

The Florida State Teachers' Association

W. Griffin
J. E. Smith

STATE OFFICERS

- N. W. GRIFFIN, President
Prin., Gibbs High School, St. Petersburg
- W. E. HARRIS, Vice-President
Prin., Hastings Voc. School, Hastings
- JAS. A. ESPY, Executive Secretary
Prin., DeLand Col. High School, DeLand
- W. V. NIXON, Treasurer
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- G. L. PORTER, Sec'y of Research
Prin., Lincoln High School, Tallahassee

Office of The

President -

June 10, 1938

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- S. M. MOSELEY, District No. 7
Union Academy, Bartow
- L. A. HALL, District No. 8
Booker High School, Sarasota

Atty. Charles H. Houston
69 Fifth Ave.
New York

JUN 13 1938

My dear Mr. Houston:

In reply to your letter of June 9 I wish to say that I learned three days before the close of school that I was not reappointed for the next year. When my wife, who teaches in an elementary school here, failed to receive her appointment along with the other teachers, she called the chairman of local board of trustees and asked him about it. In his discussion with her she was informed that I was not reappointed. Several of the citizens here immediately took the matter up with the superintendent of Public Instruction and with the chairman of the trustees. A hearing before the school board has been granted.

The superintendent said at a conference in which I was a member that my activity in behalf of salary equalization, which consisted in seeking a hearing before school board last Sept. to find out why Negro teachers were not paid by the salary schedule that had been adopted by the board and appeared in local paper June 1937, he said that was the reason for not reappointing me. He intimated on another occasion I am told that he thought I was an agitator. Because of the stand that we took here in questioning the adoption of a salary schedule and not paying Negro teachers by it, may have had something to do with the teachers of the state electing me president of the State Teachers' Ass'n. in ~~October~~ Nov. 1937. The state association is behind the case that Mr. J. E. Gilbert of Cocoa has in the courts now. Knowing that I am president of the state association and also knowing my attitude regarding the matter of salary equalization not only has the superintendent of this county a desire, I feel, to do all he can toward eliminating me from the ranks but he has informed me that the other superintendents have sent for my name. We have been further informed by a member of board that the State Agent for Negro schools, D. E. Williams, white had much to do with getting me moved.

This is another matter that I wish to report to you that happened here Thursday June 9. We were having a picnic at a beach, Shore Acres, with permission from City Manager. The police chief and two officers came out about three o'clock and ordered us away, saying get out and get out quick I stated that we had permission from City Manager. He said that he didn't care who gave us permission. In replying to a question from one of the officers, I was knocked down, then told I must learn to say "Yes sir" to "White people. We have taken it up with City Manager and also through

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the local interracial committee of which I am a member, we have a committee to make a formal protest to City Manager Monday. A member, rather the acting chairman of that body had called upon the police chief Friday. The chief is said to have said that there were two mistakes made; the City manager had not informed him that permission had been granted for the picnic, and he did not notify the City Manager before he went out to force the people to leave. (The fact that I was knocked down by one of his officers because I did not say yes sir apparently was not a mistake). He also said he knew how to handle colored people.

City authorities have tried in a way to smooth the thing over in an account that came out in the Evening Independent Friday afternoon and there is a statement from interracial committee in the morning paper. I shall send you clipping of morning paper.

Mr. Frank McCallister asked that I send you an account of the affair and ask that you write City Manager Glenn V. Leland protesting such action on the part of police department. Also send us copy of message.

The branch plans to send two or more delegates to conference in Columbus.

Very truly yours,

N.W. Griffin
N. W. Griffin, Pres.

Florida State Teachers' Ass'n.

N. W. Griffin

Dr. G. H. Eggert
1410 5th Ave. So.
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Rev. R. A. Cromwell
280-16th St. So.
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Dr. J. M. Vander
1313 - 5th Ave. So.
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Mr. [unclear]

Mr. G. D. Rogers
Chairman Citizens Committee
Central Life Ins. Co.
Tampa, Fla.

Dr. Paul
Alexander

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11758

Miss T
A. 3000

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June 19 - Girls High School, St. Petersburg

NW Griffin, not well liked. Wife who teaches in the elementary school well appreciated.

Sept said his activities on behalf of Teachers' salary organization were being successful, also Sept mentioned what the state was. Sept informed him the other county school had asked for assistance, to make sure he could give assistance.

Friday Oct, Haganfiana took out NW Griffin, and had him by state policeman for well saying in

NEGRO PICNIC GROUP OUSTED BY OFFICERS

Misunderstanding, Says Manager Leland In Explanation

St. Petersburg's racial problem bobbed up again today, on the heels of police action in dispersing a throng of some 200 negro picnickers from the Shore Acres section.

"It was all a misunderstanding," City Manager G. V. Leland said today in explaining the incident of yesterday afternoon, "and we regret it deeply."

Called by Mayor Vernon Acce and other property owners in the vicinity, Police Chief E. D. Vaughn and two of his men went to the Shore Acres section and dispersed the crowd of negroes, but not before N. W. Griffin, principal of the Gibbs Senior high school, had voiced his protest.

Griffin, it was reported, was "shoved" by one of the officers during the argument, but nothing serious developed.

Plans Protest

Questioned today, Griffin said he planned to take the matter before the Inter-Racial committee this afternoon. He was undecided as to whether a protest would be filed.

Griffin said today that one of the officers "struck me behind the ear" and told him to "say yes sir" when talking to a white man.

"When the officers drove up and told us to get out, I told them that we had permission of the city manager," Griffin related today. "They told me they didn't care who we had permission from and to get out right now."

Leland Explains

Manager Leland explained the situation today, while Chief Vaughn admitted his error in not notifying the city manager of his action before going on the call.

Apparently the negroes, a small group, have been holding picnics in the area for some time. A delegation appeared in the manager's office a few days ago to ask permission for a "teachers' picnic."

The manager, thinking that it was only a comparatively small group, gave verbal permission. He failed to notify the police department of his action.

Leland today "deplored" the incident, expressing the hope that the negroes would understand just how it happened. At the same time he reiterated the belief that negroes should be furnished some spot for recreation, to guard against a recurrence of such trouble.

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RACIAL GROUP WILL PROTEST NEGRO OUSTER

Misunderstanding, Says Leland

A delegation of members of the city inter-racial committee will call upon City Manager Glenn V. Leland early next week to protest against the ouster Thursday afternoon of several hundred negroes picnicking at Shore Acres.

W. G. Coxhead, secretary of the Y. M. C. A., who will be a member of the delegation, said last night the group did not plan to lodge any formal complaint, but would seek to prevent recurrence of such an incident in the future.

Other members of the delegation will include Dr. J. A. McClure and Mrs. Nat B. Brophy.

Decision to lay the matter before the city manager came after a meeting of the committee yesterday afternoon, when the incident was discussed.

Police said they dispersed the negroes after complaints had been made by Shore Acres residents. N. W. Griffin, principal of the local negro high school, was reported to have been knocked down by an officer.

City Manager Leland expressed regret, and said the entire affair was the result of a "misunderstanding." He said he had given verbal permission for the negroes to have a "teachers' picnic, but understood it was to have included only a small group.