

Ferdie J. Deering

FEB. 13, 1975

Must We Subsidize Radical Ideas?

OKLAHOMANS may not be aware that, as federal taxpayers, they are helping to finance a California publication devoted to the goal of persuading more people to get on the government free food lists.

It is called "Food Advocate Communicator," a federally-funded OEO project, associated with the School of Nutritional Sciences at the University of California in Berkeley.

"We are responsible for providing technical information and assistance for food stamp, school lunch, elderly feeding, and supplemental nutrition programs," the editors write, adding "Our primary emphasis will center on government food programs, and how you can participate in them."

The publication states that the 44-page January issue of Food Advocate Communicator was mailed to every church, grocery store, emergency food program, legal aid office, union and welfare office in the state of California, with an estimated "readership of 300,000". The writer is on the list.

In full-page editorials, designed for display as posters, and published in both English and Spanish, it is emphasized that "you do not have to be unemployed or on welfare to take advantage of" government funds appropriated for poverty food assistance.

The tabloid is illustrated profusely with 50-year old line drawings and contains some apparently authoritative articles on nutrition labels, the pill and nutrition, gardening, and how to start a food buying co-operative and co-operative farms.

There may be a need for disseminating information to those in dire need on how to obtain food, but probably most Americans would be shocked to see how this information is intermingled with anti-business, anti-profit, and anti-government

propaganda, all paid for with tax money collected from American taxpayers.

One target of the editorials is corporate farms. "Most of the conglomerate sodbusters are much more interested in farming the treasury than in farming the soil," says an article headed "This Land Is Their Land".

The total idea of efficiency in food production is challenged. "Is efficiency to be measured in terms of yield per acre, output per man, or profit per dollar invested? All of these are standard measurements, but in a social sense they fall short of the mark. Just as the total cost of manufacturing a product should include such externalities as the cost of

cleaning up the pollution discharged by the factory, so the total cost of corporate farming should include the welfare, unemployment compensation and general distress caused to displaced farmers and farm workers," it says.

The magazine offers booklets and papers said to be widely used by schools and land reform groups. Those who have followed the history of communism around the world are aware that among their basic appeals to the poor is some kind of land reform program.

Freedom of the press guarantees the right to publish such politically radical material, but does the Constitution require that our government must pay for it?

from

THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

Feb. 13, 1975

Copyright 1975 Oklahoma Publishing Co.