



Breaking the chains...

I'm Mike Fitzsimmons with commentary on 920 - KXLY...

Teachers in the Sprague-Lamont School District have taken a bold step. They are the first teachers in the state of Washington to break away from the powerful Washington Education Association, and form their own local bargaining unit to bargain with district administration directly.

Among other things, teachers voted October 10th to break away from the WEA because teachers were fed up with annual dues of nearly \$700 per teacher, much of which was used by the W.E.A. to further social and political agendas they found offensive. To put it another way...the state and national unions simply don't represent them, their interests, or their thinking.

This unprecedented revolution may be one of those shots heard around the world. Just a few local teacher bargaining groups have managed to decertify the overbearing National Education Association, and their respective state associations, but more are considering a similar declaration of independence.

Politically, the W.E.A. has seldom met a Democrat it didn't endorse, and has almost never supported a conservative point of view, and it has advanced liberal social concepts, and political candidates that many educators cannot in good conscience support. Still, in many states, if you want to teach, you must join the union, and you must pay for positions that disgust and offend you.

It was once thought that teachers have no choice, but that isn't true. The Sprague-Lamont revolt was assisted by the Spokane-based Northwest Professional Educators Association, which guided Sprague-Lamont teachers through the decertification process, and counseled them in the formation of their own local organization. Teachers in other school districts are thinking about following that same course. There's a crack in the WEA ice. Their death grip can apparently be broken.

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