

ISEA represents about 35,000 Iowa teachers, and a vast majority of them have misgivings over terms of a proposed merger between NEA and the late Albert Shanker's American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

Critics of the proposed merger contend that, more than an endeavor to improve the lot of teachers, it's a surreptitious effort aimed at strengthening the labor movement and rebuilding the Democratic Party.

NEA has a membership of about 2.2 million and AFT about 800,000, but the merger terms being pushed by NEA's national leaders endorse AFT's way of doing business instead of the more moderate approach of the traditional NEA.

An indication of that came in a February speech by NEA President Robert Chase at a National Press Club luncheon.

"I came here this afternoon to introduce the new National Education Association—the new union we are striving to create in public education," he said.

Chase called for "building an entirely new union-management relationship in public education."

No one knows more than teachers what schools need, he said: "higher academic standards; stricter discipline; an end to social promotions; less bureaucracy; more resources where they count, in the classroom; schools that are richly connected to parents and to the communities that surround them."

"To this end," he continued "we aim not so much to redirect the NEA, as to reinvent it."

"The new direction . . . is about action. It is about changing how each of our local affiliates does business, changing how they bargain, changing what issues they put on the table, changing the ways they help their members to become the best teachers they can be."

The union's goal? "An agreement that allows teachers, in effect, to co-manage the school district."

Terms of the NEA-AFT merger would make the new organization a member of the AFL-CIO, with the power to override the concerns of local and State affiliates.

Such things as student welfare and professional teachers' concerns and local school conditions could be lost in the dust of battle over union politics, local and national, and wages, hours and working conditions.

Local concerns would come behind the union's national priorities. A community might find itself held hostage by national union goals that have nothing to do with the community itself.

The new national organization would have the power to take control of local and state organizations for refusing to follow the national organization's policy and political lines.

In effect, it would have the power to trample the professional and ethical considerations that have led the huge majority of teachers in Iowa and the nation to join a professional association such as ISEA rather than a local of the AFT.

The Iowa and New Jersey state affiliates of NEA have been the most vocal critics of the merger terms, which seem basically dictated by the AFT's power sources in New York and other big urban centers.

Although a substantial majority of teachers across the country may oppose merger terms, top NEA officials and staffers have the power to bring it off.

That's because a number of state organizations are financially dependent on NEA and have little choice except to do its bidding.

ISEA, in contrast, is not financially dependent on NEA. But it might have to drop its affiliation with NEA to avoid being taken over by the newly merged organization.

So the ISEA has no alternative but to think about and start making contingency plans to cancel its NEA affiliation.

The details of that dominated a number of private discussions at the ISEA's delegate assembly at the Hilton Coliseum at Ames in April.

In most places, the merger seems a well-kept secret.

The idea is to keep the implications of the merger from the teachers in the states where local organizations and their leaders are beholden to NEA and AFT leaders.

ISEA has kept Iowa teachers up to date on the merger talks, and has advocated that other state organizations mirror the effort.

"The more information that comes out on the proposed merger, the more the membership seems disinclined to do it," said one person who has been following the merger talks.

It's probably not hard to find people who would dismiss all this as intramural arm wrestling between two unions.

That may well be. For the public, it may not make any difference which view prevails.

I've fought with ISEA over the years, and have been soundly denounced by dozens of teachers for dismissing it as little more than a trade union.

Whatever. If I were an Iowa teacher, I'd be against the merger because it surely would take away all hopes of the organization ever becoming a professional association that cared about anything except wages and hours.

On a practical basis, moreover, a merger would take away the implicit threat that many teachers' groups now are able to use.

Deal with the moderate ISEA or its equivalent, they lead the school boards and others to believe, or you may end up with the blood-letting unionism of the AFT.

On the other hand, I'd choose the AFT's militance before I'd relegate Iowa teachers to the kind of second-class citizenship—lots of respect and no money and no say about their working conditions—they suffered under before they acquired the ability to collectively bargain with the school districts about 25 years ago.●

THE BALANCED BUDGET ACT OF 1997 AND MEDICARE

● Mr. DODD. Mr. President, with Wednesday's passage of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, the Senate with some trepidation, has taken a number of courageous steps toward ensuring long-term solvency of the Medicare Program.

Specifically, I believe that the adoption of means testing of Medicare premiums moves us in the right direction toward the long-term solvency of this critically important program. It is important to remember that this provision will affect only those seniors with individual annual incomes over \$50,000 and married seniors with incomes above \$75,000, on a sliding-scale basis. While some tried to portray this provision as a retreat from protecting our Nation's seniors, I view it as a step toward ensuring that our seniors will be well served for a long time to come. The adoption of this provision simply says that those Americans who can afford to contribute a little more for their health care should do so. Such a measure is surely needed if we are to sustain the safety net that Medicare provides to millions of senior citizens.

While I supported that particular part of the bill, I must share my deep concern over other provisions that I feel go too far. I find particularly unacceptable the provision which will raise the age at which individuals are eligible to receive Medicare from 65 to 67. The likelihood of these seniors finding affordable private insurance is slim—many will be forced to forego coverage. At a time when the number of uninsured individuals in this country is growing and employer-sponsored insurance is declining, I find it astonishing that some would choose to exacerbate the current problem further with this measure.

I also opposed a provision that will require the poorest and sickest seniors to pay up to \$700 a year in home health costs. One-quarter of the home health users are over 85; 43 percent have incomes below \$10,000. Forcing the most vulnerable Medicare beneficiaries to bear this significant financial burden under the guise of addressing the long-term financial challenges of this program is indefensible.

Because of these concerns, I was unable to support this bill. It is my sincere hope, however, that these issues will be resolved in conference and that ultimately we will pass into law a measure that truly will protect our Nation's seniors and the vital safety net that Medicare provides to them.●

AN INDEPENDENCE DAY TRIBUTE

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I rise today so that this great body may momentarily reflect upon the importance of our upcoming Fourth of July celebration.

Over 200 years ago, this country began a historic experiment. Our Founding Fathers were told it would fail. Yet, after many trials and tribulations, the United States of America stands, it can fairly be argued, as the greatest Nation in the history of the world. Independence Day is our annual celebration of this achievement.

Yet, we must have the courage and honesty to admit that we are not all that we hope to be. We have much work to do, and we have many dreams to make a reality. This is our American journey. And let us not forget the debt we owe to those who sacrificed to make this journey possible, the men and women who have stood sentry as our country marched to greatness. Today, they protect the finest democracy the world has ever known and keep watch around the globe. They are a beacon of hope, freedom, and justice to all the world's nations. Today, we trumpet the personal courage of our forefathers and the continuing sacrifices of the members of our armed services.

Who are these veterans and service members? We all know them. He was your friend in school. She was the kid next door. You go to church with them, and you pass them in the grocery store. They are Americans just like you and

me, but when our Nation called, they willingly put themselves in harm's way. We asked them to serve their country and they obliged us. They have made this celebration possible.

Many of these regular Americans found themselves in extraordinary circumstances. They were only expected to do their duty, but they found the strength to do more. It is for these uncommon displays of valor that we have reserved the Congressional Medal of Honor. It is the highest honor which we can bestow on a member of the Armed Forces, and it is but a small demonstration of our gratitude for their acting above and beyond the call of duty.

The men who have earned this award do not ask for recognition or acclaim. They believe they were only doing their jobs. They consider themselves ordinary soldiers, sailors, and airmen. But, we call them heroes. I dedicate this day to them, and I humbly thank them for their special sacrifice to guarantee the privileges we too often take for granted.

I am proud to say that Alabama is home to 27 of these great Americans. Seven of these Alabama Congressional Medal of Honor winners are still alive today. Henry Eugene "Red" Erwin, Robert Lewis Howard, William Robert Lawley, Jr., Ola Lee Mize, Michael J. Novolsel, James Michael Sprayberry, and Harold Edward "Speedy" Wilson all have different heroic tales but common heroic traits. They steeled themselves with tremendous gallantry and fought without regard for their safety. From where did this courage come? For some, it was their loyalty to a fellow serviceman. For others, it was the strength of their convictions. And most certainly, it was done with God's help.

Let us today take a moment to congratulate each veteran we know for a job well done and come before them with a spirit of the humblest gratitude as we enjoy the bounty of this great, independent Nation. For we are the Nation that people in every corner of the world wish to call their own. We are a people who will not stop short of greatness, a nation who earns her prosperity with the labor of her citizens, and the land of opportunity whose hand extends for both rich and poor alike. We need not only be proud of our veterans but also of every citizen who holds the same ideals and dreams for America. She is great because of the businessmen who fuel her economy, the religious leaders who guide her morals, the farmers who provide her bountiful sustenance, and the many other Americans who are free to fulfill their dreams each day.

God bless those who have stood and fought on her behalf and, most of all, God bless America.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES S. TODD, M.D.

• Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today, I rise to pay tribute to Dr. James S. Todd, executive vice president and

chief executive officer of the American Medical Association from 1990 until 1996.

Dr. Todd was a dynamic leader and advocate for physicians and patients throughout the country. His advice and example were invaluable to lawmakers in Washington and to his peers throughout the Nation.

He steered the AMA through a time of stress and change in American medicine, and made great strides in preparing the AMA to lead the medical profession into the next century. But, more than anything, Dr. Todd loved his profession. He called medicine "the most demanding, regarding, and enjoyable profession there could possibly be."

One of Dr. Todd's many accomplishments included guiding the American Medical Association through the implementation of a dramatic revision in the Medicare payment system. His efforts changed the old "reasonable and customary fee" basis to a system that takes into account the resources that doctors bring to their profession, including education, and training.

Dr. Todd worked aggressively with a coalition of companies providing professional liability insurance for physicians, on ways to curb the escalating cost of malpractice insurance. He was deeply involved in drafting the guidelines for the practice of various medical specialties to reduce the number of errors committed by doctors.

As executive vice president, Dr. Todd also oversaw preparations for the establishment of the National Patient Safety Foundation. Its chief mission is to protect patients by identifying and correcting errors in medical systems, notably in the hospital system.

The physicians and patients of America alike have lost a friend and champion. We will miss Dr. Todd's spirit, integrity, and love for medicine.

Born in 1931, Dr. Todd graduated cum laude from Harvard College and Harvard Medical School. He interned and served his residency in surgery at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City, becoming chief resident in 1963. He was a Diplomate of the American Board of Surgery and a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. He was in private practice many years in New Jersey.

Dr. Todd, who retired in 1996 after 6 years as executive vice-president, was first elected a member of the board of trustees in 1980. He became senior deputy executive vice president in 1985, and was named executive vice president in 1990.

Dr. Todd is survived by his wife, Marjorie Patricia Thorn Todd, and his son, Kendall Scott Todd. •

CHANGES TO THE BUDGET RESOLUTION DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMITS, APPROPRIATE BUDGETARY AGGREGATES, AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ALLOCATION

• Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, section 202 of House Concurrent Resolution 84, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1998, requires the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee to adjust the discretionary spending limits, the appropriate budgetary aggregates and the Appropriations Committee's allocation contained in the most recently adopted budget resolution—in this case, House Concurrent Resolution 84—to reflect additional new budget authority for an increase in the maximum amount available to the Secretary of the Treasury pursuant to section 17 of the Bretton Woods Agreement Act, as amended from time to time—New Arrangements to Borrow.

Section 202 of House Concurrent Resolution 84, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1998, requires the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee to adjust the discretionary spending limits, the appropriate budgetary aggregates and the Appropriations Committee's allocation contained in the most recently adopted budget resolution—in this case, House Concurrent Resolution 84—to reflect additional new budget authority and outlays for an appropriation for arrears for international organizations, international peacekeeping, and multilateral development banks.

I hereby submit revisions to the non-defense discretionary spending limits for fiscal year 1998 contained in section 201 of House Concurrent Resolution 84 in the following amounts:

Budget authority:

		1998
Current nondefense discretionary spending limit		\$257,857,000,000
Adjustment		3,741,000,000
Revised nondefense discretionary spending limit		261,598,000,000
Outlays:		
Current nondefense discretionary spending limit		286,445,000,000
Adjustment		13,000,000
Revised nondefense discretionary spending limit		286,458,000,000

I hereby submit revisions to the budget authority, outlays, and deficit aggregates for fiscal year 1998 contained in section 101 of House Concurrent Resolution 84 in the following amounts:

Budget authority:

		1998
Current aggregate		\$1,386,700,000,000
Adjustment		3,741,000,000
Revised aggregate		1,390,441,000,000
Outlays:		
Current aggregate		1,372,000,000,000
Adjustment		13,000,000
Revised aggregate		1,372,013,000,000
Deficit:		
Current aggregate		173,000,000,000