

Gratitude to participants. [C T C & CIO]  
Sacrifice... but Saturday well spent.  
Organized Labor and The School Crisis

Oct 1951

Summary of Concluding Remarks by  
President Charles Cogen

Today's conference is illustrative of organized labor's historical concern with the advancement of public education. Its timeliness is underlined by the significant fact that President George Meany's labor Day message this year was devoted exclusively to the crisis in our schools. [Quote p. 1]

Our panel speakers have given us a good "inside look" at the New York City schools. To complete the picture, they have indicated the importance of the Teachers Guild's program to organized labor as well as to the community at large. For it can be said unhesitatingly that what is good for the schools is good for organized labor.

First, in its insistence upon improved educational facilities and curriculum, ours is a program to help your children become better citizens and happier individuals, and to eradicate the flight of juvenile delinquency in our community. Our program for integration along sound and constructive lines is in harmony with one of the prime community objectives of the AFL-CIO. In a tangible way, our school construction program is calculated to provide, at the same time, both decent and uncrowded school buildings for America's youth and expanded employment for America's workers. [Quote Meany - p. 3]  
In these days of anti-labor propaganda and right to work campaign, the extent to which the Guild philosophy permeates our schools, among teachers and students alike, will greatly enhance

the likelihood of an enlightened attitude toward the problems of labor-management relations. [Ref. Fushewitz: teacher with anti-labor bias - I] All of this, in turn, points up the need for a "union label teacher", that is, a Guild member, in every classroom.

[CALL GIRL]

I am anxious that this discussion conference end on an activist note.  
Where, then, do we go from here?

Today's session is one more evidence that the Teachers Guild and the rest of organized labor in New York City are in business together.

This is a two-way street. The Guild has been happy to be of service to the educational programs of some of its sister-unions. But the subject of today's conference calls for action in the other direction, ~~and so I want to limit my remaining remarks to the object of that is~~, an extension and an intensification of the efforts of organized labor on behalf of the schools, and in particular, through cooperation with the Teachers Guild.

I offer this 5-point program -- realistic & minimal  
One: Every unionist parent should be an active member of his parents association. [The Siegel will agree --]

Two: Union educational programs should include adequate information about the problems of our schools and how to solve them. [UPA, TG, ...]

Three: Union community services should extend into the area of training for leadership in parents associations and assisting parents in their contacts with the schools. [If union community services can deal with PTA, charity, drives, + contacts with welfare agencies, it would seem appropriate and useful to deal with educational agencies.]  
Four: See to it that teachers in your families join the Teachers Guild, or at least help us to contact them.

Five: It is high time that the Board of Education of the largest labor city in America include a labor representative in its membership. [If this meeting were to accomplish nothing else, it will have been highly successful if it results in a direct campaign toward that goal.]

[We badly need the labor point of view - dynamic, progressive and democratic - on our fossilized Board of Ed.  
Some months ago I turned over to Brother van Arsdale a summary statement of the extent of labor representation on Boards of Ed. in the major cities of the U.S. We are, in this respect, a backward area.]

The role of organized labor can be a determining factor in helping to solve the serious crisis in our schools. We are hopeful that today's conference has given impetus to this much - needed activity, and we look forward to further cooperation.

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[Quote Sidney Hertzberg, L. S. D. Memorandum, p3]

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