The Policy Behind The Controversy

July 25, 2001

You've got to hand it to the National Education Association. The NEA's press people and spin artists know how to manipulate the news.
The NEA got widespread national publicity by announcing on Independence Day that it was withdrawing its controversial proposed "New B" resolution regarding "Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Education." Parents concluded they could relax in the assurance that their darlings would not be exploited with such teaching in the schools.

But not so fast. It was all smoke and mirrors. The 10,000 delegates assembled in this year's annual convention in Los Angeles quietly adopted at least ten separate resolutions that add up to substantially the same subject matter as the withdrawn New B.

This episode began when it leaked out that the NEA planned to adopt an in-your-face resolution demanding that the gay rights agenda be incorporated into everything from school curricula to teacher hiring. For the first time, there was revolt in the ranks of the NEA's 2.3 million teachers, and the Oklahoma affiliate publicly opposed it.

Tennessee delegates asked for a vote on New Business Item 59 that read: "The NEA shall hold its affiliates harmless, for a period of five years, for any loss of dues revenue related to loss of membership beginning with the 2001-2002 membership year if Resolution New B is passed."

These delegates explained the rationale behind this item: "A significant number of NEA affiliates experienced membership losses related to [last year's] passage of Resolution B-9. Most of them have not recovered their losses," and we "believe that we will experience an equal or greater loss of membership if Resolution New B is passed."

So, the NEA leadership decided to make a public announcement that the new controversial New B would not be brought to a vote. However, NEA President Bob Chase assured the delegates that "in no way is NEA backing away from dealing with the important issues raised by the proposed Resolution. . . . Far from backing away from these issues, this task force will expand the scope of the inquiry."

Chase's promise was confirmed when the NEA convention went ahead and passed a dozen resolutions, mostly repeats from previous years, affirming practically every point covered in the withdrawn New B.

Resolution B-7 calls for "acceptance" of "diversity," which is defined to include "sexual orientation." It also calls for "observances, programs, and curricula that accurately portray and recognize the roles, contributions, cultures, and history of these diverse groups and individuals."

B-9 calls for "plans, activities, and programs" that "increase respect" and "acceptance" toward "gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered people." The resolution demands an end to "stereotyping" based on "sexual orientation."

B-9 also calls for extending this policy to "curricula, textbooks, resource and instructional materials, activities, etc." It demands that we "integrate" into all curricula a portrayal of the roles of "groups who have been underrepresented historically."

B-38 demands that we recognize different "family structures." This includes recognizing "domestic partners."

B-40 and C-22 call for "comprehensive" education programs about HIV/AIDS "as an integral part of the school curriculum." Integrating subject matter in the curriculum means concealing it so that parents cannot exempt their children from the class.

C-27 calls on the schools to "provide counseling services and programs" for "students who are struggling with their sexual/gender orientation."

D-8 calls for hiring policies and practices that "include provisions for the recruitment of a diverse teaching staff." Nobody is fooled by this euphemism.

E-5 demands that "educational materials and activities should accurately portray cultural diversity." There's that word diversity again.

F-1 puts the NEA on record in support of "affirmative action plans and procedures that encourage active recruitment and employment of men in underrepresented education categories . . . in order to overcome past discrimination." This resolution includes "sexual orientation" among other factors.

I-10 states that the NEA is committed to the achievement of a "totally integrated society." This includes eliminating all "barriers" based on "sexual orientation."

I-38 redundantly demands the "elimination of discrimination" based on "sexual orientation." I-42 deplores hate-motivated violence based on sexual orientation.

Other resolutions among the dozens that were passed at the 2001 Convention in Los Angeles reaffirmed all the radical policies the NEA has endorsed in the past. They reveal the NEA's paranoid opposition to school choice, homeschooling, and parental supervision of sex education.

Many were shocked this year when the District of Columbia City Council proposed lowering the compulsory school age to age three. We shouldn't have been shocked: the NEA convention delegates readopted resolution B-1 calling for "programs in the public schools for children from birth through age eight."