

Ferdie J. Deering

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# Strike a Ploy for Power in Schools

A LOT of people assume the main purpose of the recent teachers strike was to obtain higher pay for teachers. A number of teachers seem to believe that, and even some parents.

School officials and union leaders know better. The main purpose of the strike was to determine who will run Oklahoma City schools.

When the courts held that the union had lost its status as bargaining agent because the law was violated, union leaders denied they instigated the strike.

They claimed it was a spontaneous action of the teacher body at large. It was about as spontaneous as a fire started in the presence of an arsonist carrying a can of gasoline and matches.

With 32,000 teachers on strike in 16 states this month the argument of spontaneity doesn't hold up. Whenever a union of any kind walks into an institution or business, the strike threat comes also.

Unions seek power more than money. They know they can gain

control only through prejudicial legislation that forces workers to join and pay dues, or by strikes and other forms of violence.

Unions do not thrive where a mutually satisfactory relationship exists between employer and employees. The business of union agents is to disrupt such conditions wherever they exist, using whatever tactics may be expedient to create dissatisfaction and distrust.

Almost overlooked in the controversy is that the school board offered and instituted a salary increase averaging 9 percent for Oklahoma City teachers this year. The teachers have been neither neglected nor deprived.

The \$50 a month or so additional pay the union demanded was beyond sound budget management, but union leaders held it out as bait to persuade teachers to support the union's push for power.

Congress is being pressured to create a federal Department of Education and give union officials power to use tax money to force compul-

sory unionism on public education employees nationwide.

Under the law, citizens elect the school board to run the educational system, proposing necessary taxes, working out budgets and procedures, setting salary schedules and erecting buildings.

By striking, the union said, in effect, the board is not competent to do these things and union leaders should set policies.

Some have said they intend to try to elect union-oriented members to the board. This is their privilege, but it is a responsibility of parents and taxpayers to see to it that the union — either one — does not take over the school board.

Termination of the strike settled the wage issue this time, but it did not finally settle the battle for control of the school system.

Friction between striking and non-striking teachers will disrupt harmony in many school relationships. Lawsuits, claims and litigation will cause classroom learning processes to suffer.