PS for 8/23/90

The Radical Agenda of the NEA

The National Education Association (NEA), one of the nation's largest and wealthiest unions, held its annual convention in Kansas City last month and passed dozens of leftwing and anti-parent resolutions.

NEA president Keith Geiger announced the organization's plan to try to take $2.2 billion out of defense spending and transfer it to the public schools. This money would have spent on giving an extra two weeks of schooling for one-third of elementary schoolchildren who would be designated as "at risk," and on entering all children into the public schools at the age of three.

Geiger said that he wishes that "an international judge would declare the entire United States system of education funding unequal," as judges in Texas and New Jersey have already done. This would compel the states to pour vastly more resources into the public schools than they are now doing.

It its annual reports, the NEA bragged about its Congressional Contact Team network which briefs, trains and coordinates NEA members in each of the nation's 435 Congressional districts. During the past year, this apparatus lobbied for increased tax funding for public schools, a federal daycare bill, and socialized health care.

NEA convention handouts note that, with an average of 5,000 NEA members in each of 435 districts, the NEA is in "a unique position to use at-home lobbying to promote the NEA agenda." This past year, the NEA sent 250 teams of activists to Washington, D.C. to lobby directly for the federal daycare bill.

The NEA boasts about its political advocacy program. The NEA's political action arm, NEA-PAC, spent more than $2.5 million to elect federal candidates, and was proud to report that NEA-endorsed candidates won in seven of the ten special elections in 1990.

The NEA is active in all phases on politics. It evaluates candidates for Congress, endorses candidates, "recruits and organizes campaign volunteers," elects hundreds of its members as Delegates to the Democratic National Convention, and puts political pressure on the national associations of governors and mayors.

The NEA's 1990 resolutions included condemning all restrictions or limitations on money given to the National Endowment for the Arts, all modifications of the abortion-on-demand mandated in **Roe v. Wade**, and the Professional Golf Association for playing tournaments at private country clubs. Other resolutions put the NEA on record as supporting the Civil Rights Act of 1990 (known as the quota bill) and a boycott of coffee from El Salvador.

The NEA reaffirmed dozens of its past resolutions which include opposing school choice, tax credits, vouchers, homeschooling, and competency testing of teachers. The NEA reaffirmed its resolutions supporting socialized health insurance, gun control, early childhood education, gay rights, comparable worth, affirmative action, statehood for the District of Columbia, and a nuclear freeze.

The 1990 resolutions keep the NEA on record as advocating public school classes on sex, contraceptives, AIDS, suicide, nuclear war, globalism, multiculturalism, and conflict resolution. The NEA resolutions continue to brand parental supervision of curriculum with epithets such as "extremist."

The NEA released its legislative program for the new Congress that will convene in January 1991. The primary NEA goal, of course, is increased federal funding for education and a "full partnership role" for the Federal Government in the public schools.

Other priority Congressional issues projected for NEA lobbyists include supporting federally funded daycare and early childhood programs "for all children," a socialized health system, federally mandated parental and medical leave, a higher and more "progressive" federal income tax, statehood for the District of Columbia, and taxpayer financing of Congressional candidates.

The NEA announced that its lobbyists will continue to work against all parental choice in education program, tuition tax credits, vouchers, research into a Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), and a Balanced Budget Amendment.

The NEA's budget, which exceeds $147 million, allots nearly $7 million for advertising to promote its agenda through such means as buying ads on televisions, radio, and in the **Washington Post**. In the coming year, the NEA will spend $4.7 million on a project which "monitors and evaluates various attacks on the radical right-wing on public schools and the NEA, and devises appropriate strategies to address these attacks."

More than $600,000 of this sum is spent to maintain a clearinghouse of information about groups, individuals and activities who, according to the NEA, “attack and undermine public education.” Some people think that this money is actually used to build a blacklist of parents and of groups defending parents’ rights, and to train NEA members how to intimidate and defame parents and parents’ rights groups.