

Ferdie J. Deering

AUG 19 1982

## Pro-Left Educators Vs. the New Right

THE National Education Association was perceived for a long time as an organization for professional improvement of its members. In recent years, it has become established as a labor union and it is becoming a major influence in the political arena.

A pamphlet which has reached this desk reveals where NEA stands politically, socially, morally and otherwise. Titled "Combatting the New Right," the 50-page "Participant's Manual" is identified as "A Training Program Developed by Western States Regional Staff, National Education Association."

Informed sources say conferences using this material were held at Lawton, Putnam City and elsewhere in Oklahoma this summer.

"What is emerging today is a powerful convergence of forces on the right — militant cold warriors, anti-education would-be censors, anti-union, anti-regulatory free enterprise boosters, so-called pro-life, pro-family and pro-flag superpatriots, and

cians," the pamphlet says in accusing "right wing extremists" of exploiting emotional issues.

If that is the "right wing" and NEA is against it, where does that put NEA? Somewhere out in left field?

A half dozen pages are taken up with brief listings of "New Right," pro-business, patriotic, conservative and Christian organizations that NEA and OEA apparently consider to be their enemies.

One of the writers asserts that the "New Right" does not come close to traditional conservative philosophies but she does not imply adherence to those principles by NEA.

Instead, she declares that the "New Right" is peddling an old ideology that "is not new any more than it is right." This she says includes a belief in rugged individualism, a placing of property values over human values, a conviction that poor people are poor through fault of their own, a general anti-intellectualism, and fixed adherence to a set of false knowledge and

authoritarian control system.

Academic freedom is discussed as being "high on the hit list of the New Right." It is asserted that censorship battles are "the result of haphazard fanaticism on the part of a few crazy, disorganized fanatics."

Is that how NEA regards parents who object to their children being required to read profane, obscene or pornographic textbooks?

The pamphlet cites a definition of "Academic Freedom" by the American Library Association staff, which says: "Academic freedom requires recognition that even ideas which are generally deemed offensive, spurious, frivolous, or even dangerous to institutions, beliefs and objectivities are worth protecting — if only for the context they provide."

The pamphlet indicates that the "Right" is wrong when it opposes "values clarification" or favors prayers in schools, favors getting "the government off our backs," wants to "deny civil rights on the basis of sexual orientation" (homosexuality), or supports free enterprise.

East Main

# church of christ

1224 EAST MAIN — SHAWNEE, OKLAHOMA 74801

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## minister

Don Preston  
1421 Thompson Drive  
Phone 275-3229

August 19, 1982

Mr. Ferdie J. Deering  
Daily Oklahoman  
Oklahoma City, Ok.

Dear Mr. Deering,

Thank you for your article of 8-19-82 on "Pro-Left Educations vs. the New Right."

Would it be possible to obtain a copy of the NEA pamphlet which you cited? If you do not have an extra copy, would you please provide the address and/or ordering information? Your cooperation would be greatly appreciated.

Enclosed please find a self-addressed envelope for your convenience and \$2 to cover the cost of the pamphlet. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Don K. Preston  
DKP/bln  
Enclosure: \$2

*Come on Public Schools*

Come let us reason together

August 23, 1982

Mr. Don K. Preston, Minister,  
East Main Church of Christ,  
1224 East Main,  
Shawnee, OK 74801

Dear Mr. Preston:

Thank you for your comments on my  
recent column concerning the NEA and OEA.

The NEA pamphlet was provided to me by  
the Oklahoma Committee for Public Education,  
a coalition of several organizations. I  
requested J.D. Fleming, director of legis-  
lative services for the Oklahoma Farmers  
Union, to mail you a copy of the "Partici-  
pants' Manual," from which I quoted. It  
should reach you within a day or two.

There is no charge for this material  
and I am returning your \$2 to you herewith.

Sincerely,

Ferdie J. Deering