

Ferdie J. Deering

MAY 6 1982

Freedom Vital for Good Leadership

A CITY'S future is only as great as the potential of its young leaders," an article in "Oklahoma," publication of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, stated recently.

It announced that a series of monthly seminars designed to develop leadership skills of young Oklahomans will begin in September, conducted by Leadership Oklahoma City Inc., a non-profit organization.

Oklahoma State University, with aid of funds from the Kellogg Foundation, is launching a program to develop leadership in agriculture. Other institutions and groups offer somewhat similar programs.

It is encouraging to see definite steps being taken to develop positive leadership. Communists and an assortment of special interest groups have been developing leadership for decades and using it effectively to negate morality, good government and, to a noticeable extent, the apparent will of a majority of Americans.

Leadership is essential, because most of us are destined to be followers. Not everybody aspires to be a

leader, and not all of those who occupy positions of leadership have worthy objectives.

Many of the world's most-remembered "leaders" might readily be identified as "mis-leaders." Some got what was coming to them, but others continue to be admired in the face of evidence of perfidy.

So what constitutes leadership? How may leaders be developed and installed in offices where they can function? How may we learn to discriminate between leaders and misleaders?

Definitions of leadership are abundant. In a Readers Digest article published in 1965, former President Dwight D. Eisenhower listed as qualities of leadership selfless dedication, courage and conviction, fortitude, humility, thorough homework, power of persuasion, and "Heart and Mind."

In his latest book, "Leadership for Leadership," Dr. Robert B. Kamm, OSU professor and past president, surveyed some 40 leading university presidents and past presidents to obtain their views on how institu-

tions of higher learning might develop leadership. He also researched some other sources to gather an impressive array of various but harmonious definitions of leadership.

Altogether Dr Kamm said some 90 different qualities of leadership were presented in his survey. Mentioned most frequently was "capacity for hard work." Integrity, honesty, fairness, friendliness, a sense of humor, flexibility, patience, poise and common sense also were ranked high on the educators' lists.

Kamm's study did not indicate physical characteristics are significantly related to leadership. Neither is superior intelligence. Knowledge and insight into applicable problems are important.

"I have long believed ... that leadership of a positive, moral, and responsible kind, and freedom, in the fullest and richest sense, go hand in hand — that the two are mutually supportive," Dr. Kamm wrote. "Thus freedom is essential for good leadership."

People seldom rise above the ideal of their leaders.