

The AFT Leads the Revolution in Education

(Louisiana Federation of Teachers)

November 24, 1965

Charles Cogen, President

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

\*\*\*\*\*

At the White House Conference last summer, Sidney Marland, Superintendent of Schools in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, introduced his remarks with the following anecdote: "It is said that George Washington, soon after his ascendancy to the presidency in the early days of our country, sent Gouverneur Morris to France to take a look at Louis XVI and see what kind of a person he was. Gouverneur Morris reported back this message, 'Louis XVI, Mr. President, is a good man, as despots go, but he inherited a revolution'." Superintendent Marland then went on to say, "I think that in 1965, President Johnson has sent John Gardner into the city schools of our land and said, 'What kind of people are the superintendents?' and John Gardner is saying to the President, 'They are good men, as despots go, but they've inherited a revolution'."

Dr. Marland went on to enumerate a number of aspects of this current revolution, and among them he listed "a search for increased influence and autonomy by teachers."

We are, indeed, in the midst of the greatest revolution in the history of education. It is a revolution sparked by a revived teacher union movement and fanned to a flame by the rivalry between the AFT and the NEA. It is a revolution epitomized by the following item in the Wall Street Journal of June 14, 1965. The headline was "Militant Educators", and the first paragraph read: "School teachers--once regarded as 'underachievers' in the labor movement--are rapidly moving to the head of the class in collective bargaining."

1. Concept of Teacher Revolution
  - a. Marland quote \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Wall Street Journal quote \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Teacher Unionism: control by teachers
3. CB & continuous consultation (read UFT contract preamble)
4. Salaries: leadership of AFT in the 20 largest cities (see statistical table)
5. Working conditions
  - a. Class size
  - b. Elimination of non-teaching chores
  - c. Expansion of unassigned periods
  - d. Duty-free lunch periods
6. Fringe benefits
  - a. Extended sick leave
  - b. Sabbatical leave for rest
  - c. Health insurance benefits
  - d. New York Cities welfare fund
7. Security
  - a. Union security
  - b. Individual security
8. Professional matters
  - a. Detroit - control of discipline
  - b. Philadelphia - extended services program
  - c. New York - <sup>(1)</sup> MESP (More Effective Schools Program) -  
through consultation

- (2) Non-professional aides
- (3) Greater use of specialists
- 9. The influence on teacher personality
- 10. The Benefits to Children
- 11. The NEA as a stumbling block:
  - a. Confusion
  - b. Domination by administrators & consequences
  - c. Lincoln Park, Michigan contract
- 12. The AFT & Labor
  - a. Influence on our policies and ideals
  - b. Mutual assistance
- 13. Conclusion -
  - a. The Louisiana situation

There has been hardly anything more stimulating to all of us in the AFT national office during the past year than the organizing progress we have been making in Louisiana. Not only is the New Orleans local on the threshold of achieving collective bargaining, but also you have finally achieved an effective Louisiana State Federation of Teachers.

Time and time again we have achieved a measure of organizing success in a school district within a state, only to have all our efforts washed out by some situation on the state level which is beyond our power to control. This must not happen here in Louisiana.

Your state AFL-CIO is one of the best in the nation. It is gaining in strength every day. The teachers of Louisiana need your effective statewide organization, and Victor Bussie, one of the best men in the entire AFL-CIO movement, and the other state AFL-CIO leaders stand ready to help you in your efforts. The AFT has given first priority to Louisiana in its southern organizing program.

We regard Louisiana as our prime hope for teacher unionism below the Mason-Dixon Line, and we intend to give you all the assistance you can possibly use. I know that you will take whatever action is necessary to establish our union on a firm basis ----- and by that I mean not only firm in its financial structure but firm in its moral structure. You have organized on an integrated basis, and you are in keeping with the forward movement of our times.

b. We welcome you in joining the AFT as the leader in the great revolution in education, which I have described.

( and so, I officially present to you the state charter, with every wish for your and our success.)