NAACP Meets Wednesday Night; Officers Say Fight Is Only for Equal School Rights

The recently reorganized Hillsboro Chapter of the National Association for Advancement of Colored People met at the Wesleyan Methodist Church here, Wednesday night, to discuss steps taken to date in the group's fight for integrated schools and to make plans for future steps in the school controversy.

Meeting with the local group were: Mrs. Miley O. Williamson, Dayton, regional co-ordinator of the NAACP, and Charles Francis, also of Dayton, who has been named public relations director for the state NAACP chapters.

Elder Rita E. H. Lee, head of the local chapter, who presided over the meeting attended by an estimated 75 persons, gave a report on the state NAACP convention held at Warren, last Sunday, when other state chapters offered assistance to the local chapter in its school fight.

Francis, who told the group about the actions filed in U. S. District Court in Cincinnati, Wednesday morning, told a newsman before the meeting that, "This fight is not in any way to be construed as backing for Philip Partridge. We do not condone or approve of any unlawful act to gain our goal. Our only interest is the fight for the right to attend schools with other children."

ASKED IF the Dayton group would assure the local mothers that they stood behind them on their action of keeping their children out of school, Francis said:

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“I know of no cases where the mothers are keeping children out of school. Mr. Upp, the superintendent, and the school board are doing that.” During the meeting, Francis and Mrs. Williamson told the mothers to continue to take their children to school each morning, and, if turned away, take them back home. “While it is a shame to suffer them to such humiliation,” Mrs. Williamson said, “it will only be for a little while, until after the court hears our case.”

Francis said that he believed segregated schools are not only bad for the colored children, but for the whites as well. Both he and Mrs. Lee, during her talk to the group, pointed out that the adults were the ones who enforce segregation rulings. The children will take care of the problems themselves, if left alone, they said.

THE NAACP officials said, “We can understand Mr. Upp’s position on the matter. It takes time for public opinion to crystallize. However, as far as overcrowded schools are concerned, they would have undoubtedly made room for 67 new white children if they had moved into the district.”

Francis said that in other areas where schools are overcrowded, classes are held on a half-day basis, a plan which would work here.

All officers of the group, both state and local, called upon the members to be orderly and to act as good American citizens. They urged the parents to offer no retaliation such as “fussing, fighting or arguing” when their children are turned away from the white schools.