

Christian teachers - It's time to flee the NEA!

Peter Heck exposes the **National Education Association** in his column below for recent NEA bragging about its political power, vulgar characterizations of traditional-minded people (including dues-paying teachers) as "right wing bastards," and NEA's arrogant commitment to use its power and member dues to advance homosexual and abortion rights.

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It was indeed a heartwarming moment. With teachers, representatives, and affiliates to the National Education Association's annual convention gathered around, the NEA's retiring General Counsel Bob Chanin took to the stage to deliver his outgoing remarks. His inspiring

and uplifting message asserted the profound commitment held by the NEA to the betterment of American society: "We are not paranoid, someone really is after us. Why are these conservative and right-wing b****rds picking on NEA and its affiliates? I will tell you why: it is the price we pay for success."

As one of those right-wing "fatherless lads" Mr. Chanin was referring to, I found myself moved at how open-minded and inclusive his speech sounded. But more than that, Chanin did a masterful job of demonstrating what the true priorities of the NEA are when he stated that what makes the group effective is, "not because of our creative ideas, it is not because of the merit of our positions, it is not because we care about children, and it is not because we have a vision of a great public school for every child. NEA and its affiliates are effective advocates because we have power."

Now there's a relief. Perhaps the NEA should put that quote on its promotional fliers? After all, who would want the largest association representing teachers in the country to be basing its effectiveness on its ability to improve the lives of children?! Thankfully, the leadership of the NEA has sought a pursuit of raw political power instead. And why are they so successful in this pursuit? Mr. Chanin explains, "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." Keep in mind that many of those 3.2 million are faithful

Christian teachers who seem to turn Mr. Chanin's stomach.

Not that any of this should come as a surprise. In 1996, the NEA issued a handbook on dealing with the "radical right's crusade against public schools." The handbook states: "They won't go away. No matter how bizarre we believe their beliefs to be, no matter how illogical and inconsistent their goals appear, and no matter how often we reassure ourselves that 'this too, shall pass,' the political, social, and religious forces that make up the radical right in contemporary American society will not go away." For teachers who hold to traditional moral values, we're just to look the other way and continue sending our money.

Sadly, the pathetic reality of the current state of affairs in the National Education Association gets worse. At this same convention in San Diego, the NEA voted to throw their full support behind homosexual "marriage" by committing to use its resources and political muscle to take down any legislation that hinders the homosexual movement.

Also, the NEA voted down a resolution that called for the group to take "no position" on the issue of abortion. Currently, the NEA uses the dues money from members to advocate and support lobby groups battling for the "right to choose." Had this resolution passed, the NEA would have been unable to commit any dues money of members to causes that have anything to do with the abortion debate. Instead, they would have had to use that money on something preposterous...like issues actually pertaining to education.

To me, this year marks the line in the sand. There are many justifications and reasons an individual Christian teacher can give for joining a local

association. But because of the power of the NEA in Washington, we can't deny the reality that our local associations are in many cases legally compelled to affiliate themselves under the NEA's control. Consequently our money – money we intend to be put towards actually improving the lives of children – goes to fund deliberately anti-Christian activities.

Sure, there are excuses we can use to justify our capitulation and spineless allegiance to causes we know to be wrong. We can accept the fear-mongering about how we'll all lose our jobs without the NEA. We can delude ourselves into believing that when we check the box stating that our dues can't be used for political purposes that we aren't still contributing to the very executive councils, legal offices, and management that is publicly acknowledging their hatred towards everything we stand for. We can rationalize that it's impossible anymore to keep from spending our money on things we don't really support.

But we shouldn't do it any longer. Our consciences shouldn't allow it.

We will undoubtedly be told that we are traitors to the cause, overreacting prudes, or freeloaders. But we didn't tell the NEA to throw full support behind the slaughter of children in the womb. We didn't tell the NEA to use their muscle to advocate homosexual marriage across the country. We didn't make the decision to abandon the NEA. The NEA made the conscious decision to abandon us. And if there's any confusion on that fact, see Bob Chanin.

Peter Heck (peter@peterheck.com), a public school teacher since 2001, hosts "The Peter Heck Show," a two-hour, daily call-in radio program on WIOU (1350 AM) in Kokomo, IN. His column is posted at www.onenewsnow.com/Education/Default.aspx?id=610828. Listen to NEA General Counsel Robert Chanin's speech at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqn1rvv7Fis> beginning around minute 16:00.



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