

COMMENTARY

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PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY



If NEA delegates get their way

The country's most powerful and influential union gathered in Minneapolis over the Fourth of July weekend and set off its own brand of fireworks. Some 8,544 delegates to the National Education Association's annual convention approved its usual list of extremist resolutions presented by the professionals who run this very political organization.

At least five resolutions manifest the NEA's impassioned hostility to parents who make private school or home school choices. The NEA attacks home schooling, claiming that it is tolerable only if parents are licensed by the state and use a curriculum approved by the state education department. The NEA even opposes renting or selling abandoned public schools to a private school.

The NEA passed a strong resolution against what it calls "deleterious programs." Want to guess what that means? No, it's not violence on television or in the movies. The "deleterious programs" are "privatization, performance contracting, tax credits, vouchers, and evaluations of public schools by private groups."

The NEA is obsequious in catering to its own very visible NEA Gay and Lesbian Caucus. The convention passed at least 15 resolutions addressing the sexual orientation issue.

The NEA demands "awareness" instruction about diverse sexual orientation "whenever sexuality and/or tolerance of diversity is taught." This means the NEA wants teaching about homosexuality always to be part of sex education, and uses "diversity" as a code word for gay-lesbian teaching.

The NEA supports "ongoing training programs" to identify and eliminate "sexual orientation stereotyping." The NEA demands a "Lesbian and Gay History Month as a means of acknowledging the contributions of lesbians, gays and bisexuals throughout history."

The NEA demands that gay-lesbian teaching be part of Family Life education, sex education and AIDS education. The NEA supports the right of teachers who have tested positive for HIV or have been diagnosed as having AIDS to be retained in the classroom and not transferred.

The NEA even wants public

school training of pre-kindergartners to include "diversity-based curricula" with "bias-free screening devices." Pre-kindergartners in school? Yes, the NEA wants the taxpayers to take on baby-sitting "in the public schools for children from birth through age 8," culminating in "mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance."

Several resolutions reiterate that the NEA believes that "every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health, social, and psychological programs,

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services and care." "Every" means "beginning at the pre-kindergarten level." "Direct" means in the classroom. "Confidential" means confidential between the school and the child, not between the parent and child.

"Comprehensive" means complete with nonjudgmental teaching and explicit training in alternate lifestyles, incest, AIDS, suicide and contraceptives. "Psychological" means counseling by school personnel who are not licensed psychologists (of course, without parental knowledge or consent).

The NEA demands "school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling" to children. That means contraceptive distribution and referrals to abortion providers.

The NEA endorses the entire feminist agenda, calling for the elimination of "sexism" from the curriculum, abortion (of course,

funded by the taxpayers), "comparable worth," federally funded and regulated day care, and "gender-free career awareness" (a code slogan for role reversals and censoring out pictures of full-time homemakers).

This year, the NEA rechristened "global education" with the new name "multicultural education," which it defines as teaching children the "cultural diversity of U.S. citizenry" and "interdependency in sharing the world's resources." "Global" and "interdependent" are code words for teaching children not to be patriotic, "multicultural" means Western Civilization is bad, and "sharing the world's resources" means U.S. taxpayers should finance the rest of the world.

The NEA is enthusiastic about Environmental Education, which is easier to insert into the curriculum than Global or Multicultural. Environmental Ed is a vehicle to promote the ideology of overpopulation, the scarcity of "the Earth's finite resources," the problem of endangered species and interdependence.

The NEA supports socialized medicine (which recognizes "domestic partners" as dependents), statehood for the District of Columbia, gun control, taxpayer benefits to illegal immigrants, a national holiday honoring Cesar Chavez, ratification of the U.N. Treaty on the Rights of the Child, and a "substantial increase" in federal spending on public schools. The NEA deplores current efforts to make English our official language and to cut off taxpayer grants to persons who produce vulgar "art."

In a new resolution called "Freedom of Religion," the NEA opposes schools' scheduling a moment of silence. The NEA even wants the purpose of Thanksgiving to be changed from thanking God to a celebration of "diversity."

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Phyllis Schlafly is a nationally syndicated columnist.