

Right wheel

IT'S BEEN a tricky week for Roger Scruton, one of our most celebrated right-wing pundits. 'Searchlight' magazine has described at length his friendship with a sex-change member of the ultra-right League of St George.

She is Della Aleksander, who until 1970 was known as Derek. She used to be a pupil of Scruton's at Birkbeck College, and has written articles about National Socialism for the League's review. Scruton once helped to book a room for one of her meetings.

He tells me that he doesn't agree with her more exotic opinions. 'I know there is a type of person who believes that if I shook Della's hand, I agree with everything she says.

'She has got a mind. I admire her, she's courageous. To be a transexual, teaching in a comprehensive school, is extraordinary.

'Her views are cranky. But I hate the idea that everybody has to be a safe, middle-of-the-road left-liberal or else shut up.

'Yes, she was a woman at the time I taught her. But only just.'