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Should teachers become affiliated with the American Federation of Labor?

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Boston University
Should teachers become affiliated with the American Federation of Labor?
BOSTON UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

THESIS

SHOULD TEACHERS BECOME AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

Submitted by

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(B. S. Colby College, 1928)

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Master of Education

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CHAPTER I.

Reasons for the Study

The question of teachers affiliating with organized labor has caused considerable discussion since 1916 when the American Federation of Teachers affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Many feel that the teachers are public servants of all the people and as such should not align themselves with any one group. One of the purposes of this study will be an attempt to determine whether it is to the advantage or disadvantage of the classroom teacher to be connected with a labor organization. Do the teachers need to unionize to better their conditions; or are the professional organizations that exist at present capable of helping and protecting their interests? Are the teachers receiving the remuneration they are entitled to receive for teaching the future citizens of our country? If they are not receiving fair wages for their services is unionism the remedy? If the salary scale for teachers is raised will that be a guarantee of better teachers or will it mean that inefficient teachers will receive higher wages? One of the objections often voiced against unionism is that protection is given to inefficient workers and forces the employer to pay high wages for unsatisfactory work. The payment of higher wages alone is no guarantee that the schools will be supplied with superior teachers. Perhaps higher wages may, however, induce better qualified persons to enter and remain in the teaching profession. The claim is often made that competent teachers leave teaching for
better paying positions in other fields.

If the teachers affiliate with organized labor can they receive the help and support of labor without giving up something in return? Will it be necessary for the teachers to accept labors' platforms and policies? There are some features of trade-unionism, such as the strike, that would not be adaptable to teacher unions. A strike of school teachers would very likely be a detriment to public education.

In the long run the interests of the teachers and the interests of the school are one. What harms the school must sooner or later harm the teachers; what benefits the school also benefits the teachers. No policy which betters the economic and social status of the teachers to the detriment of the educational efficiency of the school will be permanently acceptable to the general public. Any plan to correct the economic wrongs of the teachers must first be scrutinized with regard to its effect upon the schools. If affiliation of the teachers with organized labor will help the schools thru helping the teachers, perhaps such a move would be a good thing. If, on the other hand, it helps the teachers, but works against the schools such a move would not be desirable.

A second reason for the study is to determine whether the quality of teaching is improved or retarded by an organization of teachers affiliated with labor. The pupils in our public schools are the ones to be considered when any action concerning the schools is contemplated. The schools exist for the children, and not to make jobs
for teachers and others. The children in our schools come from the homes of all classes of people. While it may be true that a majority of the pupils are workers' children, other people also send their children to the schools. Will the manufacturers, the business people, and the professional group want their children to be taught by teachers connected with labor? The teachers may gain a better understanding of their pupils thru closer contacts with the parents; but perhaps the result can be obtained by developing the present parent-teachers associations.

Many feel that if the teachers are affiliated with a labor organization their point of view on social and economic questions will be coloured by the connection. If a teacher is a member of the American Federation of Labor will he be likely to consider impartially the stands which that organization takes on various questions? The teacher as a citizen usually belongs to a political party, but this does not mean that the teacher stresses the principles of the party with which he is in sympathy. The teachers belong individually to a political party, but they belong collectively to the teacher unions. The pupils should be presented with all sides of a question in an impartial manner and encouraged to form his own conclusions. If teachers affiliated with labor sought to inculcate the cause of labor without considering the other sides of the question it would appear to be a handicap to efficient teaching. The schools should not be used for the spread of propaganda of any kind, whether the cause is labor, capital, or any other group.
If the unionization of teachers can cause the teachers to take a better interest in their job of teaching perhaps the instruction in the schools would be improved. If the teachers' thoughts and time are concerned with gaining an increase in wages or the passing of adequate tenure laws, will the teachers be inclined to devote the necessary time and efforts to teaching? If the teachers are continually waging a fight for increased wages and tenure, will the pupils in the classes have the proper respect for their teachers? Most of the pupils in the schools consider the service that the teachers are performing; they think very little about salaries where teachers are concerned. Shall the matter of salaries be placed above service? Many feel that if the teachers devote their efforts to improving the teacher in service, the question of salaries will take care of itself. They point out the fact that the other professions have confined their efforts to improving the service of their members, and in the long run the monetary side has improved because of the improved service. Can this procedure be followed in the teaching profession with the promise of good results?

Superintendents and school boards are elected or appointed by the people to serve the best interests of the children in the schools. If they are to pass on the question of teacher unions, they should consider whether the teachers will be better qualified as teachers by belonging to a union. If these school officials are looking out primarily for the interests of the pupils, do the teachers need a union to protect and fight for their interests? Should not the first consideration of
the teachers also be the interests of the pupils?

Another reason for this study is to determine whether or not it is professional for teachers to belong to a union. First we should try to determine whether teaching is really a profession or a trade. Does teaching rank with other professions, such as medicine and law, or should it be classed with building, printing, plumbing, and other trades? What determines a profession, and what have the people in other callings done to set up the standards of their professions? If teaching is a profession the compensation for services rendered should be comparable to that of other professions. The remuneration should be commensurate with the preparation for the position and large enough for the person to uphold the standard of living which the position calls for. A person must spend years in preparation for teaching, just as a doctor spends years in preparation for the practice of medicine and the lawyer for the practice of law; but the printer and plumber also spend a great deal of time preparing to practice their trades. What is it that distinguishes the professional and the tradesman?

If we decide that teaching is a profession, should the teachers condescend to an affiliation with a labor organization? Have doctors and lawyers and members of other recognized professions ever joined organizations which were affiliated with organized labor? Because members of other professions have become affiliated with labor does not necessarily mean that teachers should follow their example, but if it has been done, the teachers would not be breaking a precedent in affiliating with the American Federation of Labor.
If the affiliation with the American Federation of Labor would tend to decrease the professional tendency of the teachers, it would, perhaps, be inadvisable for the teachers to thus affiliate. On the other hand, if by so affiliating the teachers can help themselves to obtain a higher degree of professionalism, it would seem to be a worthwhile procedure on their part.
CHAPTER II.

The American Federation of Labor and Education

The American Federation of Labor has always been actively interested in education. Probably no other single influence has contributed more to the development of our public school system in this country than organized labor. Even before the beginning of the American Federation of Labor, the Knights of Labor and other labor bodies interested themselves in education. Perhaps labor realized that in order to further its own cause, it was necessary to do whatever it could to educate the masses. The majority of the people of the United States are workers, and if they receive an adequate education they may be more inclined to see the advantages of organization. The people with the least education seem to be the hardest to organize; perhaps the teachers are an exception to this rule, however. Usually the individual, thru education, realizes that he alone is powerless to change existing conditions and that only thru the united action of numbers can any social change be accomplished.

It cannot be denied that our educational system has improved since its beginning, and there is no doubt that labor has played some part in this improvement. Let us first see what the American Federation of Labor is and what it stands for; then we shall attempt to find out what it has advocated along educational lines from its beginning to the present time. Perhaps we shall then be better qualified to determine what the American Federation of Labor
has done for public education in this country.

A. Organization and Objectives of the American Federation of Labor.

The American Federation of Labor was organized in 1881 at Pittsburgh, Pa., but it was then known as the Federation of Organized Trades' and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada. In 1886 it was reorganized and became the American Federation of Labor. Since its reorganization it has been fundamentally a federation of autonomous trade organizations. Embraced in this Federation are 442 unions, numbering approximately 5,000,000 organized wage-earners.

These trade unions are in themselves complete organizations and autonomous in their specific fields. There is vested in the American Federation of Labor only such power and authority as these federated unions have delegated or may delegate to the American Federation of Labor.

The American Federation of Labor is purely a voluntary federation. Its strength is dependent entirely upon its fair and just treatment of all the federated unions. The American Federation of Labor has no authority or supervision whatever over the affairs of international unions and their subordinate local unions. All power and final authority within the Federation is vested in its conventions held annually.

The American Federation of Labor avoids partisan political action which is probably one reason why it has succeeded where other labor organizations have failed. It is disinclined toward a labor party. The Federation attempts to inform political parties of the principles which labor deems essential and to advise wage-earners of the pronouncements of all parties on labor demands so that wage-earners within all

parties shall be able to use their ballots to the end that friends of labor shall be elected and enemies of labor shall be defeated.

The American Federation of Labor is the first comprehensive labor body in American history to withstand successfully the shock of recurrent periods of depression. The Knights of Labor, the Patrons of Husbandry and other labor bodies were at one time strong, but they could not struggle thru periods of hard times.

The general purpose of the American Federation of Labor is to improve the conditions of workers in all fields of human endeavor. It holds that organization and mobilization of economic power is the primary step in progress for wage-earners. According to the Constitution of the American Federation of Labor:

"The object of this Federation shall be the encouragement and formation of local Trade and Labor Unions, and the closer federation of such societies through the organization of Central Trade and Labor Unions in every city, and the further combination of such bodies into State, Territorial or Provincial organizations to secure legislation in the interest of the working masses, and to influence public opinion, by peaceful and legal methods, in favor of organized labor."

B. Educational Program of the American Federation of Labor.

An examination of the proceedings of the annual conventions of the American Federation of Labor at various times from 1881 to the present time shows the stands which that organization has taken in regard to education. Let us look at some of the reports of these conventions. At the first convention in 1881 the Constitution declares:

"We are in favor of the passage of such legislative enactments as will enforce, by compulsion, the education of children. If the state has the right to exact certain compliance with its demands, then it is also the duty of the state to educate its people to the proper understanding of such demands."


2. Ibid, p.128.
The Convention of 1888 declares:

"We recognize that the education of the people is the fundamental principle upon which the success of every proposed plan of social reform depends. Therefore, we favor legislatures enacting laws compelling parents to send their children to school."\(^1\)

The Convention of 1894 declares:

"Education should be the watchword of the labor movement, in order that the masses may fully realize the importance of unity of action, regardless of color, creed, or country. Compulsory education laws should be strictly enforced in every state in the union, and where there are no such laws, efforts should be made to secure their enactment."\(^2\)

The Convention of 1903 provided for a committee on Education and the Executive Council was directed to secure the introduction of textbooks that would be more in accord with modern thought upon social and political economy, books that would teach the dignity of manual labor, give due importance to the service that the laborer renders to society, and that will not teach the harmful doctrine that the wage-earners should be content with their lot because of opportunities afforded to a few of their number to rise out of their class; instead, of teaching that the average wage-earners should base their hopes upon the elevation of the conditions of all the working people.

"Political influence, so often required of school teachers to retain their positions, should be eliminated. We also believe that the labor movement would be benefited by the organization of the teachers. Justice requires that teachers should be given compensation commensurate with the value of their duties."\(^3\)

The Convention of 1911 declares:

"The time has arrived when compulsory education must be had. The different states should provide by proper legislation that all children between the ages of six and sixteen years should be provided with at least a common school education and given at least the ordinary opportunities for preparation in childhood to meet the duties of life.

2. Ibid, p.128.
3. Ibid, p.128.
We know from experience, that existing economic conditions make it impossible for a large number of families among the workers to give their children the education they should have, and which they would like to give them. We recommend that free textbooks in public schools be endorsed and the legislatures of the country be, and they are hereby requested, to provide that in all public schools books shall be furnished the children at the expense of the state. We also favor public night school for children over sixteen years of age.¹

The Convention of 1915 declares:

"General educational studies and requirements of school children are of more importance to the future welfare of the workers than industrial education."²

The Convention endorsed these recommendations of the United States:

Industrial Commission:

1. Compulsory day-time continuation schools for all children in industry between the ages of 14 and 18 years of age, for not less than five hours per week, at the expense of their employers.

2. Night schools for all persons over 18 years of age desirous of further educational opportunities either cultural or vocational.

3. Standards of efficiency for teachers.³

Resolution adopted at the 1919 Convention:

"Whereas, In accordance with the instructions of the last convention the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, working with the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Education Association, has cooperated in the preparation and introduction of the Educational Bill (H.R.7) which creates a Federal Department of Education, and appropriates one hundred million dollars to be apportioned among the states to aid in the payment of more adequate teachers' salaries, in the equalization of educational opportunities, in the removal of illiteracy, in the Americanization of immigrants, in physical education, and in the preparation of competent teachers; and

"Whereas, the present period of reconstruction is revealing even more clearly than the preceding period of the war the need for a national policy to secure coordination among the states, and to promote national welfare, efficiency and unity; and

2. Ibid, p.129.
3. Ibid, p.129.
"Whereas, The threatened collapse of our schools, which influenced the action of the last convention is still more imminent now, through the forcing out of our best teachers by the thousands by sheer economic pressure, and through the refusal of young men and women of ability and independent spirit to prepare themselves for a calling which does not offer a self respecting living; and

"Whereas, The recent past has forced upon us a realization of the necessity of more effective physical education, end of the removal of illiteracy and the Americanization of immigrants; and

"Whereas, In the fields of vocational and agricultural education the value of the stimulus to the states of federal appropriations available to a state on its meeting specified standards, and on the appropriation by that state of equal amounts, has been proved by experiments, therefore, be it

"Resolved, That this 39th Convention by the American Federation of Labor, in conformity with the recommendations of the preceding convention, endorses the Education Bill (H.R.7), and instructs the President and Executive Council to use the full influence of the American Federation of Labor in its support."

At the St. Paul Convention of 1918 the Federation adopted the following program:

1. The development of vocational guidance and industrial education in both urban and rural communities in proper relation to each other and to the needs of our democracy.

2. The provisions of increased facilities in public normal schools for men and women, in the trades, who desire to prepare themselves for teaching industrial and vocational subjects; and the expansion of both state and federal educational facilities, so that we will be decreasingly dependent on private endowments in the educational field. In this connection we call your attention to the movement in one state to introduce into the state university in cooperation with the state federation of labor a course designed to prepare young men and women of labor for intelligent and effective leadership in the labor movement.

3. The insistence that in all courses of study, and particularly in industrial and vocational courses, the privileges and obligations of intelligent citizenship must be taught vigorously and effectively; and that at least in all vocational and industrial courses, an un-

emasculated industrial history must be taught, which shall include an accurate account of the organization of the workers and of the result thereof, and shall also include a summary of all legislation, both state and federal, affecting the industries taught.

4. The provisions of adequate facilities for the teaching of English to non-English speaking people, and the utilization for this purpose of the foreign language press.

5. The requirement that all our children shall be taught in the English language, in both public and private schools, a foreign language to be taught only as a subject in the curriculum.

6. The provision of ample playground facilities as a part of the public school system.

7. Continuous medical and dental inspection throughout the schools.

8. The organization and equipment of special classes for children who are subnormal, either mentally or physically; and also special classes for children who are found capable of making more rapid progress than is possible in a standard school.


10. The establishment of a complete system of modern physical education.

11. The establishment of a federal department of education, headed by a cabinet officer.

12. The wider use of the school plant, securing increased return to the community through additional civic, social and educational services to both adults and children.

13. The extension of a free textbook system to the District of Columbia and such states and communities as have not yet adopted it.

14. The establishment of self-governing school and district councils of teachers for the purpose of utiliz-
ing the experience and initiative of the teaching body in the conduct of the schools, the recommendations of such councils to be made a matter of official public record.

15. The securing for teachers of tenure of position during efficiency. There should be no dismissal without a full and fair hearing.

16. A thoroughgoing revision upward of teachers' salary schedules, to meet the increased cost of living, and the growing appreciation of the value to the community and the nation of the teachers' services.

17. The liberal, ungrudging reorganization and increase of school revenues on a war-emergency scale, as the only basis upon which to secure the expansion of our schools along these lines. England and France, with their resources strained by the past four years, and facing unprecedented immediate demands, are making huge increases in the appropriations for their schools. Surely the people who gave the world the conception of free democratic education must not longer loiter behind.¹

In 1924, according to a communication sent to the local trade unions by Matthew Woll, vice-president of the Federation and chairman of the Educational Committee, the American Federation of Labor planned to create a permanent committee on education to interest itself in the public schools and universities. The objects of the movement are given as follows:

1. That the wage-earners of each city be adequately represented on the municipal school boards.

2. That there be labor representation on the boards of directors of all state universities and other institutions of higher learning that are part of the public school system.

3. That the necessary enabling acts be passed to provide free textbooks for the schools.

4. That industrial education include sciences underlying industries, their historic, social, and economic implications, as well as the technical side — specific

¹ "Educational Program of the American Federation of Labor", School and Society, October 26, 1918, pp.501-502.
vocations.

5. That local use be made of the report on social studies made by the American Federation of Labor Committee on Education.

6. That in each locality there be developed opportunities for continuation schools and night schools under the public school administration.

7. That the widest possible use be made of all public schools for adults as well as minors.

8. That the organization affiliate with the Workers' Education Bureau for active cooperation in education for adult workers as developed by that bureau.¹

At the Convention at Washington, D.C., in 1933 the following resolutions were adopted:

1. Preservation of our public school system.

"Whereas, The destructive tendency incidental to the retrenchment movement against public education has resulted in the closing of the schools, the dismissal of teachers, the housing of children in dilapidated and overcrowded school buildings, the shortening of the school year, the curtailment and elimination of important school subjects, and of the much needed social sciences; and

"Whereas, The slogan of 'Balance the Budget' has been used as the excuse for the reckless slashing of vitally necessary expenditures, many of which are the only social guarantees we have for the maintenance of standards in education and in health and safety; and

"Whereas, We believe that the destruction of the very social fibre of this nation must come from the continuance of this policy; be it

"Resolved, That the American Federation of Labor reaffirm its position of unswerving support of public education, the necessary elements of which entail:

(1) Truly professional standards in and for the classroom.
(2) Small classes taught by trained

¹ "Educational Program of the A.F. of L.", School and Society, May 10, 1924, p.545.
teachers.

(3) An enriched curriculum.

(4) Opportunities for growth and cultural advantages for adult workers.

(5) An equitable wage for all teachers.

(6) Security of tenure for all educational workers.

(7) Decent working conditions for teachers.

(8) Right to establish teachers' unions, affiliated with organized labor.

(9) Opportunity for culture and professional study for teachers.

(10) Maintainance of educational standards.

(11) Provision for old age pensions for teachers.

(12) Opportunity for teachers to participate in formulating educational policy.

"Resolved, That it renew its pledge of utmost endeavor for the protection of education from kindergarten through university, and that it call upon all affiliated state and local central bodies to fight to the utmost to maintain intact our free public school system in this country."1

2. Federal aid to the states for education:

"Whereas, In every section of the country public schools have suffered materially through the lack of funds made available for educational work, in some localities amounting to the actual collapse of the American Free Public School System; and

"Whereas, Local communities and the several states are for the most part utterly unable to maintain their public schools; and

"Whereas, While it is undoubtedly the responsibility of the state to seek to preserve its public schools for the state, it is just as certainly the responsibility of the nation to assure opportunities for education to all the children of the nation; and

"Whereas, The citizens of the several states are, in the form of income taxes and other taxes, giving to the federal government many millions of dollars; be it

"Resolved, That the American Federation of Labor seek to secure legislation making available to the several states, funds sufficient to enable these states to maintain a free public school system worthy of the best traditions of our land and schools which would afford equal opportunities for all the children of America."

3. Federal relief program for teachers:

"Whereas, The education of our working people, employed and unemployed, on a part time continuing program, is an essential feature of our industrial recovery, not as a temporary makeshift, nor on a 'make-work' plan for idle persons to teach, but as a permanent part of our placement and after-service to all working people who need courses to improve their technical skill and broaden their economic plan of living; and

"Whereas, Such educational program is dependent for its success on properly qualified teachers with an industrial, technical, and practical background improved and made available by professional teacher training courses for such teachers; and

"Whereas, Such teacher training program may and should continue to be an integral part of our whole program for adult education, in order that our working people, idle and employed, have the best trade, technical, industrial and general teachers that can be procured; and

"Whereas, Such a program of teacher training was recognized by the Federal Board for Vocational Education and made by such a board an essential part of its whole plan for federal aid to the states in promoting adequate and worthwhile educational courses for our working people, rural and urban, juvenile and adult, idle and employed; and

"Whereas, The Federal Emergency Relief Administration has authorized and is promoting a 'make-work' program whereby needy unemployed persons, may be employed on 'work relief' wages only to teach the unemployed working people of the country, the 'teachers' to be selected and certified for this important work by state and local 'relief agencies'; and

"Whereas, Those responsible for the promotion of

this program undoubtedly have the best interests of our people at heart but fail to appreciate the reaction of such a program on the whole program of adult education as well as on the teaching profession; and

"Whereas, The NRA has definitely set up various codes of fair competition in industry in order that the country may slowly but surely return to an era of prosperity, and inasmuch as this 'make-work' program for teachers is inconsistent with, and contrary to the principles set forth under the NRA codes; be it

"Resolved, That an adequate teacher training program be maintained for those who would teach our working people, employed and unemployed, and that whatever extra teachers are employed they be employed at the pre-depression wage schedule for teachers of the locality where they are employed, and that their competence as teachers be passed upon by boards of education or boards of vocational education as the case may be; and be it further

"Resolved, That in order to continue this important work with professionally trained teachers, the Federal government make available to the states directly the funds necessary therefor."

4. Protection of the Public School System

"Whereas, The nation is threatened with grave disaster incident to the tragic breakdown of the free public school system of our states; be it

"Resolved, that the President of the American Federation of Labor with the available members of the Executive Council present this appeal to the President of the United States during this convention if possible."

After looking over the educational programs of the American Federation of Labor as adopted by the various annual conventions, there can be no doubt that the Federation has interested itself in public education in this country from its beginning to the present time. Its demands have not been unjust or selfish. Certainly the demand that every

2. Ibid.
child should have the opportunity to receive adequate educational advantages (see P.9) is in accord with our democratic ideals. In advocating the passage of laws to compel the attendance of children in the schools (see P.8), the representatives of labor seemed to realize that intelligent citizenship requires a certain degree of education and that it was the duty of the state to see that its future citizens received the necessary education. In regard to child labor the Federation has always maintained that the place for children was in the schools. The American Federation of Labor has always been in favor of legislation prohibiting child labor (see pp. 10 and 11). At the present time the Federation is working for an amendment to the Constitution giving Congress the right to prohibit and regulate the employment of children.

The American Federation of Teachers in advocating labor representation on boards of education does not necessarily mean that members of the American Federation of Labor should be selected. They do desire the labor members to be members of some body of organized labor, as they feel that a person representing unorganized labor does not have the support of any large group (see p.18).

Long before the affiliation of the teachers the Federation advocated better salaries and better working conditions for teachers (see p.10). Since 1916, when the American Federation of Teachers became a part of the American Federation of Labor, the educational policies have become more clear and definite. This is only to be expected as we realize that machinists, printers, and members of other trades cannot be expected to have the educational insight that members of the
teaching body should have.

It is only fair that there should be cooperation between boards of education and committees representing the teaching body in all cases of controversy between school authorities and the teachers (see p. 14). Many of our industries already have this cooperation between workers and their employers. At Filene's department store in Boston no employee can be discharged before he has had a fair hearing before a committee composed of his fellow workers. The teachers will be satisfied if they can have a hearing before their superiors.

The Federation may be right to some extent in criticizing the Emergency Relief Administration in its program of employing persons to teach on 'work relief wages' and to be selected by state and local relief agencies. The schools exist for the children and not to make jobs for needy relatives and friends of local and state politicians. If such work is to be carried on, it should be under the direction of the school administration, and the boards of education should do the selecting of teachers.

C. What Has the American Federation of Labor Done for Public Education?

It is rather difficult to say concretely that the American Federation of Labor has done this or done that for public education. A study of its history, however, does show that it has advocated and worked to influence public opinion for educational reforms and educational standards. By improving the conditions of workers in other fields of human endeavor, it has enabled the working man to allow his children to obtain a better education. Fifty years ago very few of the workers' children

received a high school education, and it was an exceptional case if one of their children went to college. Now the great majority of these children go to high school and many of them go on to college.

The American Federation of Labor has always been a staunch supporter of a federal child labor amendment, and at the present time it is lending its fullest support toward the passage of such an amendment to the Constitution. Twenty states have voted for the amendment at the present writing, and although Massachusetts has just voted against it, the Federation hopes to obtain the assenting vote of sixteen more states within the next year, according to Mr. Moriarty, President of the Mass. State Federation of Labor. Perhaps organized labor fears the competition of child labor, but there is no reason to believe that there can be any doubt of a humanitarian spirit underlying their demands. That the humanitarian considerations have outweighed the economic in this policy is evidenced by the refusal of the Federation to indorse the plan to tax the products of manufacturers using child labor. The basis of such a refusal was that such a tax would act as a license legalizing such employment. The tax on all establishments using child labor would have removed, to a great extent, the danger of competition, but it would not have saved the children.

The NRA prohibits child labor, but this act is only a temporary measure, and there should be legislation to cover such conditions when the NRA ends. There have been abuses of the child labor provisions of the Recovery Act, and Dr. Leo Wolman, chairman of the Labor Advisory Board, has warned the NRA Compliance Boards against granting exceptions

from provisions of the Presidential Reemployment Agreements prohibiting child labor. Dr. Wolman says as follows:

"It has been brought to the attention of the NRA that various requests are being made, and in some cases allowed, to employ children under the age of 16 in violation of the NRA and the permanent codes. The intent of the administration in making child labor prohibitions a part of the Codes of Fair Competition was to set up a standard which would spread employment among adults, do away with the lowering of wages which is the inevitable accompaniment of child labor, and release children to continue their education with a view to fitting them more fully for adult life. \*\*\*\*\*\*\* no special provisions are to be made from the child labor provisions of the codes.\"1

In 1921 a committee was assigned by the Federation to the task of analyzing the social studies in the public schools.2 The report of this committee was presented to the 1925 convention. The committee after a study made the following claims:

1. That the social studies should be introduced in the elementary schools.
2. That more attention should be given to social and economic matters in history study.
3. That the last fifty years of American history must receive more attention, presumable at the expense of earlier periods.
4. That not memory and stereotyped judgment, but the exercise of pupils' "critical faculties" upon forces and movements should be the underlying spirit of the work.
5. That the study of the labor movement is deserving of a more important place in the social studies and the teaching of labor problems to be impartial and objective.
6. That the text books in use in the schools are inadequate for the teaching of the social studies.3

The support of the American Federation of Labor has been sought at various times for educational proposals, such as the Boy

Scout movement, the Smith-Hughes Law, and the Workers' Education Bureau of America. It has always given its support to any such movement that would benefit education.¹ In addition to the investigation of the social studies, the Federation has conducted investigations of the junior high school, the platoon system, and intelligence testing. An examination of the reports of these investigations shows that the Federation has always been willing to interest itself in matters pertaining to education, and has been willing to lend aid and influence wherever possible in making the schools better for all classes of children. According to Robert J. Watt, the legislative agent of the Massachusetts State Federation of Labor, approximately fifty percent of the bills that he attempts to bring before the legislature pertain to education.²

² Personal interview on March 18, 1934.
CHAPTER III

The Issue from the Standpoint of the Teacher.

Organizations of teachers in this country are not a recent development; many of them have existed for years. Most of these organizations have been supervised by administrative officials and have concerned themselves with the development of greater teaching efficiency and the uplifting of teachers, intellectually and morally. These organizations have not attempted to better the actual working conditions of teachers, raise the wages, or secure for the teachers any part in the administration of the schools.

Teachers are, after all, human beings and must take into consideration the matter of wages. The average salary for public school teachers in the United States in 1915 was $543.31; that is, $1.73 per working day, throughout the year, or $1.48 per living day throughout the year. In 1918 the average daily wage was $1.63, instead of $1.48, or a raise of about ten percent, while the cost of living increased seventy-three and four-tenths percent. From 1914 to 1920 in the printing trades, through the efforts of the union, the weekly wage was increased from $19.00 to approximately $42.00, an increase of over one hundred percent. During the same period the hours of work were decreased from 48 hours to 44 hours per week. At the present time the average yearly salary for teachers is less than $1,000., and in many communities the teachers have received only a small portion of their salaries in the past few years. Men teachers have realized that the quickest and most effective

way to attract public attention to this vital matter of salaries is to organize in such a manner as will enable them to secure a living wage. The American Federation of Teachers seems to offer the teachers such an alliance. While the raising of salaries is an important objective of the organization, its activities are not confined to efforts in this direction.

A. The American Federation of Teachers

1. Organization and Growth

The American Federation of Teachers was organized in Chicago, Illinois, April 15, 1916, through the initial efforts of the Chicago teachers, who were the pioneers in the union movement among teachers and who, from their struggles with forces hostile to educational welfare in that city, were convinced of the necessity for stronger and more concerted action. The call for the formation of the national federation was made by the Chicago Teachers' Federation, the Chicago Federation of Men Teachers, and the Federation of Women High School Teachers of Chicago. Similar organizations in New York, Washington, Scranton, Oklahoma City and Gary, Indiana, responded by sending delegates to meet those from the Chicago federations. A constitution was adopted and officers were elected, thus affecting an organization of 2,800 members from eight locals, six of which were at that time affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.2

According to the reports from the organizers and officials of the various unions, this number increased to ninety locals with about 8,000 members in 1919. In a few cities the teachers were one hundred

percent organized at this time. Five unions in Washington, D.C., in 1919 represented seventy-five percent of the teaching force. Teachers' unions had also invaded the far west. Sixty-seven out of sixty-nine high school teachers in Sacramento, California were members of the teachers' union which had been organized in that city a short time previous. The San Francisco union had over 150 members, and a state federation was formed there on May 31, 1919. In Memphis, Tennessee teachers were about ninety percent organized in 1919. Howard University of Washington, D.C. organized the first university local, and the College of the City of New York and the University of Illinois followed the example a short time later. In the past few years the organization has grown rapidly. In the past two years they have doubled their membership, and in the last six years the membership has been more than doubled. At the present writing there are two hundred eighty locals chartered¹, four of these being in Massachusetts. The distribution covers thirty-one states.²

Prior to 1918, the membership of the unions consisted only of public school teachers who had classroom work. Principals or school officials having disciplinary or rating power over other teachers were not admitted to membership, the idea being that teachers would act more freely and independently apart from the usual restraint of schoolroom supervision.

During the annual convention held at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, July, 1918, the constitution was amended "to admit to membership associations of public school principals in their capacity as teachers or as public school employees under such rules and regulations as may be fixed

1. Communication received from Mrs. Hanson, Secy.-Treas. of the A.F. of T., Feb. 15, 1934. (Figures of actual membership are not given out according to a ruling of the Executive Council.)

by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Teachers, and in accordance with the provisions of the constitution limiting such membership."¹ In communities where there are fewer than fifteen principals, individual principals may be admitted to membership in teachers' locals after the locals have been established and actively working for two years and providing that their constitutions do not forbid the admission of principals. An amendment making college and university professors eligible to membership was also adopted by the same convention. Since that time organization has taken place among principals, and to some extent in universities.²

The officers of the Federation, consisting of a president, a secretary-treasurer, and eleven vice-presidents, constitute the Executive Council, which carries out the instructions of the national conventions. The constitution provides that the convention of the Federation shall meet annually during the Christmas vacation, or at any other such time as the Executive Council may determine, the place to be determined by the delegates at the preceding convention. Two delegates to the annual convention may be selected by each affiliated local having a membership of one hundred or less, and for each additional hundred members, or fraction thereof, one additional delegate may be elected. State federations may send a delegate to the convention, but the delegate does not have voting power. All decisions of the convention and committees of the Federation shall be taken by a majority of the votes cast.³

The finances of the Federation are met by a monthly per capita tax of from ten to forty cents, graduated according to the amount of annual salary of the members, five cents a month being reserved in every

2. Ibid, p. 249.
case to cover the subscription to the official organ of the Federation, the "American Teacher". Members at large affiliating directly with the Federation pay an initiation fee of one dollar, and monthly dues of fifty cents to be paid semi-annually in advance. ¹

Charters for new locals may be obtained from the Executive Council upon the application of seven or more public school teachers, or school principals, and the payment of a fee of ten dollars. A charter may also be issued upon the application and the payment of a ten dollar fee to seven or more teachers in educational institutions not supported by public funds, provided that such institutions are not, in the judgment of the Executive Council, conducted primarily for religious purposes or for private gain. The charter of any local may be revoked by the Executive Council when the existence of any local is detrimental to the development of democracy in education; such revocation to be subject to the approval of the national convention.²

The work of the national Federation has been, largely, along two lines: organization and educational propaganda. (For illustration see p.36.) Two members of the Executive Council, the president and the first vice-president, devote practically their entire time to the formation of new locals. Representatives of the Federation appearing before the various labor conventions and the meetings of educational and other bodies not only have kept educational needs prominently before the public, but have secured the endorsement of these bodies to educational programs and to proposed local or national legislation regarding the status of teachers. Delegates from the American Federation of Teachers as

1. Constitution of the A.F. of T., pp.8-9
2. Ibid, pp.5-6
members of the committees on education have assisted in formulating educational programs for state and national labor organizations.¹

2. **Reason for Affiliation with the American Federation of Labor.**

The Chicago teachers, who were instrumental in the formation of the American Federation of Teachers, were the pioneers in the union movement among teachers. Before the organization of the national Federation the Chicago teachers' associations had affiliated with the Chicago Central Labor Union and with the Illinois State Federation of Labor.² These Chicago teachers realized that support was necessary in their struggles against the enemies of education and turned to organized labor for help. When a national federation was organized it was only natural that it should affiliate with labor. It was welcomed by the American Federation of Labor, and for several years (until 1920) it was aided with funds to spread the organization.³ Each union may be affiliated with its local central labor union and with the state federation of labor, as well as with other clubs or federations non-union in character.

The American Federation of Labor has shown itself to be a firm supporter of free public education in this country, and has always declared itself to be against any reduction in expenditures and facilities for education at any time. (See Chapter II) On the other hand, the United States Chamber of Commerce sent out to local chambers of commerce the following suggestions for reduction of school costs:

**Possible Fields of Economy in School Retrenchment**

1. Purchase of supplies.
2. Operation of physical plant.

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³ Hardy, Ruth G., "Historical Setting of the American Federation of Teachers", a pamphlet issued by the A.F. of T., no date.
3. Reduction in cost of collection of school funds and of debt service by consolidation and refunding of outstanding indebtedness where possible.

4. Postponement of new capital for buildings and replacements.

5. Transfer supervisors to classrooms.


7. Simplify overhead administration and centralize responsibility.

8. Shorten school day one hour.

9. Increase size of classes.

10. Increase teaching hours.

11. Repairs and maintenance of physical plant.

12. Suspend automatic increases of salaries.

13. Reduction in teachers' salaries not to exceed ten percent.

14. Shorten school year not to exceed twelve percent.

15. Discontinue evening classes.


17. Reduce elementary school curriculums by consolidation from 8 to 7 years.

18. Reduce high school curriculums by consolidation from 4 to 3 years.

19. Transfer one-third of cost of all instruction above high school level from taxpayer to pupil.

20. Impose fee on high school students.\(^1\)

If these suggestions were to be carried out it would mean a backward step in education which would take years to overcome. These business men referred only to the schools and their cost, nothing was said about police and fire departments, building of highways, the cost of municipal departments, etc. Compare the program which the American Federation of Labor advocates for the present crisis (on page 15), and perhaps you may realize why the teachers turn to labor for support.

The Federation in answer to the question of why they affiliate with the American Federation of Labor states the following:

"Because it recognized that organized labor was the major

\(^1\) "Who are Your Friends?", New Bedford Teachers' Association Bulletin, Oct., 1933, p.4."
instrumentality in establishing our system of free tax-supported schools, has been their constant and consistent protector, and defender, and has an advanced educational program second to none.\(^1\)

The American Federation of Labor has done much to improve the conditions of other groups of workers, (see p. 20), and if as much can be done to improve the standards of the teaching profession, education will be benefited to a great extent. The teachers have realized that working alone they can do very little along these lines, but if they can interest millions of organized people in the public schools and obtain their aid, they have a much better chance of helping the schools and improving their own conditions. If the locals are affiliated with their state and local labor organizations as well, they should be able to do much towards interesting a large part of the citizens in their own schools. Where there is intelligent interest, there is bound to be some improvement.

3. Objectives

Many are of the opinion that the American Federation of Teachers exists only to raise and protect the wages of the teachers. While it is true that the organization does advocate and work for a higher salary scale for teachers, it is not the only objective of the union. John Dewey says in regard to this:

"Some teachers have the idea that the sole object of a teachers' union and the American Federation of Teachers is to protect teachers' wages. I have no apologies to make for that phase. I don't see why any workers should not have an organization to secure a decent living standard. The laborer is worthy of his hire. But the foundations of the teachers' unions of the American Federation of Teachers are very much wider, and I should like to have you study together the history of the unions representing even a minority of teachers, often a small minority, in such cities as Chicago, New York, Minneapolis, Atlanta, and others, to

1. "Questions and Answers", a pamphlet issued by the American Federation of Teachers, no date.
see that they have stood in the van of all movements calculated to improve public education, to introduce the principles and ideals of progressive education into the schools attended by the mass of the children; that they have been the most active instrument there is, not merely in protecting teachers from individual abuse, but in standing against the efforts of politicians to use the public school system for their own purposes. I should like to assure any doubting Thomases on this point that if they investigate the actual records of the unions already in existence, they will find good reason to be proud to be associated with the teachers who have already organized and combined in these unions.  

The establishment of tenure laws in states that do not have them and the protection of present tenure laws are main objectives of the Federation. The sense of insecurity has a demoralizing effect on the qualities of character which a teacher should possess. In order for the teacher to display intellectual courage and originality he (or she) must feel secure in his or her position. Teachers who have no tenure do not frankly express their opinions. They conform to whatever standard of behavior is least dangerous. They participate as little as possible in the civic life of the community, because they do not want to run the risk of offending any group which might bring pressure against them. The result is an inferior quality of teaching. The following tenure law clauses were adopted by the American Federation of Teachers:

1. "Tenure, after the lapse of a probationary period not to exceed two years, should be made permanent during efficiency.

2. "All dismissals, both during and after probationary period, should be for cause definitely embodied in the law, such as immorality, and inefficiency.

3. "After the probationary period, dismissal for any cause should be only by a trial board chosen as follows: three by the school board, three by the teachers, these six to choose a seventh, who is not to be either a member of the school board of the teaching staff, and who shall act as an impartial

1. Dewey, John, "The Crisis in Education", pamphlet issued by the American Federation of Teachers, no date.
chairman. At all hearings teachers shall have the right to be represented by counsel. Appeals from the decision of the trial board may be taken to the courts or to the commissioner of education, where the teacher shall have the right of review of questions of law as well as fact."

The Federation advocates academic freedom. It stands for freedom of opinion and speech, not only for its own members, but for those outside of the union. It believes that change is the law of progress, and if the social value of change is to be secured, teachers and pupils must be free. Unless such freedom is assured, intellectual stagnation is inevitable. Both sides of controversial subjects should receive adequate and impartial consideration, and in this way develop a spirit of tolerance and provide proper material for thought. In some states there have been attempts to determine the content of the social and biological sciences by legislative enactment. Such efforts have been made in Wisconsin, Kentucky, South Carolina, Florida, Texas, New Jersey, and other states. The Federation holds that the determination of the content of the various courses of study belongs to the teaching profession and every effort to infringe upon that right should be resisted.

Of course, the economic welfare of the teachers is also an important objective of the Federation. It is felt that teachers have never received salaries commensurate with the social service they render. The average teacher's salary in this country is under $1,000, and if this condition is to prevail, the persons most qualified will not be apt to enter the teaching field. By the payment of higher salaries properly qualified teachers will be more inclined to remain in the profession.

1. "Tenure for Teachers", published by the American Federation of Teachers, (pamphlet), no date.
A poorly paid teaching force means an inadequately trained citizenry, and better salaries will mean a greater saving to the general public in the long run. The Federation favors a $2,000. minimum salary, but it does not mean that every teacher is worth $2,000., but that every child is worth a $2,000. teacher. It believes in the enactment of legislation embodying the following features:

1. The embodiment of the principle of equal pay for equal professional qualifications and experience, regardless of sex or of grade or class taught.

2. A $2,000. minimum, as every child is worth at least a $2,000. teacher.

3. A maximum which will provide a cultural real wage enabling teachers to live according to the requirements of their position, to provide for the hazards of life, for leisure, for recreation, for travel, and for professional improvement.

4. A maximum to be reached in not more than ten definite annual automatic increments, regardless of ratings.¹

The judgment and attitude of the teacher should not be undermined by the threat of insecurity. A better than living wage should be provided so that the teacher may be able to secure further professional training and have an opportunity for recreation and travel. Although teaching is called a profession, the remuneration is far below the earnings of other professions. It is a generally accepted fact that teachers have not attained professionalism as far as salaries or wages are concerned. Teachers on the average are not as well paid as most skilled workers in industry, and have not as yet reached the level of clerical and other salaried workers. This is shown by the following average income figures given by the Research Division of the National

Education Association:

Comparison of Teachers' Salaries with Earnings and Incomes of Various Groups of Gainfully Occupied Persons in 1926:\(^1\)

Average Income of all Gainfully occupied persons ----------------------------------$2,010.
Average Earnings of workers in 25 manufacturing industries ------------------------$1,039.
Average Earnings of trade union members ------------------------------------------$2,502.
Average Salary of high-grade clerical workers ----------------------------------$1,908.
Average Salary of United States Government employees --------------------------$1,809.
Average Salary of teachers, principals, and superintendents in public schools ----------------------------------$1,275.

The American Federation of Teachers encourages teachers to take an active part in the affairs of their community and to accept opportunities in the public service. This not only improves the quality of teaching, by giving the teacher an intelligent understanding of his own community, but enables the community to profit by the scientific knowledge and training of its teachers. After all, the teacher is a citizen and should have a right to take part in the affairs of the community, state and nation, the same as any other citizen. There is a strong feeling on the part of some that active participation in community affairs and a point of view on social questions destroy objectivity in teaching. The Federation feels, on the contrary, that an insistence upon a neutral point of view and a refusal to join any active movement or to indorse any principle is likely to make teaching sterile. It believes that objectivity should be sought through fairness in the presentation of subject matter and in giving all sides an opportunity to be heard rather than through neutrality and inactivity.\(^2\)

2. Groves, H.M., Address delivered at the 17th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Teachers, June, 26, 1933.
The objectives of the American Federation of Teachers, according to its constitution, are as follows:

1. To bring associations of teachers into relations of mutual assistance and cooperation.
2. To obtain for them all the rights to which they are entitled.
3. To raise the standard of the teaching profession by securing the conditions essential to the best professional service.
4. To promote such a democratization of the schools as will enable them better to equip their pupils to take their places in the industrial, social, and political life of the community.

4. Program of Action.

At the Convention of the American Federation of Teachers in 1931 the following program of action was adopted:

1. A vigorous campaign against the use of the schools by private business enterprises for the spread of their propaganda, and against the corruption of teachers into agents through which such interests accomplish their purposes.
2. Equal educational opportunity for all children, without discrimination on account of race, religion, social status, or political views.
3. A maximum of 1,200 pupils to a building; a maximum of 25 pupils to a class.
4. Adoption by the public schools of methods developed in the field of progressive education.
5. Five-hour day in the public school with provision for extra curricular activities under trained supervision.
6. Widest extension of the program of adult education.
7. Elective boards of education with representative membership which shall not be exclusive of teachers.

1. Constitution of the American Federation of Teachers, p.3.
2. Program of Action pamphlet issued by the American Federation of Teachers, no date.
8. Increased revenues to maintain and develop public education.

9. Adequate school buildings adapted to the needs and procedures of modern and experimental education.

10. Employment of prepared and trained teachers only, with no discrimination in the employment and standing of teachers because of sex, race, religion, or social status, including marriage for women. Assurance to teachers of their religious, political, economic and civil rights, and conversely, no dismissal of a teacher except through an orderly procedure which shall provide for written charges, for a hearing before a trial board on which teachers will be represented, and for the right to be represented by counsel, and to subpoena witnesses.

11. Adoption of state laws for the protection of tenure of public school teachers after a two-year probationary period.

12. Academic freedom for teachers, which shall be understood as meaning that the right of teachers to present scientific and historic subjects free from religious, racial, political, and economic bias shall not be abridged, such freedom being a condition necessary to good teaching and to the development of professional character among teachers.

13. Abolition of systems of rating the service of teachers, and a substitution thereof of professional and cooperative supervision.

14. Organization of teachers' councils which shall be composed of classroom teachers elected by teachers. Such councils must have a legal status with power to participate in the determination of educational policies.

15. A single salary schedule based on equal qualifications and experience with automatic yearly increases.

16. A wage for teachers which will enable them to live according to the requirements of their po-
sition, to provide for the hazards of life, for leisure, for recreation, for travel, and for professional improvement.

17. No loss of pay for limited absence due to illness, quarantine, court cases, or death in the immediate family.

18. Actuarially sound, adequate retirement allowance for teachers.

19. Sabbatical leave for teachers, with at least half pay, automatically operative in the order of application.

This program which the Federation has adopted has many good points and certainly does not seem to be revolutionary. Most of the reforms which it advocates are needed at the present time, and although it may be quite a while before many of them are adopted, they are certainly well worth working for. In carrying on their campaign against the use of the schools by business enterprises for the spread of their propaganda, the teachers must be careful not to use the schools merely for the use of their own propaganda. There is the danger of the teachers leaning too far the other way. They must be fair to all sides and endeavor to make the pupil consider all sides of the question and then draw his own conclusions. As for the teachers organizing teachers' councils and participating in the determination of educational policies, there is no doubt that the teachers, as a whole, are interested in the welfare of the schools and they should have some part in the actual administration of the schools. The question of teacher dismissal is one which must be given consideration. There is no reason why a teacher should be dismissed because of the whim of a superintendent or principal or member of a school committee, without having the chance for a
fair hearing before a board on which there is teacher representation. If they can succeed in putting this program into force, they will have done much to professionalize teaching.

B. Advantages to be Gained by Joining the American Federation of Teachers.

The protection of the economic welfare of the teacher is a major objective of the Federation. It is the only teachers' organization which evidences more than a perfunctory interest in the matter of teachers' salaries. If the teachers themselves do not make an effort to better their own conditions, they cannot expect to make much progress.

In the past few years tax-payers associations and other such bodies, have been making a determined effort to force reductions in the salaries of teachers. Perhaps they realize that teachers, more than any other body of public servants, are unorganized and, therefore, less able to offer opposition to such moves. If the teachers have the backing of organized labor, they can resist more successfully drastic reductions in their salary schedules. After comparing the average incomes of persons engaged in educational work with the incomes of other salaried workers (see p.35), can there be any doubt that there is room for improvement in the teachers' salary schedules? The average salary for educational workers is $1,275., which is less than the salaries of trade union members and high grade clerical workers. This average includes the salaries of principals and superintendents; if it took into consideration only teachers' salaries, the comparison would be less favorable. If the American Federation of Labor can do as much towards raising the
salaries of teachers as it has done to raise the wages of trade union members, it would be a decided advantage to the teaching profession.

In securing the help of organized labor for the introduction and passage of legislation favorable to education, the teachers should be able to perform a real service for public education. The American Federation of Labor has legislative agents at Washington and in all the state capitals to secure the introduction and work for the passage of such legislation as it deems essential. Many of these bills which these agents introduce concern education, and if the Federation has the advice and help of the teachers in this matter perhaps a great deal more legislation in favor of education may be adopted. In the local communities the teachers working with the local central labor unions can work for the betterment of education and interest the people of the community in the needs of the schools. One local union of the American Federation of Teachers, according to its statement, affiliated with its local trade union, gained the recognition of the school board and the backing of a strong public sentiment, including the support of the local press, secured the early hiring of teachers, the correction of unjust contracts, higher salaries, longer school term, and the cooperation of the school board on school problems.¹ In Memphis, Tennessee, teachers claim that they assisted the local school board in securing tax legislation needed to provide sufficient funds for school purposes. ² In periods of depression, as is the case at the present time, concerted action by the friends of public education is needed to prevent drastic reductions in the expenditures for public schools.

By affiliation with labor the teachers and the parents of a large part of the pupils are brought into closer relationship with each other. The teachers gain a better understanding of the problems of these children, and the parents realize the influence the teachers have on their children and the value of the public school. In this way the teachers and the parents can work together for the advancement of our schools. The teachers and the parents should work together in educating the child; if they do not, the parents can largely offset the work of the teachers in many cases. If the child is not required to put into practice in the home what he has been taught in the school, the teaching is of little value. If this affiliation of the teachers with labor can bring about a closer contact between the teachers and the parents, it is a step in the right direction.

The American Federation of Teachers does everything in its power to influence public opinion in favor of public education. In these days when the Tax-payers' Associations and Chambers of Commerce are spreading their propaganda to curtail school expenditures, to eliminate many subjects from the curriculum, and to shorten the length of the school day and the school term, some agency is needed to combat this propaganda if the schools are to be saved from retrogression. The public is entitled to hear the other side of the story. If the public can be made to realize what effect these curtailments of educational facilities will have on our future generations, they will be willing to fight against such action. At the Convention of the Federation at Chicago, June, 1932, a resolution was adopted to undertake a publicity campaign
for the purpose of presenting to the public the effect of such curtailments on the public school system and all the locals were urged to cooperate in the campaign, "using speakers' and writers' bureaus, local newspapers and radio stations, and any other possible avenue of publicity, in order to build up an alert public opinion on school questions."

Many feel that the adoption and maintenance of adequate tenure laws for teachers would do much to raise the professional standards of teaching. Teachers worried by the threat of insecurity can seldom perform their duties efficiently, and the pupils and the schools suffer accordingly. The annual reappointment of teachers often leads to the use of the positions for political patronage or personal favor. The passage of tenure legislation would give to teachers the protection that civil service gives to other public employees. No teacher should be continually threatened with dismissal because of the whim of a school board or the result of a political election. The American Federation of Teachers strongly advocates teacher tenure (see p.32), and with the backing of organized labor should be able to do much towards securing the passage of legislation for this purpose.

C. Disadvantages of Joining the American Federation of Teachers.

There have been many objections to the affiliation of teachers with organized labor. Some of these objections have been answered by the Federation, but there are others to which no satisfactory answers have as yet been found. I shall attempt to cover the most prominent objections, giving the answers which the Federation has made to them.

One of the most frequent objections is the contention that

teachers are public employees and, therefore, should not ally themselves with any one section of the public. The schools exist for the children of all of the people, and the affiliation of the teachers with one group of the people is unfair to the other groups. The professional people, such as the doctors and lawyers, and the business people, such as the manufacturers and the merchants, are the employers of the teachers as well as the trades people and workers, and the teachers are showing discrimination by allying themselves with this group. The Federation answers this objection by pointing out the fact that associations of firemen, postal clerks, meat and food inspectors, park employees and others have unionized under the American Federation of Labor. They contend that although the public is nominally the employer of the public school teachers, the actual management of the schools is in the control of political boards or officials. The right of public employees to organize and affiliate with labor has been recognized by the national government and by state and city governments.¹

Another objection to the unionism of teachers is the claim that teaching is a profession, not a trade. Doctors, lawyers, and the members of other recognized professions have their own professional organizations and do not affiliate with labor. It is felt that teachers by unionizing under labor are degrading the professional standards and bringing teaching down to the level of the trades. If teaching is comparable with the other professions, should it be necessary for the teachers to unionize? The teachers that make up the American Federation of Teachers seem to feel that by joining the workers they can better their

¹ "Objections Answered", Pamphlet issued by the American Federation of Teachers, no date.
condition and obtain more influence in their communities. They point
to the fact that doctors and lawyers, and other professional men, can
control their hours, the conditions under which they work, and the a-
mount of their fees; teachers have no control over these matters.¹ They
further point out that where professional men have worked for a fixed
monthly or yearly sum, they have not hesitated to become members of u-
nions! In affiliation with the American Federation of Labor there are
1,200 of the leading scientists of the country in the employment of va-
rious government bureaus, physicians in the health departments of some
of our large cities, technical engineers, musicians, actors, and teachers
in normal schools and universities.²

If teachers affiliate with labor many people feel that the
unions may be called upon to go out on strike. It is commonly under-
stood that the chief weapon of the trade unions is the constant threat
of the strike. The strike has proven to be an effective method of the
workers in forcing their demands. While strikes may be permissible for
trade union workers, as far as teachers are concerned they are taboo.
Industrial workers use the strike to gain a larger share in the profits
of industry, but teachers do not share in direct profits, they are per-
forming a public service. The public feels the same way about teacher
strikes as they would about strikes of policemen, firemen, soldiers or
other public servants. The Federation answers this objection by reply-
ing: "The other unions have a strike policy, definitely providing in
their constitution for the calling of strikes and the maintainance of a
strike fund. The American Federation of Teachers has a non-strike poli-

¹ "Objections Answered", Pamphlet issued by the American Federation
of Teachers, no date.
² Ibid.
and has no provision for strikes in its constitution." They point out the fact that unorganized teachers have resorted to the use of the strike to gain salary increases. The teachers of Memphis, Tennessee, before they became affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, used the strike in securing the promise of a salary increase. Teachers in the vicinity of Bellwood, Pa., the teachers of Grainwood and Duquoin, Ill., also used the strike to force their demands. They feel that unorganized teachers have no recourse but to strike, while organized teachers can depend upon the power of organized numbers and upon the support of the organized labor. The Boston Police organization also had no provision for the use of the strike, yet they went on strike. There may be some danger that the strike may be used where teachers have difficulty in gaining their demands. If this should occur, it would not benefit the cause of the teachers' unions.

One of the strongest objections to the affiliation of the teachers with the American Federation of Labor is the contention that the Federation represents only a part of organized labor. There are many other organized workers remaining outside of the ranks of the American Federation of Labor. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the Four Railroad Brotherhoods, and other separate organizations represent large groups of workers and must be considered when speaking of organized labor. The teachers claim the support of organized labor; as a matter of fact, they are working with only one division of organized labor. These people also send their children to the public education and as taxpayers are the employers of the teachers. Perhaps they feel that

1. "Can Teachers' Unions be Called out on Strike", a pamphlet issued by the American Federation of Teachers, no date.
2. Ibid.
the teachers have no right to affiliate with one of their rivals. Then there are millions of workers that are not organized. They also send their children to the public schools and help to maintain our public schools system. While the majority of the pupils attending the public schools may be the children of workers, a large part of them are the children of unorganized workers or workers connected with organizations other than the American Federation of Labor. I have not found any satisfactory answer to this disadvantage in the literature of the American Federation of Teachers.

D. Opinions of Prominent Educators.

What do some of our most prominent educators think about the affiliation of the teachers with the American Federation of Labor? I have attempted to select a few educators that are prominent in their chosen field and find out their reaction to such affiliation. The first of these men is John Dewey, one of the foremost educators in this country.

Introducing John Dewey:

Professor John Dewey of Columbia University, New York, was born at Burlington, Vermont, October 20, 1859. He received an A.B. degree from the University of Vermont in 1879 and the degree of L.L.D. from Vermont in 1911; from Wisconsin in 1904; from the University of Michigan in 1913; from John Hopkins in 1915; from Illinois College in 1917; from Columbia University in 1929; and from Paris in 1930. He received a Ph.D. from Hopkins in 1884 and an honorary Ph.D. from Peking in 1920. He was an instructor and assistant professor of philosophy at the Uni-
versity of Michigan from 1884 to 1888; professor at Minnesota from 1888 to 1889; at Michigan from 1889 to 1894; head of the department of philosophy and education at the University of Chicago from 1894 to 1904; director of the School of Education from 1902 to 1904; professor of philosophy at Columbia University from 1904 to 1930; emeritus professor, 1930 — . He is a member of the National Academy, the Psychology Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Institute de France.1

Professor Dewey, in regard to the affiliation of teachers with organized labor, says:

"Our whole educational system suffers from the divorce between head and hand, between work and books, between action and ideas, a divorce which symbolizes the segregation of teachers from the rest of the workers who form the great mass of the community. If all the teachers were within the teachers' unions and if they were in active contact with the working men and women of the country and their problems, I am sure more would be done to reform and improve our education and to put into execution the ideas and ideals written about and talked about by progressive educators than by any other one cause whatsoever, if not more than by all causes together. All of these other teacher organizations are very valuable. They raise the standard of teaching in the field of scholarship and improved methods of teaching. But there is none of them that I know of except the American Federation of Teachers that constantly, openly and aggressively is for the realization of the social function of the profession and for raising the moral, the intellectual, and the social level of the profession as a profession on the basis of the social rights and the social responsibilities of the group of teachers as a professional group in the community."2

Professor Dewey says further:

"The time will come when the question will not be, Why should I join the Teachers' Union? It will be, Why should I not, or why has not this person and that person done it? The time will come when the principle of organization and cooperation and the recognition of common interests of all those who work in any way, whether mostly with their head or with their hands, or mostly with their voice, will be so clear that the explanations and the apologies and arguments will have to come from those who are not members of the teachers' unions."3

3. Dewey, Prof. John, In an address before the Teachers' Union.
Professor Jerome Davis of Yale University is another strong advocate of teacher unions and is a member of the American Federation of Teachers.

Introducing Professor Davis:
Professor Jerome Davis was born at Kioto, Japan, December 2, 1891. He received his A.B. from Oberlin College in 1919; his A.M. and Ph.D. from Columbia in 1919 and 1922 respectively. He was graduated from the Union Theological Seminary in 1920. He was assistant professor of sociology at Dartmouth College from 1921 to 1924; Gilbert L. Stark Professor of practical philanthropy at Yale, 1924. He was secretary to Sir Wilfred Grenfell in Labrador, 1915; acting in charge of the Y.M.C.A. war work in Russia, 1916 to 1918; chairman of the Connecticut Legislative Committee on Jails, 1931-1932. He is a member of the American Association of University Professors, Sociology Society, Statistical Association and the Economic Association.

Professor Davis in an address at the University of Wisconsin gives six reasons for joining the American Federation of Teachers:

"First: such an organization protects salary, tenure, and intellectual freedom. One has only to remember the D.A.R. black list, the expulsions at the University of Pittsburgh, and the more recent outrageous incident in connection with Dr. H.A. Miller, at Ohio State University, to realize how narrow is the margin of freedom in many universities.

"Second: this organization helps to bridge the gap between theory and the realities of social life. The teacher stands in peculiar danger of being too theoretical, of divorcing ideas from action, of dealing with abstractions rather than actual life. The American Federation of Teachers prevents this as it is a teachers' organization with a social program.

"Third: the teacher needs to join the American Federation of Teachers because it is affiliated with the organized labor movement. Teachers stand in danger of falling victims to smug respectability, as considering themselves as just a little bit better than the rank and file of the workers. We need actually to become partners with the toiling millions. From a selfish standpoint this will secure the backing of millions of workers in a more effective way for an educational policy for which teachers stand.

"Fourth: teachers need to join the American Federation of Teachers because it is the most progressive organization of teachers in the country. Education needs to be remolded, experimented with; and this organization is willing to listen to new ideas before they become popular. Furthermore, it stands guard against dangerous legislation and the action of selfish predatory interests. It was the American Federation of Teachers that was the first to protest against the Lusk Law. It was the same organization that protested against the bill for the censorship of history teaching. Again it was the Federation of Teachers which blocked turning Education Week into a period of disguised propaganda for militarism.

"Fifth: we need organization because it is group solidarity that brings courage and fearlessness in speaking the truth. We must all be kept from being intellectual serfs. The individual teacher alone may not dare to speak out for the right in an unpopular cause but with an organization behind him, aggressive action for the right is possible.

"Finally, without some such organization, education for democracy and democracy in education is made a hundred times more difficult. What would the conditions of labor be like in this country without labor unions? We should have complete economic serfdom. Organization is just as desperately needed in the educational field as in that of labor. Sociology teaches that it is group action which is most effective in our day. The teachers should be one of the most highly respected groups in the nation. This is possible only as they become more organized and more powerful. The American Federation of Teachers gives them not power or organization for selfish personal ends, but for the welfare of all children and of society itself."

1. Pamphlet of the American Federation of Teachers, no date.
Introducing Professor Brewer of Harvard University:

Professor John Marks Brewer was born at Antioch, California, on October 30, 1877. He received a B.S. degree from the University of California in 1902; an A.M. from Harvard in 1915, and a Ph.D. from Harvard in 1916. He served as a teacher in the trade schools and the junior and senior high schools of Los Angeles and San Francisco, California, from 1902-1914; instructor of education at Harvard in 1916 and 1917; head of the department of education and psychology at the California State Normal School from 1917 to 1919; associate professor of education at the University of California, 1919. He returned to Harvard in 1920 and became the director of the Bureau of Vocational Guidance, and professor in the Graduate School of Education, 1920. He is a member of the National Education Association, the American Association of University Professors, and the Vocational Guidance Association, of which he served as president in 1920 and 1921.

Professor Brewer believes in the affiliation of the teachers with labor; but he also believes in the teachers forming affiliations with other groups. They should affiliate with all organizations that are interested in the welfare of the schools. Professor Brewer says:

"It ill becomes teachers to try to prove their arguments by casting asperations on other workers in occupational life. The teacher above all persons is concerned with the welfare of 100 percent of the children, and these children are about to enter callings selected from the whole scope of occupational opportunity. It is the business of the teachers, therefore, individually and collectively, to establish not merely one affiliation but many kinds of affiliations with organizations of workers, parents, employers, and all others interested in the schools. Such affiliations must involve working agreements, bases for cooperation, and mutual interdependence in order to be effective. Without these co-operations teachers can hardly obtain the data they need for the educa-

1. "Leaders in Education", edited by J.McKeen Cattell, p.3.
tion of children now in school.

"Teachers represent all classes. It is therefore said that they should affiliate with none. It had better be said that they should affiliate with all. A recent editorial in the School Review pleads for what is called 'non-partisan civics'. It is likely that non-partisan civics would be a very colorless and useless study, because civic life demands something quite different, which might be described as 'omni-partisan'. .......... 

"If teachers will make their affiliations broader, they will learn much about industrial and political questions which they need to know in order to make their work more effective. Knowing something of the status of the industrial problem of the present time, the writer cannot 'view with alarm' even the organization of teachers' unions. There are many things worse.

"It is the opinion of the writer that a system of teacher participation by which policies are determined democratically, and executed by responsible agents with full power, will prove superior to unionizing the teaching profession."  

Introducing Professor Douglas of the University of Chicago:

Professor Paul Howard Douglas was born at Salem, Mass., March 26, 1892. He received his A.B. degree from Bowdoin College in 1913; an A.M. from Columbia, and a Ph.D. in 1921. He was an instructor of economics at the University of Illinois, 1916-1917; instructor and assistant professor of economics and sociology at Reed College, 1917-1918; associate professor of economics at the University of Washington, 1919-1920; assistant professor of industrial relations, University of Chicago, 1920-1923, associate professor, 1923-1925, professor 1925-1950; professor of economics at Chicago, 1930 —. He was the economic advisor to the Committee on the Stabilization of Unemployment of New York in 1930; the winner of the Karelson Prize in 1921, and the Hart, Schaffner and Marx Prize in 1950. He is a member of the Industrial Relations Staff, Phi Beta Kappa, and the Economic Association. 

In answer to the question of teachers affiliating with organized labor, Professor Douglas replies:

"To my mind the question whether teachers should affiliate with the Labor movement is a very simple one and really should be phrased, why shouldn't the teachers so affiliate?

"The teaching profession like every other has economic and cultural problems of its own and it can further these only by organization and combination. There is every reason therefore why the teachers should combine.

"By affiliating with the Labor movement as a whole they can serve a double purpose, (a) they can interest the labor movement in the true aims of education and (b) they can obtain the tacit support of the labor movement for those demands of their own which are just."

Introducing Professor Snedden of Columbia University:

Professor David Snedden was born at Havilah, California on November 19, 1868. He received his A.B. degree from St. Vincents College, Los Angeles, California in 1889; an A.B. from Leland Stanford University in 1897; an A.M. from Columbia in 1901, and a Ph.D. from Columbia in 1907. He was principal of the high school at Santa Paula, California, from 1892 to 1895, superintendent of schools at Paso Robles, California, from 1897 to 1900; assistant professor of education at Columbia University from 1905 to 1909; state commissioner of education for Massachusetts from 1909 to 1916; professor of education at Columbia since July, 1916. He is a member of the National Education Association, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Delta. He is the author of: "Towards Better Education", "What's Wrong with American Education?", and numerous other books on education.

Professor Snedden is a firm believer of strong teachers' organizations, but he is against the affiliation of the teachers with

1. A letter to the writer, dated February 19, 1934.
organized labor or any other movement which he believes to be partisan. In a debate with Professor Overstreet of the College of the City of New York, he says as follows:

"I have great admiration federation (A.F.of L.) as one of the fine and strong partisan organizations that our democracy has evolved. I respect it as I respect the Republican Party, the Methodist church, and all other constructive social groupings that we in America form as a means of advancing, first group interests and then those of the public at large. I do not, therefore, want to be understood as implying in the slightest degree reproach of the federation or even its more generally accepted methods. The central objection that I have to raise against any collective affiliation of teachers with the American Federation of Labor is the age-old objection to the affiliation of public school teachers in any collective capacity with a partisan organization of any description whatever.

"Teachers should not imagine for a moment that they can procure help from any organization of a partisan nature without giving up something substantial in return. I do not in the least blame the federation for wanting to procure the adherenence of thousands of teachers to their standards. It desires to enlist the farmers, the clerks, the mail carriers, and many other kinds of workers. It wants all the proselytes it can get, of course, as does the Methodist church the Republican Party, and the Anti-Saloon League. The federation wants members now because it knows that not always will its position be as strong and almost uncontested as at present.

"I am confident that when teachers clearly perceive what it would cost them, their profession and the public, to trade their professional independence to organized labor for its support in salary and other movements for betterment, the profession as a whole will repudiate the tentative engagements already made by its more short-sighted leaders. Teachers must form more compact organizations than they now have, unions indeed, if it seems desirable; but unless these organizations retain complete powers of independent action they will ultimately defeat even the purposes of the teachers themselves." 1

Introducing Professor Price:

Dr. Richard Rees Price was born at Haford, Wales, on May 23, 1875. He received his A.B. degree from the University of Kansas in 1897; his A.M. from Harvard in 1901, and his Ed.D. in 1923. He served as a teacher in the high school at Hutchinson, Kansas, from 1897 to 1899;

principal of the high school in 1901 and 1902; superintendent of schools from 1902 to 1909. He was director of the extension division at the University of Kansas from 1909 to 1913; at Minnesota since 1913. He was president of the University Extension Association from 1923 to 1924. He was a member of the state textbook commission of Kansas from 1907 to 1909. He was associate editor of the "Interstate Schoolman" from 1905 to 1909. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Delta Kappa.¹

Dr. Price feels that unions are all right for the trades, but that they are not adaptable to the teaching profession. He says:

"Should teachers' unions become, in organization, management and discipline, labor unions affiliated locally with labor organizations and nationally with the American Federation of Labor? That is the present issue, and the rapid progress of the teachers' unions of the latter type all over the United States in recent years has made the topic one of live interest. Already the matter has become controversial, bitterness has been engendered, and the ranks of the teachers are threatening to split into two factions over this question. Before too many bodies of teachers have taken a definite stand on this question, it were the part of wisdom to examine it candidly and with an open mind, and thus determine whether the best interests of the teaching profession and of education in general would be subserved by this affiliation between teachers' organizations and labor. The question should be settled now while there is some chance for impartial examination of the facts and before the majority of the teachers have definitely taken sides. There is a chance now to come to a decision on the basis of fundamental principles.

"Let us see if it is to the best interests of the teaching profession to become affiliated with labor. It seems apparent at once that teachers are not, properly speaking laborers, and therefore, an alliance with labor is an unnatural alliance. Teachers are no more laborers than doctors, lawyers, owners of factories, or superintendents of factories. It is true that all these people work, but it is also true that heretofore labor has never been willing to acknowledge any community of interest between itself and the superintendent or the owner of a factory. If all the workers of the United States were acceptable to labor unions, then virtually the entire population would be embraced therein with the small and negligible exception of the so-called parasitic class. In that case, we should all belong to one big union, and that union is the union of all people of this country.

¹ "Leaders in Education", edited by J. McKeen Cattell, p. 750.
"But we must also emphasize the fact that the aims, methods and problems of labor and the teaching profession are in most cases diverse. Then handle different materials. They work in a different atmosphere; they aim at different objects; and for the most part their respective attitudes toward their work are different."

**Introducing Dr. Myers:**

Dr. Charles Everett Myers was born at Wayne, West Virginia, on July 6, 1888. He was graduated from Marshall College with an A.B. degree in 1910. He received a B.S. degree from the University of Illinois in 1913 and from West Virginia in 1914. He received an A.M. from Columbia University in 1919 and a Ph.D. in 1923. He was a teacher of rural schools in Wayne and Mungo Counties, West Virginia, from 1905 to 1910; principal of the Nicholas County High School from 1914 to 1918; associate professor of vocational education at North Carolina State in 1919 and 1920; professor of agricultural education at Penn. State from 1921 to 1926; research secretary of the Penn. State Education Association from 1926 to 1928; supervisor of research and surveys of the State Department of Education of Virginia since 1929. He is a member of the Federal Board of Vocational Education, the National Education Association, the Education Research Association, Phi Delta Kappa, and Kappa Delta Phi.²

Dr. Myers believes that the teachers should remain free, and they cannot do so by affiliating with organized labor. He says:

"All teachers worthy of their calling and trust are essentially free, even though apparently helpless; and this sort of freedom lives forever and is multiplied in the accumulated multitudes to whom it is passed on. There can be no question if teachers recognizing their weakness, seek protection under the arms of 'labor' which is fighting a class battle with 'capital', but that they will be losers in freedom of spirit and that freedom which carries over in teaching and makes for democracy in education.

"The general issue is clear cut. Shall teachers, with the

economic and moral support of one class organization, attempt to dictate the terms of their own labor, and the education which all classes must receive? Will any large number of persons be so gullible as to believe that democracy can be safe in the hands of such teachers? If democracy is to be safe, the teachers of our future citizens must be able to remain free from class prejudice as professional public servants, must see the justice of the claims peculiar to any class, and labor to dispel the ignorance and cultivate the unselfishness which makes class disputes possible.

"Certainly teachers must be aggressive and actively use their rights, duties and responsibilities of their citizenship to promote true democracy. Not the democracy which the American Federation of Teachers advocates; but that democracy which enables the classroom teacher to work in the same organization with all other professional educators. A democracy which will enable the organized teachers to cooperate with the representatives of the people. The people themselves, and all class organizations, to the end that all individuals and all classes are given an equal opportunity, from an educational point of view, to live the most happy and useful lives of which they are capable.

"Teachers' organizations we should have, and will have. It is the teachers' prerogative, now, to organize or be organized. To determine their own purposes, aspirations, ideals, or have the same determined for them. To become a fine professional group of public servants, or become subservient to a strong class organization. Which?"

CHAPTER IV.

The Issue from the Standpoint of the Pupil

In considering anything that affects public education we must stop to meditate upon the effect which the movement will have upon the pupils in the schools. We must remember that the schools exist for the children; not to give jobs to teachers, superintendents, janitors and other school employees. Too often the true purpose of the schools is forgotten in the interests of politicians and others who would use the schools to further their own selfish ends. At the present time, in many communities, an issue is being made over the employment of local residents as teachers, and the discharge of married women teachers. In these controversies the children in the schools are very seldom considered; very few stop to think whether such action helps or harms the instruction in the schools. In deliberating upon the question of teachers affiliating with the American Federation of Labor we must consider how such an affiliation will affect the pupils. Will the pupils in our schools receive a better education if the teachers are connected with organized labor, or will it have a derogatory effect? Let us consider the advantages and disadvantages of the movement.

The unionization of other groups of workers under the American Federation of Labor has, undoubtedly raised the scale of wages in various lines of work. If the remuneration of teachers can be raised
so as to induce people that are better qualified to enter the teaching profession, and help to retain our best teachers, the quality of teaching in the public schools would be very likely to be improved. In periods of prosperity many competent teachers give up teaching to accept better paying positions in the field of business, or to enter other professions. If the compensation for teachers is commensurate with that of business opportunities and other professions, the chances are that a very small percentage of teachers will leave the profession. Surely the teachers are performing a worthwhile service. Are they not entitled to an adequate compensation for their services? If a child is sick no expense is spared in getting the best doctors for the child. Why should we not secure the best teachers for the child as well as the best doctors? In many cases where a teacher is receiving a very small salary, often less than the wages paid to an unskilled laborer, that teacher is not the best teacher that can be obtained for the salary paid, but the children are entitled to an efficient and competent teacher even if a higher salary is necessary. The American Federation of Teachers believes in a $2,000. minimum salary for teachers. They believe that every child is entitled to at least a $2,000. teacher. (See p.34)

The American Federation of Teachers strongly advocates freedom of speech and tenure for teachers. A teacher who has no freedom of speech and must handle only subjects which are safely dead seldom exerts the proper influence over the pupils. Many school officials forbid the discussion of controversial subjects in the classrooms. If the pupils are not given a chance to use their reasoning powers when they are in
the schools how can they be expected to reason things out for themselves when they leave school and take their places in the community? If the teacher has no tenure of position and the threat of loss of position is held over his head at all times he is very apt to follow the line of least resistance and avoid anything frowned upon by his superiors, even though he feels that it is essential to the education of the pupils. A teacher worried by insecurity and afraid to express himself and his personality is not doing very much to develop the character of his pupils. He may be stifling the personality of those under his charge. Stephen Ewing, writing in Harpers' Monthly in regard to this, paints rather a dismal picture. He says:

"So the vicious influence of fear travels down the line: the school board cows the superintendent, the latter cows the principal, and he in turn cows his teachers. The head of one agency summed up the situation with the remark that 'school teachers are the most frightened group of people to be found in any profession or business!'¹

If this condition is true, something should be done to remedy it. If the American Federation of Teachers can help teachers to conquer their fears and express their personalities to the end that pupils will learn to think for themselves and form their own conclusions in an intelligent manner, the pupils in our schools will receive a more adequate education.

The American Federation of Teachers believes that a true picture of the past, with due regard for the age of pupils, should be given; that both sides of controversial subjects should receive adequate and impartial consideration so as to develop the spirit of tolerance and provide proper material for thought. The truth should be taught and

and should not be distorted or perverted.

The Federation also advocates full pay for absence due to sickness. If teachers are not in good health they cannot do justice to their job of teaching. Teachers that lose their pay while absent from school on account of sickness will not stay away from their classes until it becomes absolutely necessary. Many teachers insist on continuing to teach when they should be in bed. This is an injustice to the pupils as well as to the teachers themselves as they have no heart for their work and are irritable and merely trying to get their classes over with. There is also the danger of passing their colds or other ailments to the children. If the teachers receive full pay for absences due to illness, a capable substitute can take the place of the teacher who is sick, to the benefit of the pupils and the teacher. The Federation recommends the following:

1. Full pay for absence of 60 teaching days due to illness, if certified to by a physician.

2. Payment for illness beyond the 60 days to be determined by the superintendent of schools or by the Board of Education.

3. Full pay for absence due to death in the family or to quarantine.

4. The disciplining of teachers who abuse these privileges.

Perhaps the affiliation of the teachers with organized labor may help the teachers to better understand their pupils. There is no doubt that a majority of the pupils in the public schools come from the homes of workers. If an affiliation with labor can help the tea-

chers to gain a better understanding of the problems of this large group of their pupils and bring them into a closer relationship with the families of these children, it should improve the quality of teaching. If the teachers understand the homes from which their pupils come, they will be better able to understand and remedy their difficulties. By this closer connection with the workers, they may also be able to interest them in their schools and secure reforms which are needed in the educational system. The parents should have more knowledge of the schools which their children are attending.

If the teachers have a voice in determining the educational policies and have a right to exercise their citizenship in the community, they are very likely to become better teachers in the classroom. The teachers are closer to the pupils than the administrative officials and better able to understand the needs of these pupils. If they have something to say concerning the policies of the school, they can present the pupils' side of the case, and it may cause the teachers to have more interest in the schools. If the teachers do not exercise actively their rights as citizens of the community, how can they expect to teach their pupils to interest themselves and become an integral part of their community and yet remain aloof themselves? They have the future leaders of the community, and perhaps of the state and nation, in their hands, and they should do their best to add to their development. Can they do this by being disinterested spectators? From my experience in the public schools, I can think of no teacher that inspired me to become a better citizen.
Eliminating the fear of insecurity is a major aim of the American Federation of Teachers. Everyone will agree that the competent teacher should feel secure in his position in order for the pupil to receive the best teaching. But will the Federation protect the incompetent teacher? If an incompetent teacher is a member of the Federation, in good standing, will that organization be apt to stand by and see the teacher dismissed from his position without doing anything to help him retain his position? A superintendent may be forced to keep an inefficient teacher in his system for years, because that teacher may have the backing of organized labor of the community. Superintendents of schools very rarely dismiss a good teacher, but they do want the power to dismiss teachers that in their estimation are incompetent. It would seem to be for the best interests of the pupils in our public schools to be able to eliminate unsatisfactory teachers without fighting a strong organization in the process of doing so. The Federation desires a $2,000. minimum salary for teachers, but they say that they realize that every teacher is not worth a $2,000. salary. Suppose some of these teachers that are not worthy of this minimum salary are members of the Federation, will it be an easy matter to eliminate them; or will the organization come to their assistance when they are in danger of losing their positions?

If teachers are members of the American Federation of Teachers, will they be able to handle all issues in an impartial manner? Suppose they are teaching in an industrial community and a trade union also affiliated with the American Federation of Labor is on strike from
the local factories. Do you think that the teachers will remain impartial in such a case? Their sentiments are very likely to be in favor of the workers, even though they try to remain unprejudiced. W.C. Ruediger, writing on the unionism of teachers, says in regard to this:

"The objectionable feature in this affiliation was well revealed in a discussion I once had with a union teacher shortly after a strike of street railway employees had broken out in the local community. The teacher maintained that membership in the union had benefited her because it had greatly enhanced her interest in affairs beyond the school room. Then she cited, by way of example, the fact that the moment the street car strike had broken out her ardent sympathy, and that of every other member of the union, had at once gone out to the strikers (and she implied, against the owners and managers of the railway). An impartial investigation of the issues of the controversy before aligning herself was precluded, for wasn't she already aligned by the union?"

Our newspapers, our books and magazines, our lecture platforms, and even our pulpits to some extent, are agents of propaganda. We should endeavor to have our schools at least impartial dispensers of the truth. If the teachers belonged collectively to the Republican Party, I doubt if they could present both sides of the political question to their pupils in an impartial manner. As members of the labor movement, can they present both sides of the labor-capital question in a fair manner? The teachers should be in a position to present both sides of a question without bias and should encourage the pupils to form their own conclusions.

One of the major objectives of the American Federation of Teachers is the raising of salaries. If the teachers are carrying on a campaign for increases of salaries and are not having the success they hope for, they may not go out on strike, but they will be unsatisfied with their work and their work may suffer accordingly. A dis-

1. "Unionism Among Teachers", School and Society, Nov.16, 1918, p.590.
satisfied teacher seldom puts his heart into his work. The pupils are not to blame if the salary increases are not forthcoming; yet they are the ones who would be made to suffer in this event. Although the possibility of a strike is remote, if teachers should go on strike the pupils are the ones that would be the losers. We owe it to the children to see that they receive an education and to see that they have the best teachers that it is possible to secure for them.

Superintendents of schools, as a rule, do not favor teachers' unions affiliated with organized labor. Most superintendents think that the National Education Association is the only nation-wide organization that is needed by the teachers. The American Federation of Teachers claims that the National Education Association is dominated by the school executives and that the teachers need an organization in which the members will not be influenced by school officials. The National Education Association is concerned with the intellectual and moral uplift of teachers; the American Federation of Teachers concerns itself with the economic and physical welfare of teachers. The National Education Association stresses the improvement of pedagogy and the training of teachers in service. The American Federation of Teachers centers its interest in the raising of salaries, tenure and the improvement of conditions of work. Is there room for both of these organizations; or will one perform the necessary service?

Perhaps superintendents are afraid of losing some of their power if the teachers have a strong organization backed by the millions comprising organized labor. If a superintendent must consider the at-
titude of the labor body of his community before he makes a move, his own power will be lessened. The superintendent may feel that he is more competent to judge what is best for the interests of the school than the labor interests of the community. The superintendent should be an expert in his field, and whatever he does should be for the best interests of his community. If the workers of the community have an intelligent interest in their educational system they may be able to help the superintendent. If they do not understand the school system and its needs and look upon the superintendent as the natural enemy of the teacher, the efficiency of the superintendent will be impaired.

What do superintendents think of the American Federation of Teachers? We shall consider the opinions of a few superintendents in various parts of the country and the reasons for their views.

Mr. Hector L. Belisle, superintendent of schools of Fall River, Mass., expresses his views on the subject as follows:

"To attempt to get rid of unsatisfactory conditions at the cost of entangling the teaching profession in an organization clearly tainted with labor union professionalism may be good business for some teachers, but it is pretty sure ultimately to be bad business for the cause of public education.

"The American Federation of Labor is an organization whose aims are purely economic-social. It was instituted primarily for the personal economic welfare of its own members. It protects and defends wage earners from employers of labor whose sole purpose in business is the making of money. Organized labor is absolutely necessary for offense and defense against such employers as seek to impose unfairly upon their employees for their own profit.

"Professional organizations like medical, dental and bar associations have professional-social aims. Their purpose is the professional improvement of their members to enable them to render better service to the public.

"It is nation-wide knowledge that the essential movements
of the various groups in the American Federation of Labor relate to wages and hours and other labor matters that are of real importance only to those directly concerned, - employers and employees. The professional associations, on the other hand, rarely, if ever, discuss either hours of labor or payment for services rendered. Their interest, almost exclusively, lies in the improvement of service.

"Teachers naturally belong with the groups interested in professional-social advancement. No organization of teachers should stand before the American people tainted with the suspicion of economic-social aims. Yet that is exactly where the American Federation of Teachers now stands."1

Mr. Thomas B. Portwood, Superintendent of Schools at Atchison, Kansas, feels that the National Education Association is the proper organization for teachers and that no other organization is necessary. He says:

"It is not my purpose to dispute here any of the claims of the American Federation of Labor. I will admit now that, so far as I know, this organization has done and is doing much for the American school. However, I am not willing to admit that the American Federation of Labor is the only organization that has a wholesome educational policy or that the mere fact that it has such a policy is any argument at all for the teachers of America to form themselves into a similar and allied body.

"Most teachers in America are struggling toward the goal of true professionalism. All teachers worthy of the name are deeply concerned in doing everything possible to hasten the day when the business of teaching will have a professional status equal to that of any of the other great professions. Many factors are involved in this march of professional progress. It involves the training and general fitness of the individual, the raising of standards for teacher certification and the improvement of the conditions affecting teacher tenure. It also implies a development of professional zeal within the individual that kindles the fire of enthusiasm for the task in hand and brings an abiding faith in teaching as a profession. It also implies an organization of teachers on a professional basis. The National Educational Association is sufficient for this purpose.

"What we surely do not need is the alliance of teachers with an organization that is not primarily an educational body. There should be co-operation and mutual understanding but not positive alliance. This nation is supporting schools as they have never been supported before. This support comes from the people generally. No

particular organization has any right to claim credit for its creation. It is rooted in the fundamental American principle of equal opportunity for all. It has been demanded by all classes.

"The successful administration of any enterprise depends upon a 'straight line of authority'. This line of authority must reach from the lowest subordinate directly through to the final authority. A school system is no exception to this rule. The straight line so-called does not prohibit a free voice by all concerned in the administration of the enterprise.

"A board of education, working under the laws of a state, must have complete control of the school system that is placed under its charge. Any organization that attempts to nullify or scatter this authority is working toward chaos in American public education.

"Let us have more loyalty to the great teachers' organization we now have, - the National Education Association. We do not need or desire affiliation with any other body."\(^1\)

Thomas R. Cole, Superintendent of Schools, Seattle, Washington, does not believe that the American Federation of Teachers is in harmony with the underlying principles of public education in our country. He says concerning this:

"It has been said that America's greatest contribution to civilization is her public-school system. Let us assume for argument that this be true. The greatness of our public schools springs from the fact of their wide open door of equal opportunity for every child. The continuance of a fair chance for every child depends upon the universal support of the schools by all classes of the American people. This can only be secured in the future, as it has been in the past, through absolute freedom of the schools from interference or control by those who are affiliated with any group promoting special interests.

"The American Federation of Teachers, however, plausible as its claims may be, by reason of its affiliation with a special group, is not only out of harmony, but stands in direct opposition to the fundamental principles of the American public-school system."\(^2\)

D. E. Wiedman, Superintendent of Schools, Bellingham, Washington, thinks that such a federation would hamper the superintendent

1. "The School Executive Looks at the Teachers' Federation", The Nation's Schools, March, 1929, p.44.
2. Ibid, p.45.
in his work. He says:

"From an executive's standpoint a federation is not desirable. Those who have been in executive work for any period of time realize that there are times and conditions that make the transfer of teachers and even the elimination of teachers from the corps almost a necessity. Under a federation this would be impossible. There are times when superannuated teachers, although in their own minds still able to perform their classroom duties, become a drag upon the educational system and should be retired from active service. Under the narrowing restrictions of a federation this also would become impossible without the virtual consent of the teacher involved or of the federation of which she happened to be a member. In other words, a federation of teachers handicaps school administration and curtails executive prerogatives.

"I realize that this is one of the strongest arguments being expounded in favor of the federation as against the superintendent who through personal pique, undue social pressure or for various trivial reasons may cause an instructor to be removed. My long term of contact with school executives has convinced me that, as a whole, irrespective of how much they may be accused to the contrary, they are just and charitable even to a fault in the consideration of the retention of teachers in their corps.

"Today, no teacher need fear loss of tenure if she does her work. It will also be found that every superintendent will concur in the desires of his corps for increased remuneration and better teaching conditions commensurate with the financial ability of his district and comparable to those of other districts of his state. When his knowledge of conditions makes him sure that requests of his corps cannot be met, the superintendent will frankly tell his co-workers and they, having confidence in him as an executive, will continue to work for the best interests of the district in which they are employed.

"If these conditions be true, as I feel they are, the teachers of America have no need for an organization other than their own state association, which works for the betterment of school conditions within its own state, and the National Education Association, which is diligently working for the advancement of education."

L. C. Ward, Superintendent of Schools, Fort Wayne, Indiana, feels that the American Federation of Teachers forgets the fundamental principle that the schools exist solely for the education of the children. He says:

"Public schools are not maintained by the people in order to make jobs for superintendents, principals or teachers, or to protect such persons in their jobs. Public schools, maintained by the people, are and should be controlled by the people through the medium of boards or commissioners. Such officers must be free to act according to their best judgment without undue pressure from an uninformed public on the one hand or from an interested group of professional persons on the other. They welcome advice and constructive criticism from any source but they do and should rightfully resent the machinations of politicians, either of those within or those without the schools.

"Teachers, principals and superintendents are public servants, paid by the public, answerable to the public. No third party has any right whatsoever to come between the people, as represented by school boards, and the teaching body. It is unthinkable that the principles developed by organized labor in its struggles with organized private capital should have any valid application in the relations of public servants with the whole people. To make any such application is to indict the whole people on the score of injustice, repacity, selfish greed and carelessness with respect to human rights. No such indictment can be fairly sustained. The people have been more than generous in their treatment of the schools. With hundreds of thousands of teachers employed by thousands of school districts, the cases of injustice and unfair treatment are so few as to be negligible. And, as in all other matters of public import, the people have their own powers of correction and these they are not slow to exercise.

"The public school in America has wholly escaped from the tyranny of one-man control, whether he be soldier, king or high priest. Shall a more dreadful tyranny, the tyranny of an interested mob, now dictate the policies and control the actions of the people through dangerous pressure upon their chosen representatives? Can a republic be safe when its public servants are answerable, not to the people, not to the chosen representatives of the people, but to their own court of review?

"Nobody will question the right, nay even the desirability, of teacher's organizing for professional purposes, for social contacts, for improvement of themselves in service. Everybody, except a small minority of teachers, does question their right as public servants to set themselves up as judge and jury in a cause of pecuniary interest to question, upon grounds of public policy, the right of any group of public servants, whether they be teachers, firemen, policemen or soldiers, to owe any obedience to any authority except the authority of the whole people, as expressed in the legal machinery set up to conduct the several departments of government."

A. S. Jessup, Superintendent of Public Schools, Cheyenne, Wyoming, sets forth his reasons for not desiring a local of the American Federation of Teachers in his community:

"First. In my opinion the National Education Association, the various state teachers' associations and the local city and county associations which are units of the National Education Association furnish all the organizations to which our teachers can well belong.

"Second. There may have been some need for such an organization as the American Federation of Teachers twelve years ago at a time when the National Education Association included only a small membership. That need does not exist at the present time when 20 percent of the teachers of the nation belong to the National Education Association. If I am informed correctly, this is a larger percentage of the teaching profession than the percentage of labor belonging to the American Federation of Labor.

"Third. Public-school teachers serve all the public and should not be allied with any class. They should be free to judge the program of every class and take the best from each.

"Fourth. Strife and contention seem to follow in the wake of many organizations of the American Federation of Teachers. The cause of education does not prosper in such an atmosphere. I prefer to secure the aims of the educational program more slowly and keep the good will of every portion of the community. In fact, I think the cause we have at heart is best served in the long run this way.

"Fifth. It is not likely that teachers will want to belong to two national organizations. The National Education Association has become so strong and has accomplished such a splendid program for the uplift of the profession and for the progress of education that it should have the support of all forward looking teachers. I make this statement with due consideration for the good work of the American Federation of Teachers in some localities. Teachers should present a unified front and they can best do that in our own organization, which is unallied with any class."¹

¹ "The School Executive Looks at the Teachers' Federation", The Nation's Schools, March, 1929, p.46.
CHAPTER V.

The Issue from the Standpoint of the Public

What is the attitude of the public toward the affiliation of the teachers with the American Federation of Labor? In the last analysis the public is paying the bills for the public education and must be considered to some extent. The one who shoulders the burden of expense usually has some say as to how the money shall be spent. That portion of the taxpayers' money which is expended for public schools should be used to the best advantage. If, through the affiliation of the teachers with organized labor the cause of public education will be benefited, it should receive the support of the public. If it has an opposite effect on public education it should not be countenanced by the people.

School boards in general are anxious to do whatever they consider is best for public education. In fixing the salaries of teachers the board must take into consideration the finances of the community. That school boards have been slow to act or have failed to meet the minimum or maximum salaries asked for by teachers is often due to the pressure of legal restrictions on school expenditures and limitations for school purposes.

It is well for both school boards and teachers to remember that they do not stand in the relation of employer and employees in the ordinary sense. School boards are not the private bosses of teachers; they are the representatives of the people and they express, or should
THE ROLE OF TECHNICAL ADVISORS

Technical advisors are essential in the development and implementation of new technologies and methods. They provide guidance on the latest advancements in their field of expertise, help establish standards and best practices, and facilitate the sharing of knowledge among practitioners. Technical advisors often work closely with stakeholders to ensure that projects meet the needs and expectations of the end-users. Their role is crucial in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Technical advisors must possess a deep understanding of their subject matter and be able to communicate effectively, both written and verbal, to ensure the successful implementation of projects.
express, the will of the people in all their policies and acts. There is not, therefore, the same relation between teachers' union and school boards as there is between trade unions and private employers. The trade union member is attempting to gain a fair share of the profit of the employer, but the teachers' union member is trying to receive a better salary for performing a service.

School boards and teachers are both working for the same end -- the public welfare as represented in the child -- and they cannot rightly maintain a selfish attitude. They must both be willing to accept or reject any policy or act with regard to its effect on the educational welfare. They must not consider wholly their own particular advantage, but the public welfare.

Some school boards have shown their disapproval of teachers' unions in the past. Even before the formation of the American Federation of Teachers, when the teachers of Chicago were affiliated with the local trade unions, the Chicago Board of Education showed its disapproval by the following resolution adopted in 1915:

"Membership by teachers in labor unions, or in organizations of teachers affiliated with a trade union, or a federation or association of trade unions (as well as teachers' organizations which have officers, business agents, or other representatives who are not members of the teaching force) is inimical to proper discipline, prejudicial to the efficiency of the teaching force and detrimental to the welfare of the public school system; therefore, such membership, affiliation, or representation is hereby prohibited.

"All members of the education department who are now members of any such prohibited organization shall forthwith discontinue their membership therein and shall within three months from the date of adoption of this rule furnish satisfactory evidence that such membership has been discontinued. No person shall hereafter be employed in any capacity in the education department until such persons shall
state in writing that he or she is not a member, and will not while employed in the education department become a member of any such prohibited organization.\(^1\)

An injunction was asked by the teachers to restrain the Board of Education from enforcing this rule. The injunction was granted. The judge held the rule to be arbitrary and unreasonable and one that if enforced would prohibit the teachers' membership in the National Education Association and the Illinois State Teachers' Federation, as well as the Chicago Teachers' Federation.

The Seattle, Washington, Board of Education also showed its disapproval of teachers joining the American Federation of Teachers by adopting the following resolution:

"That no person be employed hereafter, or continued in the employ of the district as a teacher while a member of the American Federation of Teachers, or any local thereof; and that before any election shall be considered binding, such teachers shall sign a declaration to the following effect: 'I hereby declare that I am not a member of the American Federation of Teachers, or any local thereof, and will not become a member during the term of this contract.'\(^2\)

The Seattle High School local of the American Federation of Teachers brought action to restrain the Board from enforcing this resolution. The Supreme Court of Washington refused to issue the desired injunction. The court pointed out that under the Statutes, Boards of Education have authority "to adopt and enforce such rules and regulations as may be deemed essential to the well-being of the schools." The court took the position that the question of the right to dismiss teachers was not involved; the only issue involved was the untrammeled right of the Board to employ such teachers as it pleased. The following statement is quoted from the courts opinion:


2. "Authority of Boards of Education to refuse to employ teachers who are members of a teachers' union.", Elementary School Journal,
"The employment of teachers is a matter of treaty or voluntary contract. Both parties must consent and be mutually satisfied and agreed. On the part of each it is a matter of choice and discrimination. However, though qualified, no teacher has the legal right to teach in the schools until the directors willingly enter into a contract for that purpose. Similarly, the directors have no legal right to the services of any teacher until the teacher voluntarily enters into a contract for that purpose. Unless restricted by statute in some way, the board is entitled to the right of freedom of contract as much as the teachers are. On the other hand, the discharge of a teacher affects a legal point. It affects the right of a contract that may not be canceled or impaired at the will or discretion of the board of directors, but only for sufficient cause. The argument is made on behalf of the appellants that if the judgment in this case is correct, then it must follow that the school board has the power to banish certain enumerated classes of persons from its teaching force. We do not so understand; no teaching force or outstanding contract is involved. The principle announced by the judgment is that the courts will not interfere with the discretion of the board in the future employment of teachers. The exercise of the power to employ does not in any way affect the present teaching force or any part of it; but only the right of contract in creating or establishing a future force."

Has a board of education a right to lay down a rule whereby certain persons are excluded from employment for reasons having nothing to do with their moral or physical characteristics, their educational qualifications or their general abilities as teachers? A school board could not very well resolve not to hire as teachers persons over six feet or under five feet four inches in height. Their job is to select the best persons for the teaching positions and the fact that a person is five feet four inches in height or a member of the teachers' union should not be considered in regard to its effect on the teaching qualifications.

The authority of a board of education to refuse to employ teachers who maintain membership in a teachers' union came before the Circuit Court of Ohio in the case of Fredrick vs. Owens (350 Ohio Cir-

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...
cuit Court, 538), and before the Supreme Court of Illinois in the case of the "People vs. Chicago" (278 Illinois 318, 116 N.E. 158, 160 L.R.A. 1917E, 1069). In both cases the authority of the board was sustained. In the Illinois Case the court in a majority opinion went so far as to say:

"The board has the absolute right to decline to employ or to re-employ any applicant for any reason whatever or for no reason at all. The board is responsible for its action only to the people of the city, from whom, through the mayor, the members have received their appointment. It is no infringement upon the constitutional rights of anyone for the board to decline to employ him as a teacher in the schools, and it is immaterial whether the reason for the refusal to employ him is because the applicant is married or unmarried, is of fair complexion or dark, or is or is not a member of a trade union, or whether no reason is given for such refusal. The board is not bound to give any reason for its action. It is free to contract with whomsoever it chooses." 1

Although school boards may discriminate in the hiring of teachers, and do all they can to hinder teachers already in their employ from joining teacher unions, the fact remains that teachers have a legal right to affiliate with labor. The solution of the problem does not seem to lie in the direction of antagonism and repression, but in the removal of conditions which have led teachers to unionism. Teachers who are dissatisfied with their salaries, their working conditions, or any other cause are the teachers who turn to unionism.

Public officials, chosen by the people as their representatives, are, or should be, serving the interests of the public. Although most of these officials are not directly concerned with public education many times they are called upon to decide questions relating to education in the course of their work. Members of our legislative bodies have many bills come before them for action which have a bearing on edu-

cation. I have interviewed a few of these representatives of the people in regard to their opinions of teachers affiliating with the American Federation of Labor. No doubt if an extensive survey was employed we would find many in favor and many against this affiliation. In this study we shall have to confine our investigation to a small group.

Thomas B. Mulvehill, a member of the Norwood, Mass., Board of Selectmen from 1919 to 1930, chairman of the Board for seven years, and a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1915, does not believe that teachers need to align themselves with the American Federation of Labor. He believes that persons in the public employ are usually well-treated and do not need to unionize to receive a fair deal from their superior officers.

Roland D. Sawyer of Ware, a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives for twenty-one years, believes that public employees should maintain their own separate organization. He says:

"The position of teachers is very analogous to that of policemen, about whose uniting with organized labor there was so much discussion in 1919 at the time of the Boston Police Strike.

"It is my opinion that public employees, who deal with matters of public safety, public health, public morals and education, are on such a different status from that of the ordinary laboring men, that they should keep separate their organizations. I do not think that the teachers should affiliate with organized labor, unless on some special basis."

Frank B. Coughlin, Representative to the Massachusetts Legislature from the 8th Norfolk District, thinks that teachers are performing mental labor and should affiliate with organized labor. Mr. Coughlin says:

"As I understand, the Supreme Court of the United States
has stated that labor includes mental as well as manual. The teaching profession is in the mental class of labor. This, in my mind, would bring the teachers within its scope, and they should affiliate with the American Federation of Labor."

Francis J. Kelley, Representative to the Massachusetts Legislature from the First Bristol District, says regarding the teachers affiliating with the American Federation of Labor:

"I am a firm believer and supporter of the American Federation of Labor, but I do feel that public school teachers should not be included in its membership. The Federation is, in my belief, for the protection of the working man, and it is not for the protection of other groups. The public school teachers are in a group that is unlike any other class, and it is my opinion that it would be better for themselves and for those whom they serve if they grouped themselves into an organization all of their own."

John P. Flavin, Representative to the Massachusetts Legislature from the 3rd Norfolk District, believes that teachers should affiliate with the American Federation of Labor. He says:

"The dignified profession of teaching is dedicated through and by mental effort to educate and train those who require and seek mental development. Both mental and physical effort are properly classified as labor. Hence the teaching profession can, with proper justice, be affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. The profession should, however, maintain a separate and distinct organization.

"The teaching profession receives its initiative impulse from the necessary training of the children of the workers, both physical and mental. It receives its support in the finances needed from the taxes paid by those groups and consequently should ally itself to this federation, more particularly because this organization can be of invaluable assistance in the profession's efforts to improve its own conditions and the conditions of those whom it educates and trains."

Thomas Dorgan, Representative to the Massachusetts Legislature from Boston, says in regard to this matter:

"The purpose of the American Federation of Labor was to organize the workers, and not the professions. I believe that the teachers should organize themselves, and elect their own officers.

"I am a firm believer of organization, and also high
standard of pay for that wonderful profession which is the real protector of the youth of the land."

What does the general public, the parents and tax-payers, think of the teachers affiliating with the American Federation of Labor? To attempt to objectively determine the reaction of the public in regard to this matter would be a study in itself. No doubt the majority of the people connected with organized labor would be in favor of such an affiliation. The professional people, the manufacturing and business interests, would be very likely to oppose such a move. Many people do not like to see the teachers place the matter of money before service. This is evidenced by a letter sent by a high school alumnus to the New Bedford Standard Times. The New Bedford teachers joined the American Federation of Teachers last November. They had been asked to teach for two weeks without pay because the school budget would be expended before the end of the fiscal year. Here is what this high school graduate says:

"I had almost come to the conclusion that teaching was a profession. Then suddenly I am disillusioned. Those teachers who I once thought were interested primarily in me and my fellow-students, announce that they are more interested in the money that they receive than the welfare of the boys and girls of New Bedford. At least they have refused to work a few days for nothing and have associated themselves with an organization whose first interest is monetary, the American Federation of Labor. (Let me say parenthetically that I am not opposed to the American Federation of Labor in its proper place.)

"To a person of normal intelligence, it must be obvious that one will never become wealthy by teaching. Yet to some, the opportunity to be of service is so inviting, that monetary considerations are put aside. I had always considered that it was this type of teacher who had taught me in New Bedford. Evidently my judgment has been at fault.

"Now I realize that teachers must live. I also realize
that they should receive a salary which enables them to maintain a standard of living consistent with their position in the community. But what are you to do when there is no money for salaries? What does the doctor do when there is no money for services rendered? It might do the teachers of New Bedford some good to ask the doctors whether they ever had to work for nothing. Now if teaching is to maintain its standing as a profession, the teachers must adopt this attitude of self-sacrifice and service. As a final consideration, can you imagine a group of doctors becoming associated with any such organization as the American Federation of Labor?  

The teachers of Chicago proved that they would work even when no pay was forthcoming. Many of these teachers were on the point of starvation and had mortgaged practically everything they owned, yet they did not refuse to work. This splendid demonstration of devotion to public service occurred in the home of the American Federation of Teachers, and a large percentage of the teachers were members of that organization. The New Bedford teachers would work without pay if they thought that it was necessary. They did not believe that the financial situation of the city required that they work without pay. If the city was in financial straits the teachers would be willing to do their part to help. In the recent case in New Bedford the policemen, the firemen, and other public employees were not asked to take the two payless weeks.

CHAPTER VI.

Conclusion

The affiliation of the teachers with the American Federation of Labor has its advantages and disadvantages. When studying any movement of this sort, the advantages should be weighed against the disadvantages before judgment is passed. The American Federation of Labor certainly has a wholesome educational program (see Chapter II) and has considered the matter of public education since its first convention in 1881 (see Page 9). With the teachers helping to draw up the educational program, even better results may be expected.

The advantages to the teacher, such as: the raising of salary schedules, protection of tenure, freedom of speech, the passing of legislation favorable to education, and the closer contact between the teachers and the parents of the children, do not seem to be opposed to the spirit of education. If we expect competent persons to become and remain teachers, the remuneration for teaching should be sufficient to attract such persons to the profession. The protection of tenure should be established if the teacher is to feel secure in his position and to insure the freedom of speech that is necessary. With the backing of organized labor, much legislation favorable to education should be gained. A closer contact between the teachers and the parents should help the education of the children both in the schools and the homes.

The teachers are public employees, however, and there is
some doubt as to whether they should align themselves with any one section of the public. Those groups other than labor may feel that they are being discriminated against. Teaching is usually classified as a profession and professions, as a rule, form their own associations without affiliating with any other group. Members of other professions, such as doctors and lawyers, usually do not work on the same basis as teachers. The union teachers point out that where members of other professions have worked for fixed salaries, they have joined labor unions. The possibility of a teachers' strike under unionism is an objection frequently voiced, but the probability seems remote. The teachers feel that there is less reason for the use of the strike if they are organized, because they can depend upon their power of organization. They feel that the unorganized teacher has no other recourse but to strike (see p. 44). One of the strongest objections to this affiliation is the fact that the American Federation of Labor represents only a part of organized labor. The railroad workers, the clothing workers, and other groups of organized workers not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor may feel that they also have a right to the membership of the teachers if they are to receive the support of organized labor (see p. 43).

Prominent educators are divided on the question of teachers' affiliation with organized labor. Of the men that have made known their opinions, John Dewey, Jerome Davis, John M. Brewer, and Paul H. Douglas favor the affiliation, while David Snedden, Richard R. Price and Charles E. Myers are against the affiliation. The educators on each side of the
question have advanced good reasons for their opinions. (See Chapter III)

In studying this question the children in our schools must be considered. The schools exist for the children and the movement should be examined with regard to the effect upon the education of the pupils in the public schools. If the payment of better salaries, the providing of tenure, freedom of speech, adequate sick-leave, and the satisfying of the demands of the teachers for a voice in determining school policies will help to secure more competent teachers, the children should benefit. If the unionism of teachers protects incompetent teachers and prevents the teachers from handling issues in an impartial manner, public education would certainly not be improved. In my opinion the majority of the teachers in our schools have the interests of their pupils at heart, and will not knowingly do anything to seriously hinder the education of the children entrusted to their care.

Superintendents of schools, as a general rule, do not favor the affiliation of the teachers with the American Federation of Labor. The superintendents perhaps feel that they know what is best for their communities; but they may also feel that their power would be lessened by a strong union of teachers. Most superintendents believe that the National Education Association is sufficient for the purpose, while the teachers feel that this organization is dominated by the school officials. Perhaps there is room for both the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers. The National Education Association can stress the improvement of pedagogy, and the American Federation of Tea-
chers can look after the economic welfare of the teachers. By working together perhaps these two organizations can accomplish much toward raising the professional standards of the teaching profession.

Most school boards show no desire to express an opinion concerning the affiliation of the teachers with the American Federation of Labor. The only opinion which could be found were those of the Chicago, Illinois, and the Seattle, Washington, Boards of Education. (See pp. 72-75) In these two cities the school boards vigorously opposed the formation of teacher unions. Although boards of education have the legal right to refuse to employ teachers that are members of teacher unions (see pp.73-75) and to hinder teachers in their employ from joining unions, the solution of the problem would seem to be in the direction of elimination of the conditions that lead to the unionism of teachers rather than through antagonism and repression. Satisfied teachers are not the ones that turn to unionism.

Public officials, the representatives of the people, are also divided in their opinions on this question. The opinions of a few officials are quoted in this thesis (see pp.76-78). Some of the officials favor the affiliation and others are against it. No doubt if a larger number had been asked for their opinions, many would be found in favor and many against such affiliation, depending upon the majority of the people they represent.

As for the general public, the parents and tax-payers, regarding the affiliation of the teachers with organized labor, the opinions of their elective or appointive officers must suffice, with the
exception of a few cases where some ordinary citizens have expressed an opinion. (See pp. 78-79)

In many communities where high standards prevail there is perhaps no necessity for teacher unions, but in many other communities a strong organization may be needed to raise the standards of the profession. If those sections where low standards prevail do not want the teachers to unionize, they should attempt to eliminate poor conditions and raise their standards.
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