Denounces Racial Bias In Education

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The early efforts of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO on behalf of social justice seem small in comparison to the massive legislative attacks and giant demonstrations of today, but they were taken by men guided by principle and courage, not by opportunity.

As early as 1931 the American Federation of Teachers denounced racial discrimination in education.

AFT SPECIAL GUEST — At the 1969 American Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO convention in New Orleans some of the members talked to Thomas Bradley (second from left), first black to run for mayor of Los Angeles. AFT delegates are (from left) Charles Smith, president of the Gary, Ind. AFT local; Bradley; Richard Parrish, AFT vice president, and David Selden, AFT president.

In 1934 and again in 1938, the AFT moved its convention from one hotel to another, and in the latter year, the convention site from one city to another, to allow its black delegates equal access to all convention facilites.

Delegates to the AFT convention would not permit such indignities as requiring black delegates to ride the hotel freight elevators to and from the hotel convention hall.

In 1948 The Democratic Human Relations Committee of the AFT called for an end to segregation in interstate transportation.

In 1949 the Executive Council of the AFT pleaded unsuccessfully with its southern locals to join with black locals.

In 1951 the AFT decided that no new charters would be issued to locals that practiced racial discrimination in their membership. It asked existing locals to include nondiscrimination clauses in their constitution.

At the 1953 national convention an amendment to the constitution was passed that said: "the practice of any local in limiting its membership on account of race or color shall render its charter void."

Together with more than 100 international presidents of the AFL-CIO then president of the AFT, Carl J. Megel, signed the Joint Statement of Union Program for Fair Practices.

This program sponsored by the President's Committee for Equal Employment Opportunity, chaired by Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson, called for a comprehensive attack on all aspects of discrimination within unions and organized places of employment.

The public schools of Prince Edward County in Virginia were closed in order to avoid a court order to integrate. In their place private schools for white only were opened, leaving the Negro children of that area without schooling.

An investigation was conducted by Richard Parrish and Frank Sullivan, national AFT vice-presidents, and resulted in a positive action being taken by union teachers in the adjacent areas.

More than 50 dedicated teachers, without remuneration for their time and talent, operated Freedom Schools for these neglected children during the summer of 1963.

Expenses were to be paid by the AFT.

Due to the action of these unselfish teachers, the Federal government, through some private groups in Virginia in the Fall of 1963, opened schools on a private basis for any child in the community whose parents could not afford other schooling.

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The 1963 convention of the AFT in New York City adopted resolutions supporting peaceful demonstrations and President Kennedy's program for civil rights.

After the convention, many AFT leaders and members participated with 250,000 other citizens in the Civil Rights March on Washington.

The four motor coaches of teachers leaving New York City following the convention were led by AFT President Megal, Local 2 President Charles Cogen and AFT Vice-president H. Johann Eschbach from Cedar Rapids.

AFT teachers were impressed by the quite dignity and determination of their fellow marchers.

In 1969 at the annual AFT convention delegates picketed two New Orleans bars which refused to serve black delegates.

Each local of the AFT has been urged by the executive council to establish a civil rights committee.

Only by the presence of a functioning civil rights committee at the local level will the positive AFT policy on integration be turned into effective action.

While the AFT position remains unexcelled among educational organizations in the area of civil rights and while the union looks with pardonable pride upon its progressive past, the AFT and its incumbent President, David Selder, realize that it must build constantly and more rapidly upon a history of advancement.

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Black students active at Frostburg college

FROSTBURG ,Md. — Black students in institutions of higher education today are confronted with numerous challenges but have more vantage points than ever before.

Frostburg State College is availing itself of all opportunities to offer the black student chances for success. The college has recently been cited in a study made of the Maryland State Colleges as having used extraordinary measures in the effort to Ford Foundation to reorganize the schools — money! cess. Financial aid has been expanded; the curriculum is being changed to meet the needs of black students; extensive dialogue is taking place between black students, faculty, administration, white students and the townspeople for the benefit of all involved; black students have effected positive changes in the attitudes and practices of the college community.

One of the assets of the college is its scenic location which provides a mountain resort atmosphere. Students at Frostburg who are from urban areas enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of the campus and of the town

The picturesque mountains, bathed with color in the autumn and frequently with snow during the winter season, foster varied activities such as fishing, boating, camping and skiing.

The college campus is basically the center of the town's activity. Many students atate that this is one feature which helped them to make their choice for matriculation. Frostburg is located 150 miles from Baltimore and Washington and 100 miles from Pittsburgh.

A recent visit to the campus of Frostburg was rewarding to a Neighborhool Youth Corps group from Baltimore. After a tour of the campus and facilities, several students expressed an interest in making application.

Other groups are scheduled for campus visits this year. Any group interested in such a visit should contact the admissions office

Black students, as well as other students at Frostburg, are of varied backgrounds. Maryland residents are from the Eastern Shore, the city of Baltimore, suburban Washington, suburban Baltimore, as well as other areas of the state.

Some students also come from other states and foreign countries. There is evidence of this in the varied points of view with which black students approach challenges, problems and social and political intercourse.

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