

TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS OF AMERICA

by Samuel L. Blumenfeld

You are probably a member of the National Education Association, better known as the NEA. Perhaps you didn't want to join the NEA, but when you joined your local teachers ^{group} ~~organization~~, which was an affiliate of the NEA, you were told that that automatically made you a member of the state and national organizations. And that is why your membership dues run to around \$300 a year.

In some school districts you had a choice. You didn't have to join the local NEA affiliate. But by not joining you were told that you wouldn't have liability insurance to protect yourself in the classroom against law suits for educational malpractice. Apparently, as teaching has expanded into areas beyond the general subject matter of basic education, teachers have found themselves to be more at risk, more vulnerable. Thus, we are told, they need liability insurance.

Of course, very little of that \$300 paid to the NEA goes to pay for liability insurance. In fact, there are alternative teachers associations in America that provide the same insurance coverage -- and sometimes even greater coverage -- for much less money. For example, Professional Educators of Iowa provides ^{better} ~~such~~ insurance coverage with a membership fee of only \$40 a year. Thus, if you and ninety-nine other teachers in your school district decided to organize an alternative teachers association, you could probably get the same insurance as the Iowa group with dues of only \$40 a year and thereby save yourselves collectively \$26,000.

But then perhaps you are one of those teachers who have lost the right to choose. Perhaps you teach in a district with an "agency shop."

An agency shop, as you know, is an arrangement agreed upon by your local NEA affiliate and the local school board, whereby, as a condition of employment, you must either join the union or pay its dues even if you don't join. The union claims that since it has negotiated a contract for you, you must pay its agency fee. You may have wanted to negotiate a contract of your own with the school board. But that is not permitted under the rule of exclusive representation.

~~It is true that~~ The agency shop agreement deprives you of your basic freedom of choice, your right to work in the government schools on the sole basis of your qualifications as a teacher. But apparently the majority of your colleagues don't want that freedom for themselves and neither do they want ^{it for} you ~~to have it~~, for they voted for the agency shop.

What does this tell us? It tells us that there are far too many teachers who will voluntarily vote away their rights as free citizens in a free country. In the interest of going along with the collective, they will give up their rights as individuals. Of course, the NEA calls this democracy. They claim that if the majority want to vote away their freedoms they have a right to do so. But our federal Constitution was devised to prevent exactly that. It prevents the majority from voting us into a dictatorship or depriving the minority of its Constitutional rights. That is why we have remained free for as long as we have.

But what is also sad is that local school boards are willing to give up the government's right to hire teachers on the basis of quality and merit rather than on ~~the basis of~~ union membership. The public schools are paid for by the taxpayer. What right do school boards have

to set up agency shops without consulting the taxpayers? Do not those who pay for the schools have a right to decide on what basis teachers should be hired or fired?

Fortunately, there are many teachers who have decided to fight the agency shop. They have gone to court to defend their Constitutionally guaranteed freedoms, and they have been helped by a ~~wonderful~~ ^{feisty} organization ^{near} ~~in~~ Washington called Concerned Educators Against Forced Unionism, a division of the National Right to Work Committee.

Meanwhile, teachers have been fired for refusing to pay their agency shop fees, and some teachers have resigned. One teacher in Fremont, California, who had been voted the best foreign language ^{teacher} in the state, resigned rather than accept the agency shop. She wrote her students: "My employer is confiscating my wages without my permission. This is the status of a slave. How can I return to you in September and teach you to stand tall as a free man or woman if I cannot?" This is a question that all teachers in an agency shop should be asking. What is frightening is that the NEA ^{wants} ~~would like to have~~ an agency shop in every school district in the nation, creating an educational dictatorship run by the NEA. Is this what the teachers of America want?

But there are other reasons why many teachers don't like the NEA. They know that the NEA is more than just a union. It is a political organization with a radical leftist social agenda that is undermining traditional American values, and the last thing these teachers want is for their money to be used to support that program.

However, far too many teachers are unaware of the NEA's stand on political and social issues. They simply don't bother to read NEA materials and thus do not realize how far to the left their union is.

For example, the NEA favors pro-choice on the abortion issue. As far as the NEA is concerned, the unborn have no unalienable right to life, and the mother's social convenience is more important than the child's life. Isn't it odd, that a teachers' organization, so concerned with finding new jobs for teachers should condone the murder of 15 million unborn children who could have filled the schoolhouses of America? The NEA speaks loudly for students rights, but it is silent on the right of the unborn to live. The NEA claims to be concerned with the health and welfare of America's children, and that^{supposedly} is why it advocates lowering the compulsory school attendance age to four. Yet it expresses no concern over the brutal slaughter of 15 million unborn children. Is this an organization that truly cares for the welfare of ~~our~~ children?

The NEA also favors the Marxist Sandinista government of Nicaragua which, with the help of America's deadliest enemies, is leading that Central American nation into totalitarian communism. The NEA has no sympathy for the freedom fighters who want for the Nicaraguans the same kind of freedoms that Americans enjoy.

The NEA also advocates a nuclear freeze which would freeze us into a position of inferiority vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, thus making us vulnerable to nuclear blackmail by the communists. The NEA is so keen on creating anxiety among American school children concerning the nuclear threat that it is distributing a ten-lesson course on the subject for the 10 through 14-year-old age group entitled Choices: a unit on conflict and nuclear war. The course doesn't present America's strategy of Peace through Strength which has effectively managed to deter nuclear war for the past 40 years. Instead, it works on the fears and anxieties of the children. It shows them ghastly pictures of charred bodies and

disfigured victims of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The NEA doesn't tell teachers that the nuclear freeze movement was started by the Soviet-controlled World Peace Council in 1980 for the purpose of creating nuclear hysteria in the West so that its people would mindlessly demand unilateral disarmament.

The NEA condemns the government of El Salvador which is fighting communist terrorism, but it is silent on Soviet genocide in Afghanistan. It condemns apartheid in South Africa but says nothing about the ^{Marxist} Mugabe government in neighboring Zimbabwe which is terrorizing and murdering its own black citizens who voted for political parties other than Mugabe's.

The NEA also opposes school prayer, educational vouchers and tuition tax credits. It opposes the teaching of creationism as an alternative view to the theory of evolution. It advocates state regulation of church schools and home schools in clear violation of our First Amendment right to freedom of religion and the parents unalienable right to educate their children without interference from the state. It wants to extend state control over every facet of child development and education in America.

While the NEA opposes the imposition of sectarian religious practices in the public schools, it promotes the religion of secular humanism through its strong advocacy of values clarification, sex education, death education, sensitivity training, globalism and other related programs. Yet, in a pamphlet entitled "The Radical Right Attack on the NEA," published in March 1985, the NEA has the gall to state: "The whole notion of secular humanism is, in fact, entirely the invention of Radical Right leaders, writers and fund-raisers. They've conjured up the concept, defined it, villified it, and then attributed it to

teachers."

Either the NEA is lying or so abysmally ignorant that it doesn't even know what it is doing. Having debated NEA officials on several occasions, this writer tends to believe that it is a combination of both.

But you, a teacher, need not take my word for it. You can find out for yourself who is telling the truth. After all, there is a philosophy of education guiding our public schools. No one, not even the NEA, would deny that it is a secular philosophy, a philosophy that excludes traditional religion from the public school curriculum. But is it "humanist"?

The humanist philosophy was first formally set down in 1933 in a document known as the Humanist Manifesto. It was signed by John Dewey and 33 other prominent humanists. In 1973 that document was updated as Humanist Manifesto II and signed by 114 original signers and 258 additional signers. Among them are many prominent professors, psychologists, Unitarian ministers and Ethical Culturists. They include such well-known names as Isaac Asimov, Theodore Brameld, Lionel Abel, Alan F. Guttmacher, B.F. Skinner, Betty Friedan, Sol Gordon, A. Philip Randolph, and others.

What does the Manifesto say? First, it denies the efficacy of faith in God or prayer. It states:

"As in 1933, humanists still believe that traditional theism, especially faith in the prayer-hearing God, assumed to love and care for persons, to hear and understand their prayers and to be able to do something about them, is an unproven and outmoded faith. Salvationism, based on mere affirmation, still appears as harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter. Reasonable minds look to other means for survival."

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How can it be said that a faith that has served millions of people over a period of 5,000 years is "unproven"? How can it be said that such a faith is "outmoded" when it provided the impetus for the settlement of a vast wilderness and the creation of the freest and richest nation in all of human history? How can it be said to be "harmful" when it provided man with a moral code that permitted him to flourish in safety and freedom in a civilization of unparalleled achievement? How can it be accused of "diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter" when it has created an economic system of abundance and unlimited progress while atheist philosophies that promise utopia instead of heaven have given their victims nothing but hell on earth?

Second, the manifesto denies the divine origin of moral values. It states: "We affirm that moral values derive their source from human experience. Ethics is autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stems from human need and interest." In other words, God's law does not exist, and the Ten Commandments are an ^{moded} ~~outdated~~ statement of moral prejudices. There is no sin.

And that is why the schools teach situational ethics and values clarification. That is why they concentrate so heavily on sex education. The Manifesto states: "In the area of sexuality, we believe that intolerant attitudes, often cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures, unduly repress sexual conduct. The right to birth control, abortion, and divorce should be recognized. . . . The many varieties of sexual exploration should not in themselves be considered 'evil.' . . . Short of harming others or compelling them to do likewise, individuals should be permitted to express their sexual proclivities and pursue their life-styles as they desire." And this is what the schools have been telling American children for years, with the result that we now have more teenage pregnancies than ever, more venereal disease than ever, more ~~sexual perversion~~ than ever.

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That the NEA has been promoting all of the components of secular humanism can be proven by simply examining NEA history and reading its publications. In 1948 the NEA became a sponsor of the National Training Laboratory in Group Development at Bethel, Maine. The NTL specialized in developing the techniques of sensitivity training, group dynamics, and producing social change.

In an article entitled "The Teacher -- Agent of Change," published in the NEA Journal of January 1962, we read:

National Training Laboratories of NEA initiated a program for classroom teachers

The training lab is an intensive learning experience . . . in which a staff of social scientists help translate research findings into classroom practice. Objectives include greater sensitivity in observing and interpreting social and psychological factors in learning groups.

And in Today's Education of September 1970, the successor to the NEA Journal, we learn more about what the change-agent teacher is doing. We read: "The change-agent teacher does more than dream, however; he builds, too. He is part of an association of colleagues in his local school system, in his state, and across the country that makes up an interlocking system of change-agent organizations. This kind of system is necessary because changing our society through the evolutionary educational processes requires simultaneous action on three power levels."

If that isn't a conspiracy to change America according to the humanists' plan, I wonder what else you would call it. Perhaps as a teacher you've been duped into becoming a change agent. Do you know

where it will all lead to? It will lead to a world government -- no doubt dominated by the communists -- in which America will have lost its sovereignty and freedom and where "unalienable rights" will be a thing of the past. For the world humanist-communist government will be an atheist government in which there is no Creator endowing human beings with unalienable rights. Rights and freedoms will merely become privileges dispensed by a government run by men.

Is this the kind of world you want to live in? Is this the kind of world the teachers of America should be attempting to create in their roles as change agents?

The NEA started its crusade for world government back in 1942. In 1946 NEA Journal editor Joy Elmer Morgan wrote:

In the struggle to establish an adequate world government, the teacher has many parts to play. He must begin with his own attitude and knowledge and purpose. He can do much to prepare the hearts and minds of children for global understanding and cooperation. . . . At the very top of all the agencies which will assure the coming of world government must stand the school, the teacher, and the organized profession.

Thus, the NEA has been promoting the idea of world government for four decades. The Humanist Manifesto of 1972 affirmed that stand when it stated:

We deplore the division of humankind on nationalistic grounds. We have reached a turning point in human history where the best option is to transcend the limits of national sovereignty and to

move toward the building of a world community in which all sectors of the human family can participate. Thus we look to the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational federal government.

Thus, the very goal of the NEA is to end American sovereignty and freedom.

So it is obvious that the NEA is more than just a teachers association devoted to improving the lot of teachers. It is the nation's single most powerful and active engine of political and social change. And your dues are helping to pay to run that engine. The members' money, to the tune of a half billion dollars a year, is being used to lobby Congress and fifty state legislatures, support an army of 1,170 full-time professional organizers, publish and distribute thousands of books and curriculum materials promoting the NEA's political and social agendas.

The NEA even has a training program to instruct teachers in how to combat the so-called New Right. Is this proper? Do not the teachers of America serve children from all kinds of homes, regardless of the parents' religious or political affiliations? Ought not a public school teachers association be politically neutral since the education system must serve the public at large without bias or prejudice?

Apparently the NEA doesn't think so. It is determined to oppose any Americans who resist or criticize its program to change America from a God-believing, free-enterprise, individualistic society to an atheistic, socialist, collectivist society in a world government. In short, ^{NEA} ~~it~~ is prepared to oppose the vast majority of Americans who neither want socialism nor world government.

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The simple truth is that ~~the~~ NEA has been controlled by the radical left ~~since~~ since World War I when it established its permanent headquarters in Washington. The radical left has worked hard over the years to forge the NEA into a political instrument whereby it could take power in America and impose its program on the American people. As early as 1932, leftist professor George S. Counts of Teachers College, Columbia, wrote: "That the teachers should deliberately reach for power and then make the most of their conquest is my firm conviction."

In 1967 NEA executive secretary Sam Lambert proclaimed: "NEA will become a political power second to no other special interest group. . . . NEA will organize this profession from top to bottom into logical operational units that can move swiftly and effectively and with power unmatched by any other organized group in the nation."

In 1973, NEA president Helen D. Bain told NEA members: "The muscle of teacher organizations must be used to become politically effective in every election throughout the country."

And in 1974, NEA president Helen Wise said: "Teachers individually and collectively can change the direction of government."

Is that the mission of America's public school teachers: to change the direction of government? What would you think if the policemen of America organized to "change the direction of government?" What would you think if any other group of government employees decided that its mission was to "change the direction of government?" You'd be alarmed. And rightfully so. And that is why so many Americans are alarmed at what the teachers of America are doing, knowingly or unknowingly.

There was a time when teachers were looked up to, respected and loved by students and parents ^{alike} and virtually placed on a pedestal. Today all of that trust and respect are gone. The teacher has become an enemy

of the parent, a Pied Piper leading children into a new deadly world of pagan immorality, a skilled deceiver of the public using tax dollars to undermine the traditional values that have made this nation great.

There are many good teachers who know this and are doing what they can in the public schools to educate and help children. Many of these teachers have left the NEA and joined alternative associations. While they must still teach in schools dominated by humanism, they are at least not supporting an organization that represents the political ^{ambitions} ~~hope~~ of the radical left.

If you want to restore the love and trust that Americans once had for their teachers, then you too must repudiate the philosophy and goals of the NEA.