

CONCERTED ATTACK CHARGED IN NEW JERSEY. Under the heading of "The Censors," a series of articles by Ted Hall in the Newark (N.J.) News in February discloses that attacks on schools and libraries in eight New Jersey communities over the past several years appear now to have come not from "aroused local citizens" but from organized special groups. In each case organizations and individuals "have presented their censorship request as a patriotic necessity and have rejected as un-American any criticism of their actions." Among those involved, according to the News, were leaders of the New Jersey Anti-Communist League, and lending assistance was Allen A. Zoll, executive vice president of the National Council for American Education, who has been linked with school disputes in Pasadena, Denver and Scarsdale, N. Y.

The attack took different forms in the separate communities, but a common thread was "charges of subversion or Communism where investigation showed no communism to exist." In Englewood the attack began when a prominent preacher was opposed as a high school commencement speaker. In East Orange a social studies teacher was criticized for using pro-Communist pamphlets as a teaching aid in a course examining propaganda. In Tenafly attack centered on the school curriculum and on "un-American textbooks. In Milburn, tenure for the Superintendent of schools was fought on the grounds that he had been associated with un-American educational societies. In Montclair the public library was criticized for having "subversive" books on its open shelves and the Board of Education was asked to ban display of the United Nations flag in the schools. In Red Bank a speaker at a teachers' meeting was protested as un-American. In Nutley, "Brotherhood of Man," to be shown during Brotherhood Week, was criticized in advance as pro-Communist. In Summit school authorities were asked to delete from the junior high school pledge a reference to world citizenship that had been in use fifteen years; according to the News, this was the only dispute of purely local origin.

"We are an underground pressure group," the News quotes the president of the New Jersey Anti-Communist League as explaining, "to expose Communism in schools and other places." The league's membership is kept secret to prevent "persecution by Communists and liberals." The News stories suggest that the way to handle such attacks is by full publicity and exchange of information.

"The Censors" has been reprinted for distribution by the New Jersey Federation of District Boards of Education.

THE COMICS

Most popular method of dealing with objectionable comics, if one is to judge from the news, is the book swap. Local American Legion auxiliaries, as part of a national plan, have moved to get rid of undesirable comic books by offering an acceptable children's book for every ten comics turned in by children. In some places, however, there has been no discrimination between comics offensive on "social or moral grounds" and those approved under the new Code Authority. In Champaign (Ill.) the News-Gazette referred in one story to "salty" comic book reading, and added that most of the comics given up were "about such earthy characters as Mickey Mouse, Lassie, Donald Duck and Bugs Bunny."

Books given in exchange have often included children's classics, biographies, stamp books and books on animals. But in Brunswick (Me.), according to an AP dispatch, a department store offered illustrated Bible stories; the proprietor, long a foe of comics, argued against them in 1953 to help pass a bill providing bookmobile service from Maine's State Library. And in Canton (O.), where the book swap plan was first used, the Mayor's Committee for Promotion of Good Reading Habits inaugurated its third swap campaign by offering tickets to the motion picture "Hansel and Gretel" for undesirable comics. The only stipulation, said the Repository, was "that children using the tickets must be accompanied by an adult."

An editor, on the Peoria (Ill.) Star, noted that comic books in Vancouver had been publicly burned, and editorialized (Dec. 22); "It has been a contention of liberals that the removal of seditious books from libraries constituted 'book burning.' And we generally agree that the destruction or suppression of obnoxious publications is not the way to deal with them.

"But if that is true, how can we sanction the actual burning of juvenile books as a kind of ceremony to prove to kids that they have been reading the wrong stuff?"

Comic books have been burned in towns other than Vancouver. But in Norwich (Conn.) when over 5,000 comics had been collected at the end of a successful swap, a plan for publicly burning them was protested by radio station WCIH and by the American Civil Liberties Union, which called it "an imitation of totalitarian dictatorship that is wholly contrary to the American way of life." According to a U. P. dispatch the comics were then disposed of privately and without fanfare.

Legislation. An ordinance banning comics depicting crime and horror has been passed by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. In New Orleans the City Council passed two ordinances prohibiting the sale of horror, crime or "sexually indecent" comic books--one for persons under 17 years of age, and the other for persons over 17. In Riverside, California, an ordinance establishing a board of censors to screen objectionable comics and other material, was passed at a first reading, but at a required second reading, library and university opposition tabled the measure for six months, probably killing it; subsequently, similar ordinances were voted down in two other cities in Riverside County, a result based upon the earlier action in Riverside.

A positive approach by librarians has helped to defeat the idea of a censorship ordinance in Bozeman, Montana. And librarians have issued a considered statement on the "Freedom to Read" statement and on comics in Minnesota, concluding "in nearly every instance where efforts are made to control comic books, other forms of books are included.... We must be careful that the whole vast edifice of our

liberties is not undermined because we think one room needs redecorating.

The Connecticut General Assembly has voted to conduct an investigation of comic books, according to the N. Y. Times (Jan. 27), "to ascertain whether they are related to growing juvenile delinquency in the state." In Washington (U.P., Feb. 19) a Senate subcommittee on juvenile delinquency examined the "blood curdling plots of depraved violence" in some of the comics, and called on the publishers, czar or no czar, to clean house themselves. Bills censoring comics and proposed inquiries are pending in a number of state legislatures now in session.

CODE AND CZAR. In February the National Organization for Decent Literature announced that it would temporarily cease listing objectionable comics until the "Code Authority has completed its work. The NODL Committee will then review the revised comic books according to the NODL Code." New York Code Administrator Charles F. Murphy (N. Y. Times Feb. 12) was already under criticism from the New York State Joint Legislative Committee about to introduce legislation based on its own independent study of "pocket books, comic books, obscene pictures, radio and television." Chairman James A. Fitzpatrick, according to the Times, said that his committee had found in its "independent examination of books bearing the seal that violence and brutality continue to be portrayed to an intolerable degree."

Perhaps more critical was the testimony of Dr. Frederic Wertham, author of The Show of Violence, that from advertisements in comics bearing the Code Authority seal he had been able to buy a bull whip and a throwing knife. Administrator Murphy admitted the advertisements, "in small print among numerous other 'novelties,'" had been overlooked by two of the twenty-nine publishers represented by the Authority. "You need a magnifying glass to read it," he said; it was, he added another example of the "growing up" process of his office.

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YOU MUSTN'T READ, YOU MUSTN'T LOOK. The January 15 issue of The Firing Line, published by the National Americanism Commission of the American Legion, attacked the selection of books by Louis Adamic and Pearl Buck and of the film "Brotherhood of Man" in the December issue of the library publication, the Public Relations Planner.

The PRP is in good company. In the following issue (Feb. 1) the Firing Line attacked the American Committee for Cultural Freedom. Previously the Herbert Paul Lenz Post of the American Legion of Allentown, Pa., had opposed the showing of four Charlie Chaplin films at Muhlenberg College in a series on the development of the cinema. From James T. Farrell, chairman of the ACCF, came a telegram deploring the Post's "vigilante action in coercing Muhlenberg College to drop Chaplin Film Festival"--and continuing, "This action apes Soviet tactics and Soviet attitudes.... While it is perfectly clear that Chaplin tends to be pro-Soviet and anti-American in his political attitudes, there is no reason why we should not enjoy his excellent movies which have nothing to do with Communist totalitarianism.... At first banned, the Chaplin films were shortly reinstated and shown at the college.

All but three paragraphs of the Feb. 1 Firing Line were devoted to the American Committee. Included among the committee's members attacked were not only Farrell but John Dos Passos, George S. Counts, Roger N. Baldwin, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Reinhold Niebuhr, Arthur M.

Schlesinger, Jr., and Harry Overstreet.

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FREEDOM AGENDA PROGRAM. The Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund, 164 Lexington Ave., New York 16, has recently issued six pamphlets to serve as the basis for popular community discussion of the fundamental principles of individual liberty. Over 330 groups basing their discussion on these pamphlets have been inaugurated by such organizations as the League of Women Voters, AMVETS, the National Council of Catholic Women, the National Council of Jewish Women, the YMCA and YWCA. The pamphlets, written by authorities in each field, are: the Constitution and Loyalty Programs, by Alan Westin; Freedom of Speech and Press, by Zechariah Chafee, Jr.; the Constitution and Congressional Investigating Committees, by Robert K. Carr; Where Constitutional Liberty Came From, by Alfred H. Kelly; Constitutional Liberty and Seditious Activity, by Jack Peltason; the Bill of Rights and Our Individual Liberties, by T. V. Smith. The Memorial Fund was created by the League of Women Voters, and its Freedom Agenda Program has been made possible by a grant from the Fund for the Republic.

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LITERATURE AVAILABLE. We have varying quantities of certain documents, statements and reprints on aspects of intellectual freedom. On request we shall be glad to mail out single copies where the supply is limited, and in reasonable quantity where we still have a good-sized stock.

1. Not Censorship But Selection. By Lester Asheim. Reprint from September, 1953 Wilson Library Bulletin: 5p. Many copies.
2. Intellectual Freedom. By William Dix. Reprint from January, 1955 Library Trends: 9p. On the relation of intellectual freedom to the A.L.A. 400 copies.
3. Opinion of the Oklahoma Supreme Court decision on the Bartlesville library case. Mimeo., 5p. 200 copies.
4. Report from Boston. By Laurence Kipp. Reprint from Nov. 1, 1952 Library Journal on the attack on the Boston Public Library. 4p. 300 copies.
5. Propaganda and Pressures. 6-page printed folder, now well known. 200 copies.
6. The Librarian--Bureaucrat or Democrat. By Paul Bixler. 6-page folder, reprinted from Dec. 1, 1954 Library Journal. 400 copies.
7. Selective Bibliography of Literary Censorship in the United States. Prepared by Aaron Fessler, March, 1952. Dittoed: 9p. 100 copies.
8. Let Freedom Ring: 2d ed. of a Special reading List for our Time, April, 1953. Mimeo., 10p. 100 copies.
9. Do Silent Witnesses Defend Civil Liberties? By Alan F. Westin. Reprint from June, 1953 Commentary: 10p. 200 copies.
10. Book Burning. A Special Report on the Censorship of Books. From the New Republic, 1953. Includes stories from San Antonio, St. Cloud and Boston, and Freedom to Read Statement. 400 copies.

11. Material on Consumer Union and Consumer Reports. mimeo., 7p. This is now history as the House Un-American Activities Committee finally withdrew its "subversive" listing last year. 100 copies.

12. Knowledge, Security and Wisdom. By President Otto Kraushaar of Goucher College. 17-page folder. 100 copies.

13. Library Trustees Discuss Russian Language and Communist Literature Problems. mimeo., 3p. How the public library in Springfield, O. plus an informed newspaper editor handled a tricky situation. 100 copies.

14. Books and Constitutional Guarantees. Issued 1953 by American Book Publishers Council. Dittoed: 6p. A few copies.

15. Letter from Jefferson to M. Dufief, Monticello, Apr. 19, 1814. Mimeo: 2p. 100 copies.

16. What to Do About "Dangerous" Textbooks. By Edward N. Saveth. Reprint from Commentary, February, 1952. 11p. 50 copies.

17. Address by Judge Curtis Bok, 1954 National Book Awards. 14-page folder. 1,000 copies.

18. Directive from Palmer Hoyt to his staff on how to handle McCarthyism. Mimeo., 2p. 100 copies.

19. The United Nations: Facts and Fallacies. 6-page folder from Church Peace Union. 100 copies.

And of course we have copies of the Library Bill of Rights, the statement on Labelling, and the Freedom to Read statement.

*Special. Also the beautiful broadside taken from President Eisenhower's "Don't Join the Book Burners" speech at Dartmouth College, June 14, 1953. For a copy send \$.15 in stamps.

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REPORT IN HOUSTON. Over 900 teachers in the Houston (Texas) school system believe themselves subjected to "unwarranted pressures" in and out of the classroom, according to a 60-page report issued by the National Commission for the Defense of Democracy of the National Education Association at the end of December. The pressures reportedly came from school administrators, members of the board of education, nonteacher organizations, and laymen of the community. 258 teachers reported pressure brought against them to support a political candidate; 285 said they had been pressured to refrain from social or political activities; 258 recorded pressure to "slant some courses toward a certain political belief"; 324 said they had been subjected to pressure to "present only one side when discussing current events"; 331 reported pressure to "include or exclude teaching materials not required by the school board." Over half the total number of Houston school teachers replied to the questionnaire within the time limit of six days set for answering. Fifty-eight per cent of the replies reported one or more pressures.

Questions were supplied and answers tabulated by an independent research company, Psychological Research Associates. Immediate cause for employing the questionnaire method was the confused and excited response which greeted a special investigating committee of laymen from other southern states, called in by the NEA to examine the situation. Earlier, the Texas State Teachers Association had requested the NEA to

investigate "the circumstances and the educational unrest in what is generally referred to as the Ebey case and related problems" in Houston. (George W. Ebey was dismissed after one year as Houston Deputy Superintendent of Schools for being "controversial"; see Newsletter II; 2, p. 7, item "Minute Women; and II: 3, p. 5.)

There is much more in the NEA report than the results of the questionnaire. Background of the investigation is an extended history of unrest and dispute. One of the issues causing repeated friction within the school system, says the Report, was a dual system of control, in which the Business Manager shared equal administrative status before the School Board with the Superintendent. In 1948 and 1952 heated contests between "conservative" and "liberal" factions in election campaigns for the School Board left scars on community relations and on school affairs. In recent years not only "Communist fronters" but so-called "progressive educators" and "one-worlders" have drawn the fire of critics, and according to the Report, violent protests were leveled on such grounds at such visiting speakers as Dr. Willard Goslin, Stringfellow Barr, and the late Eduard Lindeman.

Against such a background how were books selected? According to the Report, in 1949 Magruder's textbook American Government was banned by the School Board on the grounds that parts of the volume tended to undermine the American way of life--an action which took place after the book had been unanimously recommended by a teacher textbook committee set up according to legal regulations. From then until the time of the current investigation (over four years) the Houston schools were without a textbook in government. On a later occasion the Board voted 4 to 3 to reject a handwriting textbook recommended by the legally constituted teacher review committee, then voted to substitute another textbook written by a former teacher of one of the Board members.

"Report of an Investigation, Houston, Texas: a Study of Factors Related to Educational Unrest in a Large School Area" can be obtained from the Washington office of the NEA.

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REPORT ON FOUNDATIONS. In a speech before the National Press Club (N. Y. Times Washington, Jan. 26) Robert M. Hutchins, head of the Fund for the Republic, asserted that "the fear of being branded unjustly as subversive may cause foundations to stop supplying 'risk capital' for philanthropic and educational purposes." Attacking the report and proceedings of the special House Committee on tax-exempt foundations, Dr. Hutchins said that the committee's chairman, Representative B. Carroll Reece of Tennessee had "accomplished his purpose which was to harass the foundations and to subdue such stirrings of courage, or even of imagination, as could be found in them."

Given "equal time" by the Press Club to reply, Rep. Reece (N. Y. Times, Feb. 23) repeated the charge in the committee's report that foundations were "directly supporting subversion," called Dr. Hutchins' comments "typical of the vituperation which has been poured on us by professional operators of foundations," and attacked Representative Wayne Hays of Ohio, minority member of the committee who opposed the majority report and was openly critical of committee procedures, for his "marathon interruption of witnesses."

The American Civil Liberties Union, which is not tax-exempt and was not involved in the committee report (Times, Feb. 23), has asked for a Congressional study of the "investigative practices involved in the committee's procedure." When committee sessions closed last June

without foundation witnesses in reply, Patrick Malin, the Union's executive director, said the union "was appalled by this gross violation of due process in legislative inquiry." The recent report, he said, "appears to have formalized many of the failures and injustices which have accumulated since last spring."

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NEW ENGLAND EDUCATION. One of the bills introduced into the Massachusetts legislature (Worcester Telegram, Feb. 10) would require school and college presidents "to expel Communists or Communist sympathizers from their teaching staffs" on penalty of losing the institutions's charter; no definition of "Communist sympathizer" is given except that it includes anyone claiming the protection of the Fifth Amendment. Another bill would add to the present Massachusetts teachers oath law the phrase, "I am not now a member of or ever was a member of the Communist Party." A third bill would provide that anyone who refused to answer "any question" put to him by an investigating board or commission would be ineligible to teach in any private or public school of any description.

In Connecticut the regulations of a new code adopted by the State Board of Education has been provoking widespread discussion and protest, particularly among teachers and teachers organizations (Hartford Courant, Feb. 1). In addition to losing his teaching license on the grounds of incompetence, fraud, neglect, "scandalous conduct," or subversion, a teacher who is found to have "advocated, advised, taught or furthered the overthrow of the government by force or violence or by any unlawful means since he or she received a teacher's certificate, can no longer teach Connecticut children" (Greenwich Time, Jan. 7). A certificate may also be revoked if its holder is found to be a member of a group or organization which has been "declared subversive by the Department of Justice of the United States." Full procedures to insure fair hearings have been set up by the Board, according to Greenwich Time.

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FEARFUL TEACHERS? A study of fear among teachers in high schools and colleges has been announced by the Fund for the Republic. The aim is to "assess the degree of fear among teachers in such areas as the handling of controversial subjects in the classroom; their relationships with students, fellow teachers and administrative superiors; their feeling about expressing unpopular opinions in professional publications; their willingness to take part in extra-curricular and community affairs, and the influence of tenure on academic freedom." The Fund is to allocate \$80,000 to \$85,000 for the college study and at least as much again for the high school study (N.Y. Times, Jan. 24).

Results of a questionnaire according to the Times, are to be "coded, tabulated and analyzed for publication to reflect the situation in each institution and over the nation, including breakdowns by type, size and institution." A report is expected in six to nine months.

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IFC PROCEEDINGS. Available now from the American Library Association is Freedom of Book Selection (\$3.50), proceedings of the Second Intellectual Freedom Conference (Whittier, Calif., 1953), edited by Fredric Mosher. Six months after publication a new printing is

available of Freedom of Communication (A.L.A., \$4.00), proceedings of the First Intellectual Freedom Conference (New York City, 1952.)

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NEWS BRIEFS. Much has been made of a recent incident in Los Angeles in which a copy of the Bill of Rights, posted by a naturalized citizen on the bulletin board of a state government office, was ordered removed after a time on the grounds that nothing "controversial" should be so displayed. But a grievous point, too complex perhaps to be fully explicated in a news dispatch, was that the Bill of Rights had become the focus for a battle of bulletins and posters between pro-McCarthyites and anti-McCarthyites, between pro-Communists and anti-Communists...

One of the most widely published of syndicated editorials in the past month considered the proposal of Congressman Daniel Flood, Pennsylvania Republican, that a government commission be set up to prepare a textbook or fact-book on Communism for colleges, based on material gathered under oath by Congressional committees. The editorial said that the proposal would happily ban any tendency in any college to avoid the subject of communism; that the project would be useful if the commission would carefully sift the reliable from the unreliable testimony; but emphasized that no compiled textbook or fact-book should be mandatory in any college and that the aim should be to encourage the fullest inquiry about Communism. The editorial appeared in newspapers from Nevada (Humboldt Star) to Massachusetts (Lawrence Eagle)...

A \$250,000 study of the influence of Communism, past and present, on all aspects of American life, was recently announced by the Fund for the Republic...

In North Canton, Ohio the American Legion Auxiliary has pressured the public library, unsuccessfully, to have the Nation, the Saturday Review, and the Reporter removed from its magazine racks. The president of the Keep America Free Council suggested that "subversive" books and those by "subversive" writers in the library be labelled, but library trustees objected on the grounds that such an act would be undemocratic and would set a precedent for other groups to follow...

According to an INS dispatch (Seattle, Wash., INS, Feb. 17), University of Washington students hanged their school president in effigy in protest against his refusal to permit Robert J. Oppenheimer, atomic physicist, to speak on campus...

Attorneys studying the record and the effects of Milwaukee's city motion picture commission and its county literary commission, which have advisory censorship powers, have urged (Journal, Feb. 16) that both be abolished...

Thirteen faculty members at the North Dakota Agricultural College issued an "open letter to the people" of the state in support of four professional colleagues discharged by the state board of education (Fargo, A.P., Jan. 22)...

In an article, "Leftwing Bias of a Library Service," in the January National Republic, Felix Wittmer attacks the reviews in the Library Journal, charging that "almost without exception" [they] recommend left-wing books and condemn those of conservatives..."

Paul Bixler

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