

# Professional Women

## The Gender Politics of the National Education Association's Century of Non- Unionism

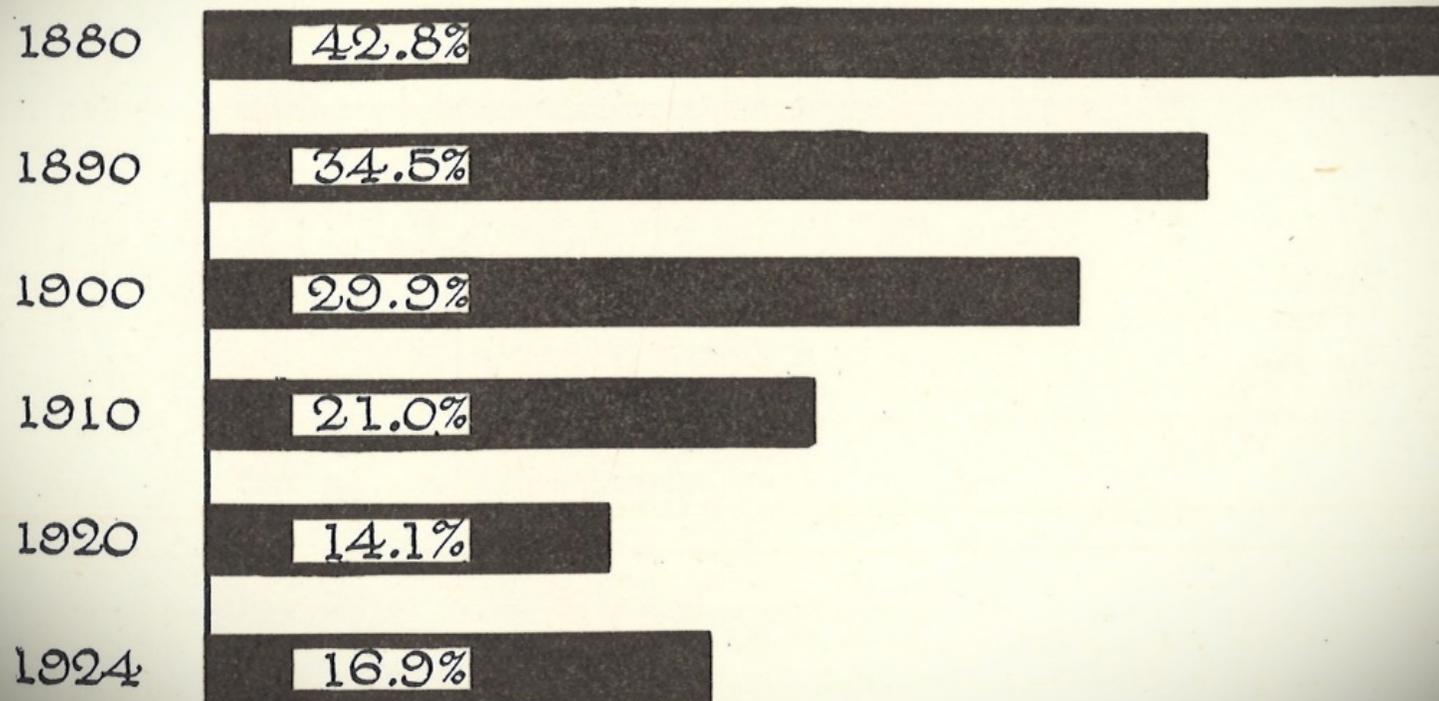
Vakil Smallen  
International Brotherhood of Teamsters Labor History Archivist  
George Washington University



# History of the NEA

- Founded in 1857
- *The Call* was an open letter to the education associations of every state to replicate their associations at the national level.
- .....who are willing to unite in a general effort to promote the general welfare of our country by concentrating the wisdom and power of numerous minds, and distributing among all the accumulated experiences of all....

# PERCENTAGE of MEN TEACHERS in OUR ELEMENTARY and SECONDARY SCHOOLS 1880 ~ 1924



*Research Division, National Education Assn.*

Based on figures of the U.S. Bureau of Education.

CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

PREAMBLE

To elevate the character and advance the interests of the profession of teaching, and to promote the cause of popular education in the United States, we, whose names are subjoined, agree to adopt the following

CONSTITUTION

*Article I—Name*

This Association shall be styled the National Educational Association.

*Article II—Departments*

Sec. 1. It shall consist of four Departments; the first, of School Superintendence; the second, of Normal Schools the third, of Elementary Schools; and the fourth, of Higher Instruction.

Sec. 2. Other Departments may be organized in the manner prescribed in this Constitution.

As a rule the organization of the National Education Association has been in the hands of a few men. The women as well as the great body of men have had little or no part in selecting the officers of the association and no voice in helping determine its policies. In other words, the N. E. A. has been aristocratic in the extreme. But just as there has been a quiet rising of the common people throughout the country against the rule of the few in the state and national government, there has been an uprising in the N. E. A. against a similar condition. This uprising started mainly among the men. It showed itself strongly at the Cleveland meeting in 1908, and at the Denver meeting in 1909 a partial victory was gained without any particular help from the women.

For twenty-five years women constituted the large part of all audiences, paid their dues and cheerfully performed the parts assigned to them on the programs, leaving the business affairs of the association almost exclusively in the hands of the men. They scarcely dreamed that it would be possible to overthrow the N. E. A. aristocracy.

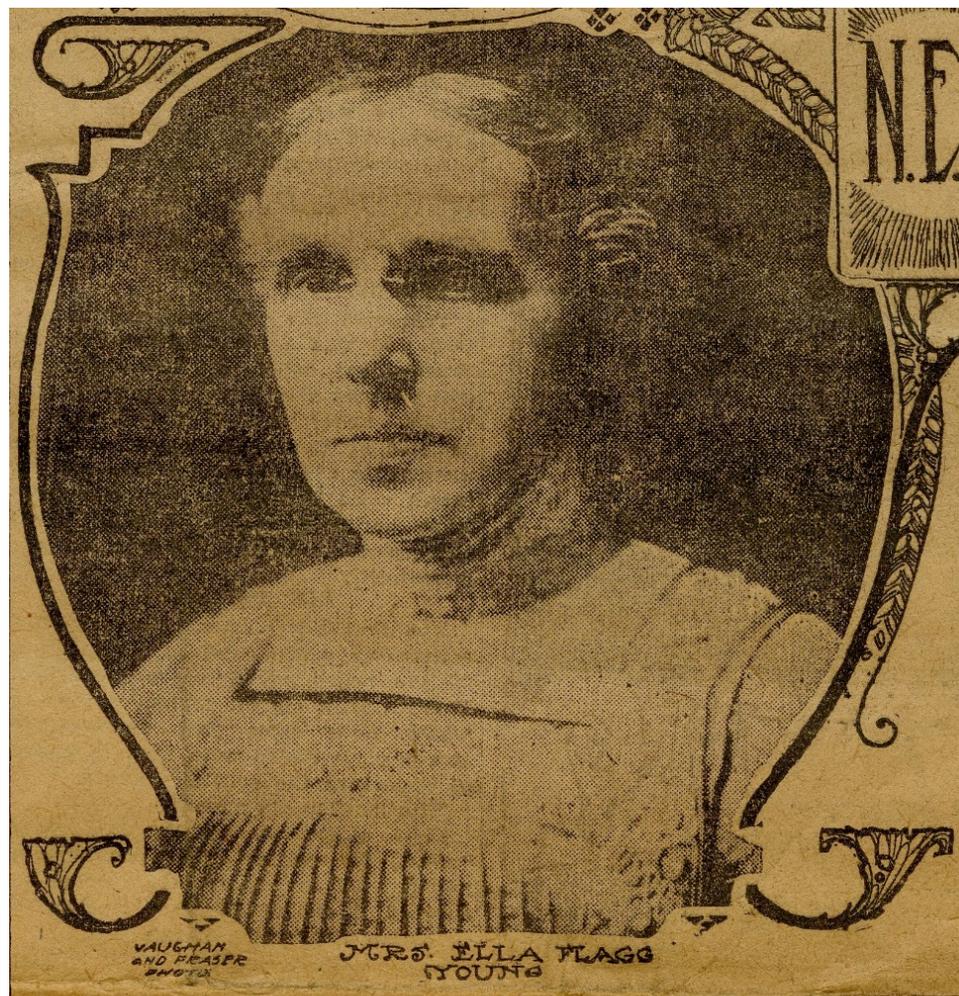
schoolroom, out into the glorious world in which all civilized nations are working for the progress and enlightenment of humanity.

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*WHY TEACHERS SHOULD ORGANIZE*

MARGARET A. HALEY, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEACHERS,  
CHICAGO, ILL.

The responsibility for changing existing conditions so as to make it possible for the public school to do its work rests with the people, the whole people. Any attempt on the part of the public to evade or shift this responsibility must result in weakening the public sense of civic responsibility and the capacity for civic duty, besides further isolating the public school from the



Principals in the fight between the insurgents and old guard of the National Education Association at the board of directors' meeting yesterday. Ella Flagg Young was forced after a vigorous struggle to renounce her plans for admission of teachers. E. E. Scribner led the victorious old guard against her. Carroll G. Pearse was Mrs. Young's chief lieutenant. James Y. Joyner, insurgent candidate for director, refused to vote for himself and was defeated by a vote of 18 to 17. Durand W. Springer's voluntary report discrediting Mrs. Young's assertions about the funds, brought forth facetious remarks from the president. Nicholas Murray Butler's resignation as director precipitated the fight.

The motion to close the debate was carried.

PRESIDENT PEARSE: We come now to the vote upon the first question: Shall the name of Miss Grace C. Strachan be substituted for that of Mr. E. T. Fairchild in the nominating committee's report? As many as favor this motion say Aye. As many as oppose it say No.

The vote having been taken by Aye and Nay vote, President Pearse declared that the motion to substitute was lost.

A rising vote was called for.

MISS BLAKE: I will ask for a ballot. It is not fair to ask for people to stand up and be counted when their superior officers do not want them to be counted.

PRESIDENT PEARSE: The vote will be taken as indicated unless there is a different order from the house.

MISS BLAKE: I move that the vote be taken by a ballot.

The motion was seconded.

MR. BICKNELL: I believe that we are proceeding with a ballot and no business can be intruded during that order.

PRESIDENT PEARSE: The Chair does not wish to have the members of the Association feel that they are not having all the privileges that they should have. The question has been raised. Unless a ballot is ordered, we shall proceed in the usual order. All those in favor of the motion to vote by ballot will stand; be seated. Those opposed to the motion to vote by ballot will stand; be seated. The motion to vote by ballot is lost

## Change in Government Result of Growth

The adoption of this form of government came about as the natural result of growth and development. When the Association had only a few thousand active members, it was possible for these, or a goodly number of them, to assemble at the annual business meeting, elect the officers and transact the business. But the Association has been growing very rapidly during the past few years, until it now has more than fifty thousand active members. The necessity of reorganization on a representative basis has been recognized for several years and plans therefor have been prepared and published and very generally discussed.

## CHART 2

Teachers' unions serve and pay allegiance to organized labor. Professional associations serve and pay allegiance to society as a whole. In a nutshell,

that fact sums up one of the most significant differences between the two.

The segment of organized labor (AFL-CIO) with which teachers' unions are affiliated represent only 20

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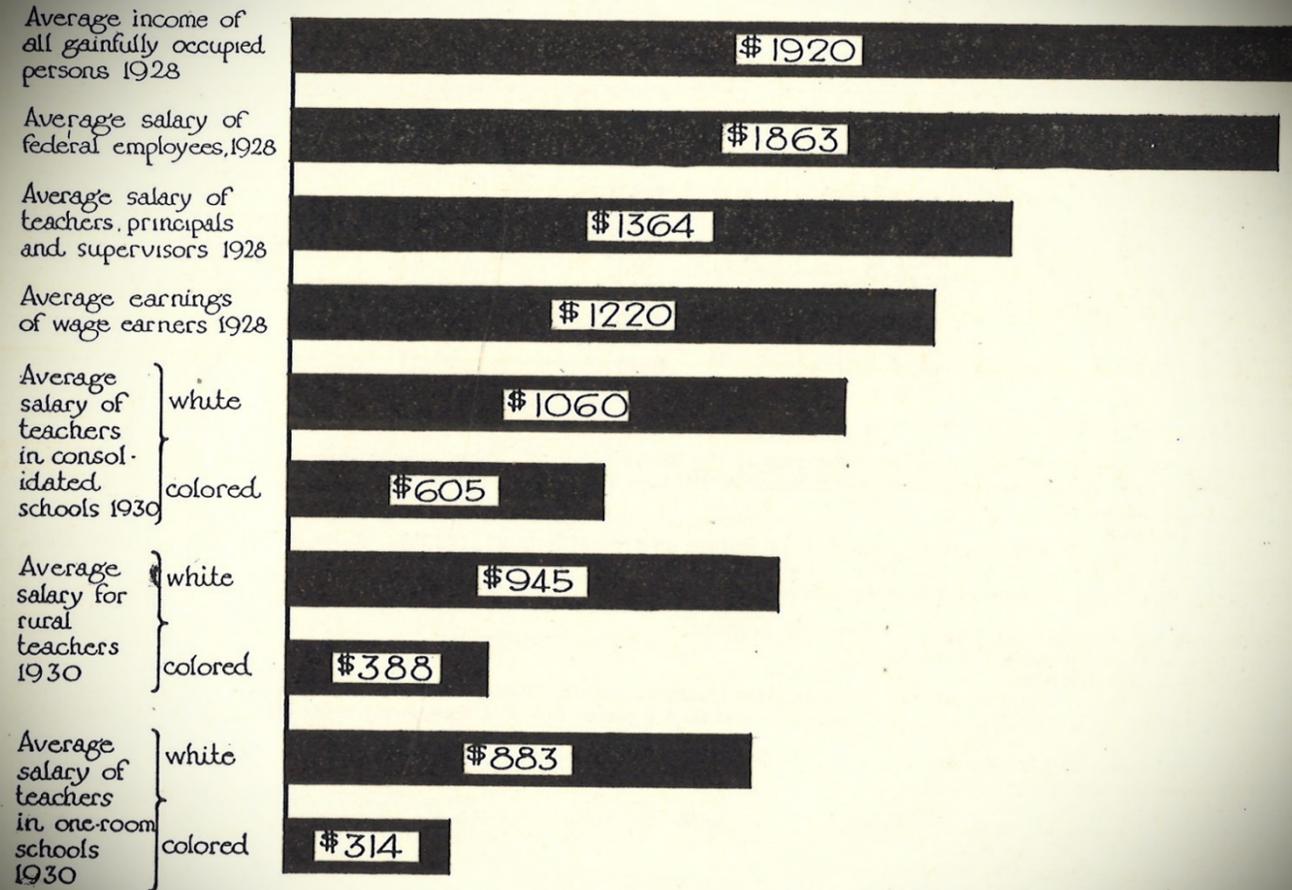
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*Education by radio*—The National Education Association believes that legislation should be enacted which will safeguard, for the uses of education and government, a reasonable share of the radio broadcasting channels of the United States.

**Teacher welfare**—The primary purpose of all education is to provide for the children of America the best possible training for good citizenship and for happy and successful living. Since this training depends almost entirely on the teachers, the fundamental thing in providing adequate education is to set up conditions which will secure and train most effectively the best teachers.

*Standards*—The National Education

# SALARIES OF TEACHERS AND CERTAIN OTHER GROUPS



Research Division, National Education Ass'n.

Average income of gainfully occupied and average earnings of wage-earners from Willford King's *The National Income and Its Purchasing Power*, p. 87. Average salary of federal employees from *Report of Wage and Personnel Survey, Personnel Classification Board, United States Government*, p. 388. Teachers' Salaries from U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Education.



# EXTRA

NRA **San Francisco** AMERICA FIRST **Examiner**

## U. S. TROOPS AWAIT CALL!

*S. F. Without Street Car Service Today*

## PLANS DRAWN TO FEED CITY

*Today Measures Taken by Britain to End Its Great Strike Bared*

ARMY READY IF ORDERED TO KEEP PEACE

Developments

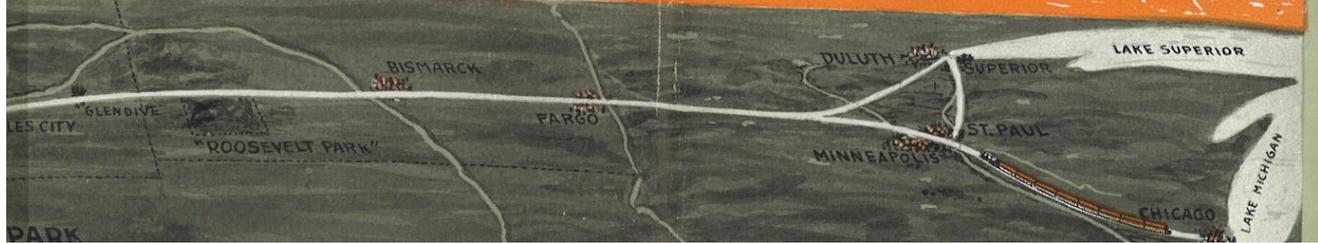
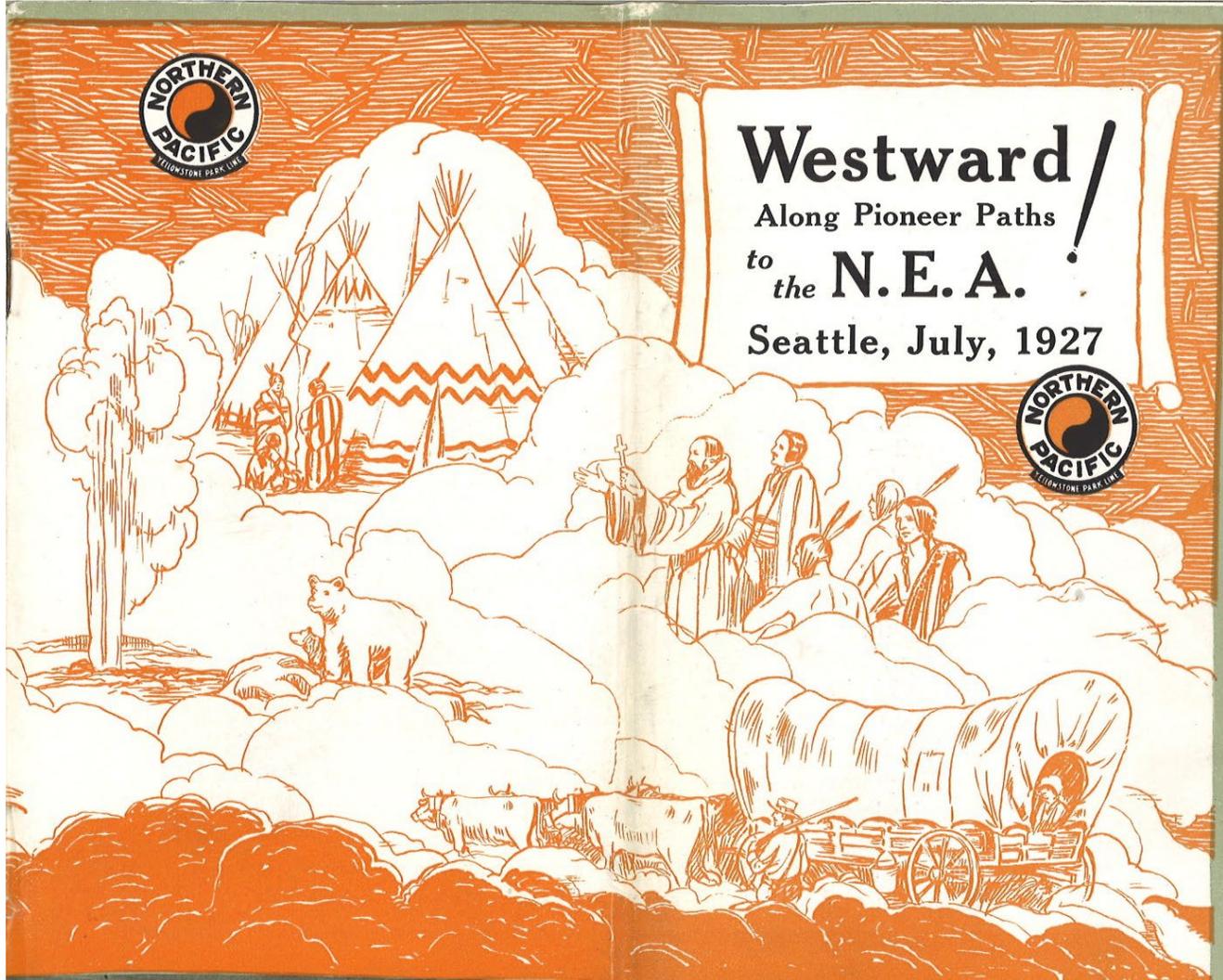
19 RESTAURANTS WILL BE OPEN; POLICE FORCE OF STRIKERS PLANNED

Special Citizen Corps Violence Flare



# Westward /

Along Pioneer Paths!  
to the **N. E. A.**  
Seattle, July, 1927





# Yellow Dog Contract

- The above addressed teacher, by signing a copy hereof, covenants that such teacher is not a member of the American Federation of Teachers, Oklahoma Federation Union no. 767, or a member of any teachers labor union or other organization covered by Rule 23 of Article VI of the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Education....

private employees. It is inevitable that collective bargaining in public employment be compared with collective bargaining in private industry.

It will be seen from the cases that, if collective bargaining agreements in public employment are to be held valid, they must be limited to a far greater extent than such agreements are in private industry.

The process of collective bargaining has been defined by statute in the field of private employment. Whether or not there is a definite statement to that effect in-

# TEACHER TENURE IN THE UNITED STATES

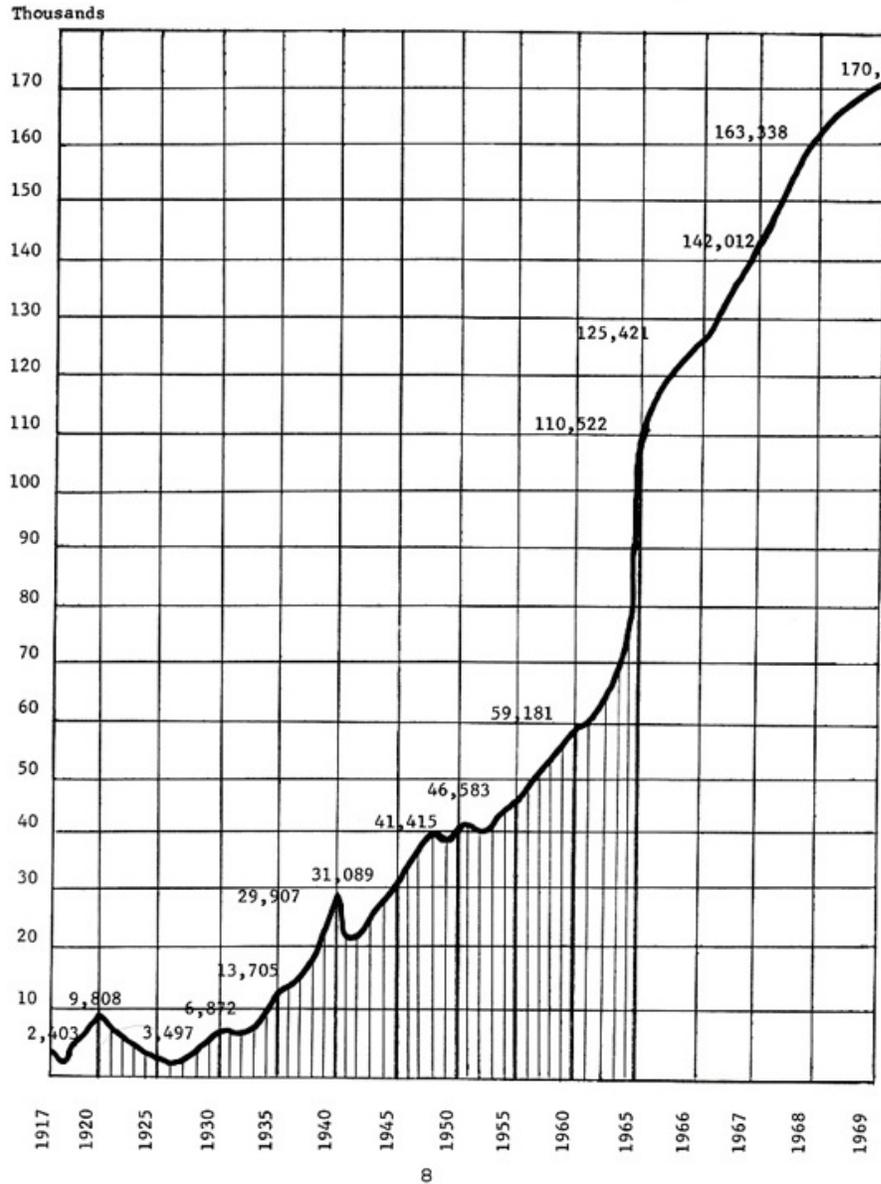
FRED M. HUNTER, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, OAKLAND,  
CALIFORNIA, CHAIRMAN

*Accomplishments of the Committee of One Hundred on the Problem of Tenure*—The Committee of One Hundred of the National Education Association on the Problem of Tenure has for the past two years presented extensive reports on the subject of *Teacher Tenure*. The 1924 Report covered these ten points:

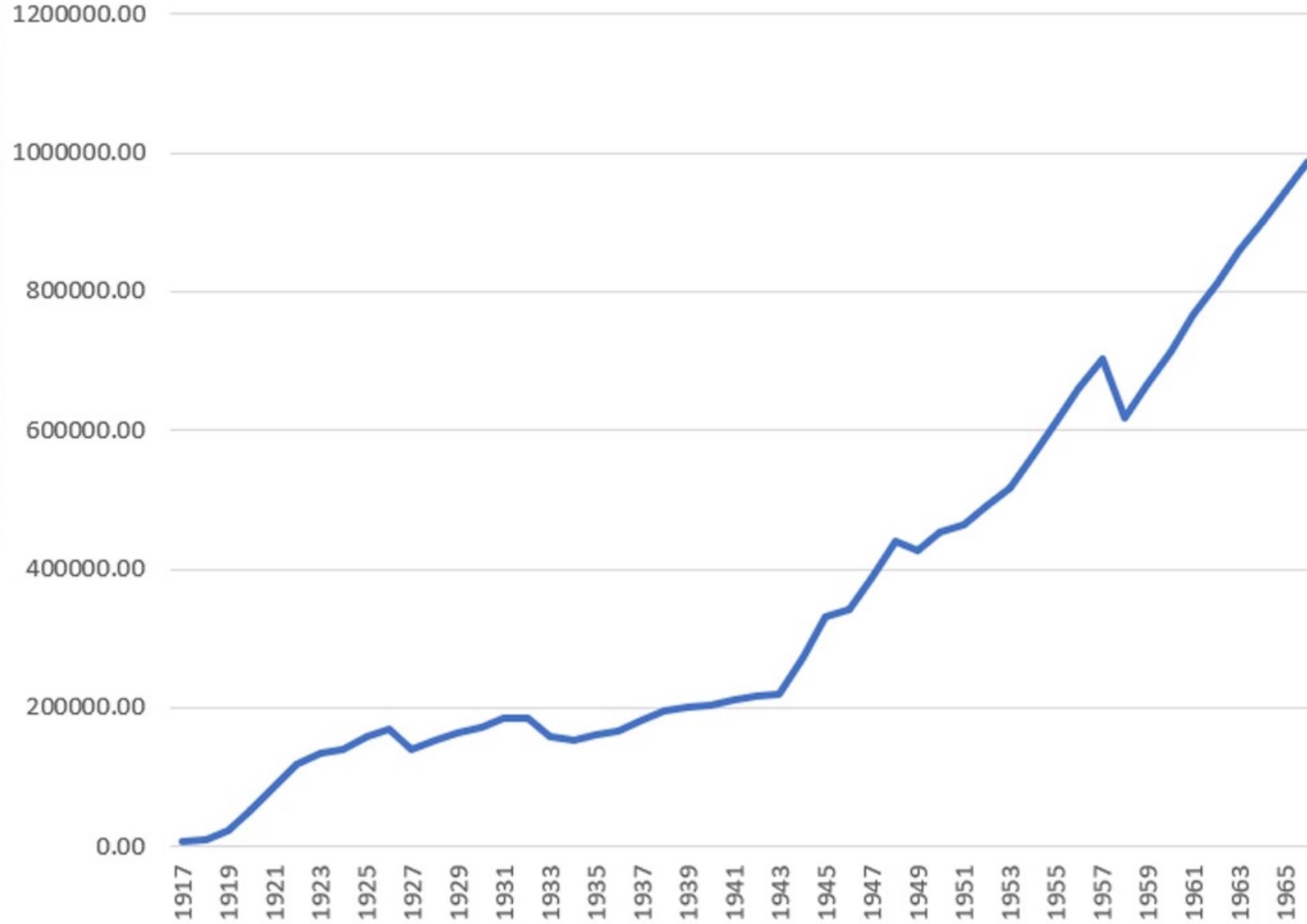
1. Origin of the Issue of Teacher Tenure
2. Teacher Turnover in the United States
3. Court Cases Affecting Teacher Tenure
4. Analysis of Present and Proposed State Teacher Tenure Laws
5. Survey of Local Tenure Regulations
6. Teacher Tenure Provisions in Foreign Countries.
7. A Defensible Standard of Merit for Teacher Tenure
8. Bibliography on Teacher Tenure
9. Texts of State Teacher Tenure Laws
10. Texts of Seven Local Teacher Tenure Regulations.

This Report received wide circulation and has been used in state and local campaigns for teacher tenure legislation. So great was the need for tenure legislation which the 1924 Report revealed in its study of conditions in the elementary and secondary schools that those members of the Committee of One Hundred on the Problem of Tenure, who were members of normal schools and teachers' colleges, requested that the Committee make a study of teacher tenure in these institutions of higher learning. This study formed the basis of the 1925 Report of the Committee.

AFT MEMBERSHIP  
May 31, each year, 1917-1969

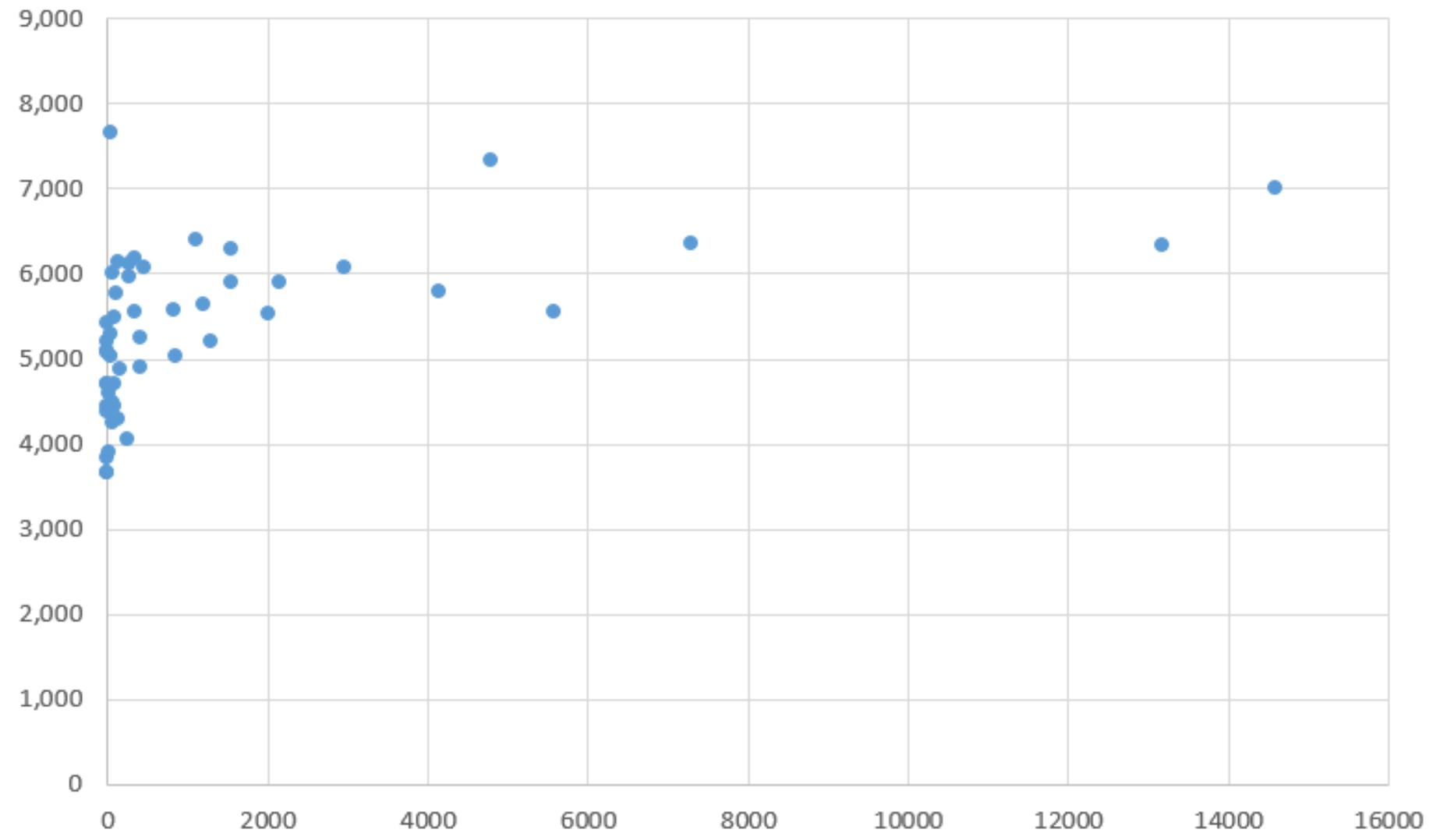


NEA Membership





### 1962 AFT Membership and Average Salary



## **IMPORTANT POINTS DISCUSSED:**

- 1. There is a crying need in big cities for teachers to be effectively represented before administration and boards of education.**
- 2. The "image" that most teachers have assigned to the NEA and its state affiliated associations is one of advancement of education and of professional standards. The union "image" is that of welfare and salary improvement.**
- 3. There is a need for long-range planning of goals and strategy in order to develop an effective program for associations in the big cities. This must include research and evaluation.**

1968

1. Members of the teaching profession, nationwide, (outside of Oklahoma) are hereby notified of the existence of unacceptable educational conditions in Oklahoma, and teachers from other states and areas are hereby notified that to accept employment in the schools of Oklahoma while sanctions are in effect will be considered as unethical;
2. The OEA hereby notifies all placement bureaus outside of Oklahoma of unsatisfactory conditions in Oklahoma schools and requests such agen-

## Article V—Board of Directors

### Section 1. Composition

The Board shall comprise the three (3) executive officers and twenty-seven (27) Directors who shall be officers of the Association.

a. Directors shall be elected by and responsible to the Representative Assembly.

b. The Directors shall represent elementary and secondary classroom teachers, classroom teachers in higher education, and administrators each in proportion to their membership in the Association.

c. A state shall have no more than one (1) member in any positional category. Executive Officers shall not be included in this stipulation.

d. Three (3) elementary and secondary

# Why Does This Matter?

- The same rhetoric about teachers as “dedicated professionals” can be seen today as the anti-labor movement seeks to take down public-sector unions.
- Do archivists face the same rhetoric about being “dedicated professionals”?