NEA Goes All-Out for Same-Sex Marriage

by Phyllis Schlafly August 7, 2009

The National Education Association (NEA), which usually passes a dozen or more pro-homosexual resolutions every year at its annual national convention, this year in San Diego went all-out in support of same-sex marriage. This emphasis on advocacy for homosexuals was spelled out in a five-point New Business Item E.

Point #1 tells its union affiliates to support state legislation that registers same-sex couples in a way that mimics marriage. This registration would cover taxes, inheritance, adoptions, medical decisions, and even immigration.

Point #2 says that states can call this same-sex registration marriage or civil union or domestic partnership so long as same-sex relationships are treated like marriage.

In Point #3, the NEA promises to "support its affiliates" in opposing state constitutional amendments and laws that "could have the effect" of differentiating between homosexual and heterosexual couples. The NEA's California affiliate spent $1.25 million of teachers' dues money on the campaign to defeat Proposition 8 last year.

In Point #4, the NEA supports repeal of federal laws and regulations such as the very popular 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman. According to the Government Accountability Office's (GAO) list of laws that use DOMA's definition of marriage, repeal of this law would create new Social Security and joint income tax benefits for homosexual partners.

The NEA's only concession to those who disagree with these goals is Point #5, which acknowledges that churches have a First Amendment right not to perform same-sex marriages.

In the limited floor debate, delegates were booed if they mentioned that marriage should be between a man and a woman. New Business Item E was approved by a voice vote of about 60 percent to 40 percent.

The long list of policy resolutions approved by the nation's most powerful teachers union included many references to "sexual orientation," "gender identification," and "diversity." Since the NEA is the largest and most powerful teachers union, it is reasonable to assume that these attitudes will follow the teachers into the classroom.

Every year, the NEA convention passes a resolution endorsing "family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom," which everybody understands specifically means abortion. And every year, some pro-life delegates try to pass a motion stating that the NEA takes "no position on abortion."

The abortion-neutral motion has always been decisively defeated, never getting as much as 25 percent of the vote, and sometimes it is even ruled out of order by the chairman. This year, something remarkable happened.

The pro-lifers introduced their motion as a bylaw amendment instead of as a resolution, a procedure that calls for a secret, written ballot instead of a voice vote. Although the abortion-neutral motion failed, mirabile dictu, the secret ballot produced an amazing 39.4 percent voting for the abortion-neutral measure.

The swan-song speech of the NEA's retiring general counsel, Bob Chanin, showcased the NEA's animosity toward parents and others who don't agree with the NEA's leftwing views. Chanin, who served the NEA for 41 years, pitched his

speech to respond to his own question: "Why are these conservative and right-wing bastards picking on NEA and its affiliates?"

Chanin answered, "NEA and its affiliates are effective advocates because we have power, and we have power because there are more than 3.2 million people who are willing to pay us hundreds of millions of dollars in dues each year."

Such arrogance! The NEA would have a small fraction of its power and bank account if it had to depend on teachers "willing to pay" dues.

In many states, teachers pay union dues because it is a condition of their employment. Many of the NEA's contracts require school districts to promptly fire any teacher who fails to pay dues.

Some of these "right-wing bastards" identified by Chanin included Fox News, the Wall Street Journal, Forbes Magazine, and the Bush Administration's Department of Education. He added: "We are not paranoid, someone really is after us."

Chanin is correct. Conservatives are after the NEA. Since this powerful organization has effective control of the public schools, spends millions of taxpayers' dollars to indoctrinate schoolchildren, and spends millions of its own money to lobby for leftwing goals, the NEA deserves to be subjected to citizen surveillance and criticism.

For many years, the NEA nestled behind its status as a professional "association"; after all, that's its name. But Chanin now unapologetically played up the NEA as a union, saying, "NEA and its affiliates should never lose sight of the fact that they are unions."

One final Item of note: the NEA convention voted down New Business Item 66, which would have required the union to make public the salaries and benefits received by its executives.