LOOK WHO'S TEACIDNG OUR CIDLDREN!

September 8, 1994 by Phyllis Schlafly

As schoolchildren start their fall term, the nation's largest teachers union is focused on politics rather than reading, writing and 'rithmetic. With one of the nation's largest Political Action Committees (PACs), the National Education Association (NEA) will be a big player in the November elections.

At the annual NEA convention, held this year in New Orleans over the Fourth of July weekend, the headline speaker was Hillary Rodham Clinton hawking her health care plan. As she basked in the applause of a rapturous 15,000 delegates, oversized screens projected images of her under the captions "Hillary in '96" and "Hillary in 2000."

The Michigan delegates made up the largest caucus at this year's convention, and ousting Governor John Engler was their number-one goal, with many delegates sporting "Out with Engler" buttons. Every morning for five days, the Michigan Education Association plotted to dismantle the reforms pioneered by Governor Engler, and then spread out to collect tens of thousands of dollars from other state caucuses to finance the campaigns of union-backed candidates in Michigan.

The Michigan Education Association spent $800,000 on a gubernatorial candidate who lost in the Democratic primary in August, and spent $12 million to oppose Engler's school tax reform, which was overwhelmingly approved by the voters in March.

NEA President Keith Geiger's address to the convention lashed out against the "far right," private schools and homeschoolers, "bigotry and oppression," "school funding inequities," and oppression of gays and lesbians. He praised Nelson Mandela, Jesse Jackson, Cesar Chavez, Outcome-Based Education, and the Brady bill.

Geiger described parents and legislators who support school privatization as "money hungry" and "merchants of greed." Toadying to the feminists, he said that "Today, women in America remain a maligned, mistreated, and abused majority."

The NEA's Gay & Lesbian Caucus (GLC) was very prominent. The bright pink GLC ribbons were very Politically Correct, worn on the delegate passes not only of GLC members but of some of the most prominent leaders on the floor of the Representative Assembly.

The GLC successfully introduced many resolutions and new business items designed to put radical homosexual curricula into the public schools. The recipient of the 1994 Creative Leadership in Human Civil Rights Award was the GLC nominee, Jerry Newberry, a teacher who was hailed for his success in bringing gay and lesbian issues into the public schools in Virginia.

"The worst thing that ever happened in education is the radio talk show," declared David Berliner, who received the NEA's "Friend of Education" award. Following his

convention speech, the NBA delegates voted to boycott Florida orange juice unless the Florida Department of Citrus canceled its $1 million advertising contract with Rush Limbaugh.

Berliner's speech was a rousing summary of all the NEA's favorite themes and a show of solidarity with President Clinton. It was punctuated with the recurring refrain, "The crisis in education is manufactured!", and the assertion that the dramatic drop in SAT scores is "trivial."

The NEA's newest caucus, the Men's Issues Caucus (MIC), was formed out of the frustration of male teachers who say they are oppressed by the feminization of the American education system and by being labelled "male chauvinists" by NBA women. MIC members assert that male teachers are becoming a rare and persecuted species, declining from 31.3 percent of teachers in 1961 to only 27.9 percent in 1991.

MIC members seek to "promote men as important to a child's development," and to deal with the difficulties posed by the lack of father figures in an increasing number of American families. MIC members also expressed concern about their own increasing vulnerability to bogus child molestation charges.

The NEA passed its usual list of radical leftist resolutions, including support of nationalized health care, statehood for the District of Columbia, and animosity against parents, private schools, and homeschoolers. A new resolution called "Sexual Orientation Education" put the NEA on record as supporting "the acceptance of diverse sexual orientation and the awareness of sexual stereotyping whenever sexuality and/or tolerance of diversity is taught."

Translated, this means that, whenever a school gives instruction in sexuality, health, family living, multiculturalism, diversity, or tolerance, the curriculum must include teaching the "acceptance" of homosexuality. Another NBA resolution demands affirmative action recruitment and hiring of homosexual teachers.

At the various NEA's caucus meetings, discussion centered on the tactic of forming "cadres" to advance "progressive" goals. Cadres were formed to raise women's awareness, to protest sexual harassment, to promote diversity training, and to attack policymakers who are "anti-education" (i.e., opposed to Outcome-Based Education).

Anti-private enterprise cadres were formed to propose resolutions to boycott Politically Incorrect industries and businesses: Florida citrus (for advertising on Rush Limbaugh's program), Coors Beer and Marriott Inns (for being anti-union), Whittle Communications and Education Alternatives, Inc. (for managing schools for profit), Dole Fruit Co. (for laying off migrant workers), and Crazy Horse Malt Liquor (because the name is insensitive to Native Americans).