do a series of regional conferences, again, across the country. We're going to try and see if we can get some network time. We're trying to get Carnegie interested in doing something maybe on C-span or something like -- not everybody gets that, it's on the cable areas, but we will do everything that we can to disseminate.

There are schools, even NEA school districts, I've been invited to be a conference speaker -- this is the first time in all the years, my history of the AFT, where I've been invited to be a conference speaker in a NEA district, to speak to the entire faculty on Carnegie.

And so first they invited me and then the school administration called rather sheepishly, saying that we had to withdraw the invitation because the NEA has put pressure on us, and then we said to them, "Well, invite the NEA too, you know, this is a professional issue; I'm not coming in there -- it's not a collective bargaining issue," and so

they invited the NEA too and the NEA said okay, so I will be -- and I'm going to write the NEA district, saying "Here are a series of issues that will affect the entire profession. I'd like an opportunity to talk to you."

And I've been speaking; I've spoken at about nine conventions of state school boards associations. By the way, a lot of school board members like this. A lot of principals like it. A lot of them are not happy with the way schools are going right now. We will get -- I mean, the official point of view of associations is one thing, but we -- look, this has come to us very fast, that came out May 13th, we've had executive council meeting for preparing for the convention, I don't know that what we will end up with will satisfy everybody. As you say, it's complex. This is not one of those things you can sloganize.

But we will do everything we can to get question and answer things out, to get videotapes out, to get audiotapes, to get stuff on the air, to make it -- have regional conferences, and to do everything that we possibly can to get this discussion going.

And it's very nice, by the way, for once not to be treated like a bunch of children. It's easy -- you know, you can put out a report that has 17 recommendations and it's very easy, but you know that nobody's going to change

teaching from what it is now, and schools from what it is now to what they ought to be, without something that's very sophisticated. This is sophisticated. It could be wrong in a lot of ways, but it's well thought out and I think one of the things we can be proud of is the kind of discussion it's generation -- I mean, look, isn't this great? Here we are. I bet that there's not a superintendent in this country who's spent as much time discussing educational issues as we have this afternoon, over the last five years, right?

(Laughter.)

MR. : I'd like to make one observation with regard to the NEA. I wouldn't worry at all about their posture on this issue because -- well, a) they've gone against collective bargaining, but b) they are such a staff-oriented organization, they do not want teachers to be free to make decisions. I want to give you an example.

I work in a district in Indiana, Hammond, Indiana, where we've negotiated a building-based decisionmaking process that is opposed by the NEA because it frees teachers involved -- not only involved, but to develop ownership of decisionmaking, which is a recommendation from Carnegie. And I think that's one of the reasons that we're all in the AFT, because of local autonomy. We can develop locally many of the concepts in this report and do it in a

way that will allow us to build building blocks around the nation without the decision coming from President Shanker or even our convention, that it's okay to behave this way. It's up to us as faculty and teachers, and I think we have the wherewithall to cause a big collective bargaining experience.

So I wouldn't want our convention to get worried or hung up on posturing with the NEA. I think we're right on this issue and they're wrong, and time will tell.

(Applause.)

MR. SHANKER: By the way, I would urge you to get copies of the Hammond Agreement (Inaudible) negotiated a procedure whereby teachers are able to improve new ways of involvement, and it's a very significant addition to the collective bargain process, and they're doing some great things in addition to the videotapes that I've talked about that we're doing on these other things, we will be getting the Hammond to share their experience, which we didn't know about until very recently, Hammond people were just nice enough to come to Washington a few weeks ago. We asked them to come and spend some time with us share that, and here they were doing it and we didn't know about it, and they've developed a very good technique for adding onto an agreement developing -- and they really don't want educational policies nailed down to contract in the usual

way, because you want to be able to change them if you find they're not right, and they have found a way of protecting teacher rights, protecting the collective bargaining agreement and making it an extension of their bargaining process, and it's very valuable and very good experience.

MR. : Mr. President Shenker, and one of the questions I would like to raise is the position that the national has concerning vocational teachers, VTI employees. Vocational people who have become teachers through a certification process that says that they were successful craftsmen in their industry and then were elected as teachers and they came into their educational job through that expertise.

With that in mind, I'm looking to the Carnegie Report and asking myself, well how is an appropriate address to be made to those people, and I'm wondering who on your staff then would be able to provide certain direction as to the relevance of that Carnegie Report to those of us who may not be in that _____ folder and in fact, many vocational teachers have never had college training, but they seem to be successful in providing the skills necessary to their students very successfully. In fact, some of them have been singled out as quality teachers, successful teachers, but they're not paid any more than any one else.

So, with that in mind, is there any comments that you have to share with us for the vocational teacher as far as this report is concerned?

MR. SHANKER: No, I can't. I can just say that you have to recognize in the report that there are sort of three levels. What you get from the state is no longer considered -- under this report, which again, the state has a license, and that's sort of the standard where the state says that we have in some way examined this person and this person is able and is not going to do any harm. It's kind of a minimum level. It's a minimum level.

And then you have board certification, which is a recognition by the profession of two levels of excellence, and the people who are doing the research for the certification are now going to have to say, "What do you do for special ed, what do you do for folk ed, what do you do for all sorts of early childhood," I don't know how they're going to resolve that.

But they will essentially have to come up with procedures for all the people who are working in the schools. There's no sense in leaving anybody out. How are they going to do it? I don't know.

MR. : Then the report really doesn't address that area.

MR. SHANKER: The report just says -- it says that

it should be done for teachers. That's all. And it does not -- it has a few sentences about what the nature of the thing ought to be. As long as this is and as complicated as this is, this in itself is a shell, a fragment. If you were really to do -- if this gets done five years from now you'll have four or five volumes about all the things that people had to do in order to create it. Very complex.

Yes?

MS. : Mr. President --

MR. : Al, how often (Inaudible).

MR. : All right, I just -- I'll call the AFT _____ Education Committee. I just asked a brother to come to the workshop on vocational education committee will address that, talk about it, and offer some ideas, and I'll try to elicit some ideas you have and share that with other vocational education teachers.

MR. SHANKER: Okay, one last one.

MR. : This deals with the national board. Who would be on the national board, and how would they be selected, and when do you expect this national board to take effect?

MR. SHANKER: Well, it's like -- a good question, and I'll answer it the best I can, but you know, whenever you start something, the question is who gets it -- eventually, you're going to have advanced board-certified

teachers and there'll be a lot of them and there'll be meetings and conferences and other board-certified teachers will elect people to this board. That's what will happen eventually.

But right now, there isn't any board-certified teacher because there's no board, there's no examination. So how do you get the thing started; it's a chicken and egg thing.

What they're going to do is they're going to take the same people who were on the task force and they're going to add classroom teachers to it so the classroom teachers are either 50 percent or a majority, and then that group's going to be the planning group and that group's going to figure out who should be the first group. So that's -- you now know all that I know, and both the NEA and AFT have nominated a certain number of classroom teachers, I think they nominated 11, we nominated 15, but they could pick other people. They don't have to stick with the nominees. So that's round two, and that's all I know.

I have a second meeting now with representatives of higher education locals, so I want to thank -- let me get kind of a sense of what your sense is here. How many people, after listening to all of this, think it's all utter nonsense and we ought to not pay much attention to it

and oppose it? Will be very skeptical about it. I mean, feel free to --

MR. : Al, we all want quality. Now it's time to put it into practice.

MR. SHANKER: All right, how many think it's pretty good and will _____ going to take a very positive attitude toward it and work toward it? All right, how many are somewhere in between those two poles? Okay, fine. We're going to have a good convention.

(Laughter & applause.)

Thank you.

(End of proceedings as recorded.)