'Equal rights: to realize the promise'

Labor's determination to bring about equal rights for all and the methods by which equality can be achieved make up the sole theme of the November edition of the AFL-CIO's monthly magazine, The American Federationist.

All nine articles and introductory editorial signed by AFL-CIO Pres. George Meany are devoted to "Equal Rights: To Realize the Promise."

Running through much of the magazine is the important proposition that equality cannot be assured in an economic vacuum. Meany sums it up thus:

"EQUAL OPPORTUNITY in employment is meaningless unless there is full employment. Equal housing is impossible until we eliminate the slums and build the homes America needs for all its population—black or white.

"Equal education is impossible until America builds the kind of schools and supplies them with enough well-paid teachers to do the job of providing good education for every one of our children."

The writers do not blink at the fact that there has been—and still is in diminishing degree—prejudice within labor.

BUT THEY emphasize that the same objectives benefit minorities and organized labor. And they tell the story of substantial achievements by labor for equality.

Along with labor's effective battle against discrimination and segregation, the magazine recounts significant instances in which labor and civil rights groups have stood together to their mutual benefit.

The magazine condemns not only the "white backlash" and discrimination against minorities but the "black power" call, which it defines as a retreat from Negro-white partnership for freedom.

And it warns that unless the vicious cycle of antagonisms is supplanted by constructive partnership there will be bitter strife.

Rights drive at crossroads

Not only embittered Negro advocates a "black power" but many white liberals are retreating from the possibility of Negro-white cooperation for equality, says civil rights leader Bayord Rustin.

Writing in The American Federationist, Rustin blames both retreats on the same basic cause—the new complexities of the civil rights struggle.

The situation now is complex because of the nation's failure to deal with the social and economic problems—including those of jobs — which cloud Negro-white relations.

MORE NEGROES were unemployed and more were attending de facto segregated schools in 1964 than 10 years earlier when the Supreme Court handed down its historic school desegregation ruling, Rustin recalls. And, he adds, since 1964 there has been an actual rise in Negro joblessness.

The result is frustration and advocacy of "black power," which he calls "not a confrontation but a 'cop-out.'"

Unfortunately, says Rustin, too many white liberals share in the "cop-out," finding the present situation dismaying and confusing. They were comfortable in the civil rights struggle, he says, when the issue was the simple one of overcoming color bars.

HIS ANSWER to the pressing economic problems includes the "Freedom Budget," calling for a massive anti-poverty effort in which the federal government must take a dominant role.

This calls for creating the staggering total of 22,000,000 to 27,000,000 new jobs by 1975 to benefit all the poor—white or black—and to match an expanding labor force.

It can be accomplished, he says, if the nation "will not only turn its attention but its tremendous resources to its crying social needs."

THESE NEEDS, satisfying which will also make new jobs, include replacing slums with decent housing the poor can afford, building the classrooms and training the teachers needed by schoolchildren, expanding college facilities and doubling the nation's hospital construction outlays.

All men are brothers

The time has come, A. Philip Randolph writes in The American Federationist, to transform the civil rights revolution into a social revolution, aiding all the poor whether they are black or white.

Randolph, president of the Sleeping Car Porters and an AFL-CIO vice president, urges enactment of the "Freedom Budget" which he drew up to wipe out poverty.

Of the 35,000,000 people living under the poverty line, "20 per cent are black and about 75 per cent are white.

"THEREFORE the black working poor must unite in order that we may fight for full employment under the leadership of organized labor.

"There is no remedy for the problem that confronts the civil rights movement without full employment."

Randolph believes the time is near when street marches and demonstrations for civil rights will have run their course. Without eliminating demonstrations and boycotts, he urges that the emphasis shift "from the streets to the conference room."

IF BLACK-WHITE antagonisms are not cured, he warns, "there will be a confrontation of blacks and whites . . . one to secure full citizenship and the other to deny him the right to get these rights."

He condemns both "white backlash" and the fact that "Negroes who were not part of the civil rights movement" have taken violent action, "throwing bottles and bricks, Molotov cocktails."

Violence, he warns, "could escalate into a race war . . . which could become catastrophic to the Negro and to America."

Alliance is key to labor program

Donald Slaiman, director of the AFL-CIO Department of Civil Rights, documents labor's solid progress against discrimination in the November American Federationist. But he adds:

"When it comes to making democracy complete for all Americans, this nation has, to use Abraham Lincoln's phrase, 'much unfinished work.'"

He notes that mass media often publish stories about local unions charged with discrimination, "sometimes fairly, sometimes not."

BUT THE media rarely report the efforts of local and international unions to negotiate nondiscriminatory contracts, end pay discrimination and fight discriminatory dismissals or discriminatory denial of promotion, he points out.

Slaiman reviews the AFL-CIO's campaign to implement the Civil Rights Act and labor's legislative partnership with civil rights groups.

The partnership at this year's session of Congress was in support of civil rights legislation, repeal of Taft-Hartley's "right to work" Section 14(b), minimum wages and other joint objectives.

SLAIMAN cites labor's aid to Negro registration battles and civil rights leaders' support of union organization as examples of a wholesome "two way street" relationship.

He recalls the AFL-CIO's call to its affiliates to work closely with government and other forces to make the Civil Rights Act work. Closer to home was the AFL-CIO request that international unions foster civil rights programs within their unions.

This has worked, he says. Where problems of equality occur, real or as a result of misunderstanding, government efforts are immensely aided by utilizing procedures of international unions.

Making equal rights work

The crying need of government efforts for equality is for better liaison among separate agencies in the field, Walter G. Davis declares in The American Federationist.

So complete has been the separation of the races, he says, that the social change needed today cannot be realistically achieved piecemeal.

"Yet that is our present approach and it is a major reason for the frustration in the large Negro ghettoes . . . that inevitably leads to the unrealistic 'let's go it alone' cries of some civil rights leaders," he says.

DAVIS is assistant director of the AFL-CIO Department of Civil Rights on leave as deputy director of the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. His article is a detailed guide to the workings of government civil rights agencies.

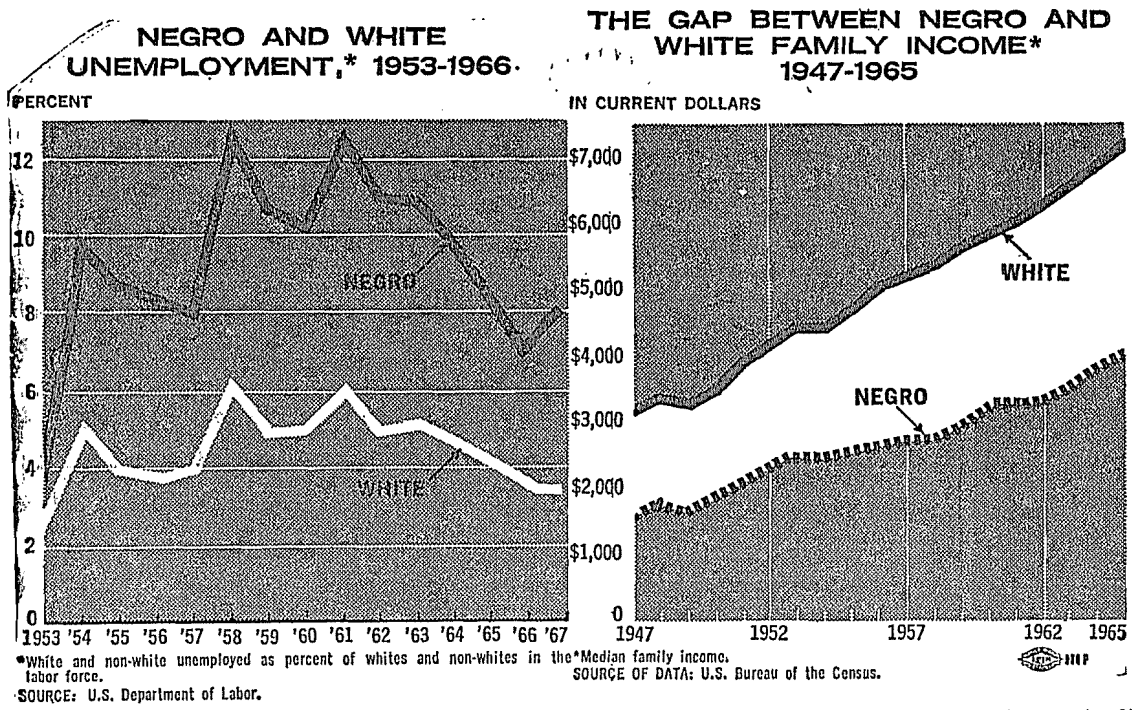
Another Federationist article describes civil rights and government - labor - management efforts to make apprenticeship work for minority youths.

Articles by Whitney Young, executive director of the National Urban League, and Roy Wilkins, executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, tell their organizations' programs.

NATHANIEL GOLDFINGER, AFL-CIO Research Director, describes the stark facts of Negro unemployment and the wide spread between Negro and white income levels.

Negro joblessness—8 per cent for all, more than 20 per cent for young men and 33.9 per cent for young women—must be met by government job-creating activities, he urges.

The aim of such a program, he says, is "to improve the quality of life for all Americans while creating job opportunities for an expanding labor force"—objectives which will benefit the poor whether they are white or black.



TWO CHARTS set the stage for labor's continuing efforts to meet the problems of equal opportunity. The chart on the left reflects an almost historic relationship of two to one in the unemployment rates of Negro and white workers. The gap has narrowed slightly in recent years but remains at a high level. The gap between Negro and white family income, however, has plainly opened up.

Unity way to victory

Much has been done to s fy ties between organized and the civil rights move and much must still be Professor Ray Marshall, a versity of Texas econo writes in The Federationist.

High on the list of what to be done, he declares, is "affirmative action to act seek qualified Negro men rather than merely passivel ceiving applications."

He finds it surprising to union leaders "who would selves never agree that they gained enough for their bers argue that the trouble Negro leaders is that they never satisfied with what have achieved or, worse what the 'unions have done them.'"

LABOR and the civil movement, Marshall notes, "objectives which are neces for the economic, political moral health of the counti

United, the two movements be a powerful force but if dissipate their energies in flict with each other, strengthen their common a saries," he writes.

"Union leaders at every also might do well to esta close working relationships civil rights organizations on mutual trust and unders ing," he adds.

UNIONS in the South did create the area's segregation tern but few openly challe it before the 1930s, he re "because most southern ists, like most southerners, segregationists."

The climate has changed witness the fact that the CIO's support of equality brought more gains than for unionism in the South says. "Southerners who attri their good conditions to the bor movement will not abandon their unions for reasons," he concludes.

Mugging for voters

NEW YORK (PAI)—The unkind cut of all in the 1966 tions was experienced by 71-y old Frank Williams.

Seven months before the ing he was mugged and the took his wallet. When he to vote he was told it was al cast. Williams appealed to a cial board of elections court, tice Edward R. Dudley retu Williams to the polling pla vote, saying, "Obviously his was usurped."

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