



The

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NEA Fights to Maintain School Monopoly

The federal antitrust lawsuit against Microsoft has illustrated the evil of monopolies and the tactics that monopolists use to maintain their power. But the biggest monopoly in our midst, the public school system guarded by the teachers unions, seems so far untouchable.

At its annual convention over the Fourth of July weekend, the National Education Association flung down the gauntlet in its war against school competition, a.k.a. school choice. Meeting at McCormick Place in Chicago, the delegates voted to impose a \$5 a year increase in each member's dues in order to raise \$6 million to combat vouchers and related ballot initiatives.

The NEA delegates approved numerous resolutions and a legislative lobbying program to back up this very political decision. In Resolution A-29, the NEA declares that it "opposes all attempts to establish and/or implement" voucher plans or tuition tax credits because they "undermine public education" and "reduce the support needed to adequately fund public education."

The NEA knows how to sling the semantics. Resolution A-27 describes all the following as "Deleterious Programs" that must be eliminated: "privatization, performance contracting, tax credits for tuition to private and parochial schools, voucher plans (or funding formulas that have the same effect as vouchers), planned program budgeting systems (PPBS), and evaluations by private, profit-making groups."

The NEA gives us a case study in how a monopoly freezes out its competition. NEA Resolution A-10 states that "closed public school buildings should be sold or leased only to those organizations that do not provide direct educational services to students and/or are not in direct competition with public schools."

The NEA is also trying to restrict competition by having NEA bureaucrats impose regulations on private schools. Resolution A-2 states that "all schools must be accredited under uniform standards established by the appropriate agencies in collaboration with the NEA and its affiliates."

Of course, the reason parents remove their children from free government schools and take on the burden of paying for private schooling is to get out from under the

phony "standards" set by "appropriate" union-controlled government agencies.

The NEA feels particularly threatened by home-schooling, possibly because of the way homeschoolers have outperformed public school students on national tests. The long tentacles of the public school monopoly are trying to erect barriers to keep homeschool competition excluded from the market.

Resolution B-67 seeks regulations to forbid parents from teaching their children unless they are "licensed by the appropriate state education licensure agency" and use "a curriculum approved by the state department of education." The NEA even wants to forbid homeschooled students from participating in any extra-curricular activities in the public schools and wants to give the public schools sole authority to determine credits earned toward graduation for students entering or re-entering public schools.

The NEA fully realizes the importance of capturing its customers at the youngest age possible. Resolution B-1 demands "mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance."

Resolution B-1 also states that "The National Education Association supports early childhood education programs in the public schools for children from birth through age eight." That's not a misprint; it does say "from birth."

The NEA's monopoly extends not merely to funding and "customers" but also to curriculum. The NEA wants no interference from parents when it comes to teaching children about sex.

Resolution B-38 states that the NEA believes "it is the right of every individual to live in an environment of freely available information and knowledge about sexuality." The information, which the NEA demands be "freely available" to every child at every age, is specified to include birth control, "family planning," diversity of sexual orientation, incest, and sexual harassment.

NEA resolutions endorse a wide range of leftwing and globalist policies. New Business Item B requires NEA members to distribute "a petition calling for meaningful gun control, specifically licensure, registration, bullet imprinting, child safety locks, mandatory background

checks including waiting periods.”

New Business Item 21 endorses another petition campaign demanding that the University of California Regents reverse the ban on affirmative action in the UC system.

The NEA's legislative program for the 107th Congress includes ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which would be a global Equal Rights Amendment enforced by a global feminist commission, and the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which would fulfill Hillary Clinton's dream of having the "village" raise children instead of their parents, also enforced by a global feminist commission.

In an effort to help the Democrats take back the House, the NEA decided to spend most of its NEA-PAC money, estimated to be \$8 million, on 25 hotly contested congressional races. It's no surprise that 89 percent of the NEA delegates endorsed Al Gore for president.

Do We Need Campaign Finance Reform?

The Landmark Legal Foundation has filed complaints with the Internal Revenue Service and the Federal Election Commission about the NEA's political activities financed by its members' dues. These are all in addition to the declared political expenditures from the NEA-PAC and its state and local PACs.

Landmark's legal complaints, copiously documented with dozens of exhibits from the NEA's own publications, charge that "the NEA is spending substantial general operating funds on taxable political activities, which it has not reported on its tax returns for the last several years." The NEA's Forms 990 show that, at least since 1994, the NEA has entered a big zero in answer to question 81a demanding "the amount of political expenditures, direct or indirect."

Form 990 instructions make clear that "a political expenditure is one intended to influence the selection, nomination, election, or appointment" of any public official. "Expenditure" includes not only direct contributions, but loans, in-kind support, "or anything of value" such as personnel, equipment or supplies.

The other exhibits filed by Landmark consist of NEA publications that effectively prove that, out of its general association dues, the NEA has been doing all of the above to elect its chosen candidates, but not reporting its expenditures as the law requires. The NEA has two powerful incentives to avoid filling in line 81a: monies reported on this line are taxable, and NEA members (who may be up to half Republican) would find out that their dues money is being spent to elect Clinton-Gore-type candidates and would demand a refund, which they are entitled to under the Supreme Court's *Beck* decision.

Landmark's exhibits include the NEA's series of "how

to" handbooks to train its members in "practical politics." The NEA's political action manual instructs members how to "elect pro-education candidates at the local, state and national levels" so they can "more easily pass or defeat legislative proposals."

The NEA handbook instructs members in "integrating the structure" of the NEA with its various PACs by making sure that all the PACs have a majority of NEA board members to control how funds are spent.

Landmark's exhibits include the NEA's "Strategic Plan and Budget." This document reveals the extraordinary sums of money spent annually on politics from NEA dues: \$350,000 for "cyberspace advocacy systems ... in support of ... candidates at the state and federal level," \$386,000 for "partnerships with political parties, campaign committees, and political organizations," \$540,000 for "candidate recruitment ... early voting, and vote-by-mail programs in order to strengthen support for pro-public education candidates," \$350,000 for "training programs ... to support the election of pro-public education candidates," \$872,000 to elect "pro-education candidates," \$530,000 for "political data systems" to assist state political programs.

Much of the NEA's political spending is concealed under euphemisms: \$2,517,701 was spent on "Government Relations programs assistance to state affiliates" for "candidate recruitment and recommendation; campaign staff and support." An additional \$792,422 was spent to "secure member support for Association-endorsed candidates."

The NEA's UniServ program, with a budget of a whopping \$76.4 million for 1999-2000, enables the NEA to select, train and fund at least one employee of each NEA affiliate, called a UniServ director, in every congressional district and linked to the NEA's 13,000 local affiliates. This UniServ director manages the NEA staff dispatched to assist with phone banks, door-to-door canvassing, absentee vote programs, media development, and polling and consulting services to elect NEA-endorsed candidates.

This NEA army of paid political organizers and lobbyists far exceeds the combined staff of the Republican and Democratic national committees. In addition, the NEA exercises uncommon leverage over the Democratic Party, controlling at least ten percent of the delegates to the Democratic National Convention.

At last year's NEA convention, NEA president Bob Chase congratulated NEA members for their role in congressional elections. "We supported pro-public education stalwarts in the Democratic Party — the folks who have helped Bill Clinton," he said.

Chase made no secret of the NEA's special campaign to defeat Senators Al D'Amato (R-NY) and Lauch Faircloth (R-NC). Chase boasted, "Jesse Helms, you're next!"

Excerpts from NEA Resolutions Passed at the 2000 Convention in Chicago

A-10. Use of Closed Public School Buildings. The National Education Association believes that closed public school buildings should be sold or leased only to those organizations that do not provide direct educational services to students and/or are not in direct competition with public schools.

A-15. Financial Support of Public Education. Funds must be provided for programs to alleviate race, gender, and sexual orientation discrimination and to eliminate portrayal of race, gender, and sexual orientation stereotypes in the public schools. The Association opposes the use of public revenues for private, parochial, or other nonpublic pre-K through 12 schools.

A-19. Undocumented Immigrants. The National Education Association believes that, regardless of the immigration status of students or their parents, every student has the right to a free public education in an environment free from harassment.

A-26. Charter and Nontraditional Public School Options. The Association believes that when concepts such as charter schools and other nontraditional school options are proposed, all affected public education employees must be directly involved in the design, implementation, and governance of these programs.

A-27. Deleterious Programs. The National Education Association believes that the following programs and practices are detrimental to public education and must be eliminated: privatization, performance contracting, tax credits for tuition to private and parochial schools, voucher plans (or funding formulas that have the same effect as vouchers), planned program budgeting systems (PPBS), and evaluations by private, profit-making groups.

A-29. Voucher Plans and Tuition Tax Credits. The National Education Association believes that voucher plans and tuition tax credits or funding formulas that undermine public education, reduce the support needed to adequately fund public education, and have the potential for racial, economic, and social segregation of students. The Association opposes all attempts to establish and/or implement such plans.

New A. For-Profit Schools. The Association believes that there is an inherent conflict between serving the needs of children and of stockholders in an educational setting. The Association therefore opposes education for profit.

B-1. Early Childhood Education. The National Education Association supports early childhood education programs in the public schools for children from birth through age eight. The Association further believes that early childhood education programs should include a full continuum of services for parents/guardians, and children, including child care, child development, developmentally appropriate and diversity-based curricula, special education, and appropriate bias-free screening devices. These programs must be available to all children on an equal basis and should include mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance.

B-7. Diversity. The National Education Association believes that a diverse society enriches all individuals. Similarities and differences among races, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, geographic location, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, size, occupation, and marital, parental, or economic status form the fabric of a society. The Association further believes in the importance of observances, programs and curricula that accurately portray

and recognize the roles, contributions, cultures, and history of these diverse groups and individuals.

B-9. Racism, Sexism, and Sexual Orientation Discrimination. The National Education Association believes in the equality of all individuals. Discrimination and stereotyping based on such factors as race, gender, immigration status, physical disabilities, ethnicity, occupation, and sexual orientation must be eliminated. Plans, activities, and programs must

- ✧ Eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in the curriculum, textbooks, resource and instructional materials, activities, etc.
- ✧ Integrate an accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of all groups throughout history across the curriculum, particularly groups who have been underrepresented historically
- ✧ Eliminate subtle practices that favor the education of one student over another on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, physical disabilities, or sexual orientation
- ✧ Offer positive and diverse role models in our society including the recruitment, hiring, and promotion of diverse education employees in our public schools. The Association encourages its affiliates to develop and implement training programs on these matters.

B-30. Multicultural Education. Multicultural education should promote the recognition of individual and group differences and similarities in order to reduce racism, ethnic prejudices, and discrimination.

B-31. Global Education. The Association believes that global education increases respect for and awareness of the earth and its people. Global education imparts information about cultures and an appreciation of our interdependency in sharing the world's resources to meet mutual human needs.

B-37. Family Life Education. The Association believes that programs should be established for both students and parents/guardians and supported at all educational levels to promote the development of self-esteem. The Association also believes that education in these areas must be presented as part of an anti-biased, culturally-sensitive program.

B-38. Sex Education. The Association recognizes that the public school must assume an increasingly important role in providing the instruction. Teachers and health professionals must be legally protected from censorship and lawsuits. The Association also believes that to facilitate the realization of human potential, it is the right of every individual to live in an environment of freely available information and knowledge about sexuality and encourages affiliates and members to support appropriately established sex education programs. Such programs should include information on sexual abstinence, birth control and family planning, diversity of culture, diversity of sexual orientation, parenting skills, prenatal care, sexually transmitted diseases, incest, sexual abuse, sexual harassment.

B-55. Standardized Testing of Students. The Association opposes the use of standardized tests when —

- ✧ Used as the criterion for the reduction or withholding of any educational funding
- ✧ Results are used to compare students, teachers, programs, schools, communities, and states.

B-67. Home Schooling. The National Education Association believes that home schooling programs cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience. When home schooling occurs, students enrolled must meet all state requirements. Home schooling should be limited to the children of the immediate family, with all expenses being borne by the parents/guardians. Instruction should be by persons who are licensed by the appropriate state education licensure agency, and a curriculum approved by the state department of education should be used. The Association also believes that home-schooled students should not participate in any extracurricular activities in the public schools.

C-7. Child Care. The Association encourages school districts and educational institutions to establish on-site child care for preschoolers, students, the children of students, and the children of staff members.

C-14. Extremist Groups. The National Education Association condemns the philosophy and practices of extremist groups and urges active opposition to all such movements that are inimical to the ideals of the Association.

C-22. Comprehensive School Health Programs and Services. The National Education Association believes that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health, social, and psychological programs and services. The Association believes schools should provide —

- ◇ A planned sequential, pre-K through 12 health education curriculum that integrates various health topics (such as drug abuse, violence, universal precautions, and HIV education).

The Association believes that services in the schools should include —

- ◇ Counseling programs that provide developmental guidance and broad-based interventions and referrals
- ◇ Comprehensive school-based, community-funded student health care clinics that provide basic health care services (which may include diagnosis and treatment)
- ◇ If deemed appropriate by local choice, family-planning counseling and access to birth control methods with instruction in their use.

C-23. School Counseling Programs. The National Education Association believes that guidance and counseling programs should be integrated into the entire education system, pre-K through college.

C-31. Suicide Prevention Programs. The National Education Association believes that suicide prevention programs including prevention, intervention, and postvention must be developed and implemented. The Association urges its affiliates to ensure that these programs are an integral part of the school program.

E-3. Selection and Challenges of Materials and Teaching Techniques. The Association deplores pre-publishing censorship, book-burning crusades, and attempts to ban books from school libraries/media centers and school curricula.

F-1. Nondiscriminatory Personnel Policies/Affirmative Action. The National Education Association believes that personnel policies and practices must guarantee that no person be employed, retained, paid, dismissed, suspended, demoted, transferred, or retired because of race, color, national origin, cultural diversity, accent, religious beliefs, residence, physical disability, political activities, professional association activity,

age, size, marital status, family relationship, gender, or sexual orientation. Affirmative action plans and procedures that will encourage active recruitment and employment of ethnic minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and men in under-represented education categories should be developed and implemented.

H-1. The Education Employee as a Citizen. The Association urges its members to become politically involved and to support the political action committees of the Association and its affiliates.

H-7. National Health Care Policy. The Association supports the adoption of a single-payer health care plan for all residents of the United States, its territories, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

H-11. Statehood for the District of Columbia. The National Education Association supports efforts to achieve statehood for the District of Columbia.

I-2. International Court of Justice. The National Education Association recognizes that the International Court of Justice is one instrument to resolve international disputes peacefully. The Association urges participation by the United States in deliberations before the court.

I-12. Family Planning. The National Education Association supports family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom. The Association further urges the implementation of community-operated, school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling by trained personnel.

I-26. Freedom of Religion. The Association opposes the imposition of sectarian practices in the public school. The Association also opposes any federal legislation or mandate that would require school districts to schedule a moment of silence.

I-27. Gun-free Schools and the Regulation of Deadly Weapons. The Association believes that strict proscriptive regulations are necessary for the manufacture, importation, distribution, sale and resale of handguns and ammunition magazines.

I-46. English as the Official Language. The Association believes that efforts to legislate English as the official language disregard cultural pluralism; deprive those in need of education, social services, and employment; and must be challenged.

I-49. Equal Opportunity for Women. The National Education Association believes that all persons, regardless of gender, must have equal opportunity for employment, promotion, compensation (including equal pay for comparable worth). The Association supports an amendment to the U.S. Constitution (such as the Equal Rights Amendment) that guarantees that equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state because of gender. The Association endorses the use of nonsexist language.

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