



newsletter

ON INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

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'Cancer' Spots

SAN DIEGO

A San Diego jury has acquitted two La Jolla, Calif., bookstore owners on charges of selling an obscene book, *Tropic of Cancer*. The decision came after 12 hours of deliberation and climaxed a five-month trial for Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence McGilvery, owners of the Nexus Bookstore.

Despite the verdict, Police Chief Wesley Sharp and Sheriff A. E. Jansen publicly stated they still thought the book obscene and promised to continue arresting anyone who sold it. "Merely because the jury decided this way in one case does not change the law," Jansen said. "Each offense is a separate offense and another jury might just as readily convict them." On May 25, City Attorney Alan Firestone declared no further prosecution would be made.

The McGilverys were arrested last November 11 when they sold a copy of Miller's novel to a young police undercover agent. At first the couple refused to sell the book to Police Cadet Steven Wayne, pending the resolution of a case against the book then in progress in Los Angeles. But when the cadet, posing as a college student, said he needed the book for a paper he was doing on literary censorship, the couple relented. Their arrest came immediately thereafter.

NASHVILLE

Tropic of Cancer has been banned by the manager of the Vanderbilt University bookstore. "Everyone knows what kind of book it is. I don't want to make any comment," said Arthur R. Leonhardt, the manager. But the campus newspaper, the *Hustler*, quoted him as having said, "It's filthy. I don't want kids picking it up here and taking it home to their parents. It's not the type of book Vanderbilt should offer to the student."

HARTFORD

Hartford, Conn., Superior Court Judge Frank J. Covello fined a local bookseller \$50 for selling *Tropic of Cancer*, which he ruled an obscene book "totally lacking any idea having the slightest redeeming social importance."

The judge remarked in his decision on the "high esteem" the court had for many of the college professors who testified in the book's defense. "It must be borne in mind, however, that the book . . . is not published for the use of scholars who may see in it

literary merit in the method of expression or the arrangement of words," wrote the judge. "It is published for distribution to members of the general public and the question is whether to the average person, applying contemporary community standards, the dominant theme of the material, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interest."

Defense attorneys said an appeal will be filed with the Supreme Court of Errors.

CHICAGO

Four persons were arrested March 13 in Chicago's Actors' Club for reading aloud passages from *Tropic of Cancer*. The Chicago vice squad charged the four with "reading obscenity aloud in a public place" despite protests from the performers that the book had been cleared of such charges in Chicago. The four referred to Superior Judge Samuel Epstein's February decision (April *Newsletter*) which found the book "a literary work of substantial merit" and not obscene.

SYRACUSE

Syracuse, N. Y. police have arrested three bookstore operators for selling *Tropic of Cancer*, described in the warrant as "obscene, lewd, filthy, indecent and disgusting." The three booksellers have pleaded innocent to the misdemeanor charge in Police Court.

Lieutenant Richard Schill of the Police Department Youth Bureau said the action was taken after several complaints were received from irate parents.

MIAMI

A Circuit Court jury in Florida's Dade County (Miami) has banned the sale of *Tropic of Cancer*. It was the second book to be banned by a Dade County jury in recent months. The other book was *Pleasure Is My Business*, the memoirs of a Madame Sherry who operated a brothel in the Miami area.

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Food For Thought

The following two items appeared in the Santa Fe *New Mexican* early in February. Some authors have had long experience in fighting back at critics who charge that their books are unfit to read. With the current hysteria, in some parts of the country, other authors who have never before had the unwelcome distinction of having their books labeled "obscene" are being given the opportunity to defend themselves against their narrow-minded critics. Mr. La Farge's statement is so eloquent that we felt that the readers of the *Newsletter* would welcome the opportunity to discover how it feels to have one of one's literary creations attacked.

(These items are reprinted by permission of the *New Mexican*)

'IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH?'

It takes all sorts of people to make a world including, we suppose, a certain number of anti-intellectuals.

What bothers us is how in the world this sort gets into the education profession as seems to have happened at Amarillo. At the dust storm capital, the president of Amarillo College and the superintendent of Amarillo Public Schools have removed some of the best books ever written in the English language from the school library shelves in a move to "weed out obscenity."

The list of proscribed volumes—believe it or not—includes Oliver LaFarge's Pulitzer Prize winning "Laughing Boy." It also includes three other Pulitzer winners: "The Grapes of Wrath," "Andersonville," and "The Way West." Others on the list are "The Big Sky," "Marjorie Morningstar," "Of Time and the River," "Brave New World," and "Nineteen Eighty Four."

The school superintendent indicates that he plans to read these modern classics "to see what is in the books." It's a little hard to imagine a school superintendent—or any other literate adult—who hasn't already read a few of them.

We fear that this gentleman is in for a disappointment if he expects to find anything obscene in Mr. LaFarge's sensitive portrait of a young Navajo's tragic adventure between the Indian and White worlds, or for that matter in any of that blue-ribbon list of literature. However, we suspect he'll appreciate "Nineteen Eighty Four." That's the one in which the Thought Police of Orwell's monolithic "Big Brother" state of the future, preach "Ignorance is Strength." Judging from the attitude toward thought-provoking books, that sentiment should have special appeal for Amarillo educators. (Editorial Feb. 2, 1962)

BANNED BOOK BRINGS BEREAVEMENT

NOTE: This column was written before seeing the fine editorial in Friday's edition of this newspaper. O. La F.

It was curious to learn, some days ago, that the first novel I ever wrote had been removed from the libraries of the public schools in Amarillo, Tex., on the grounds of obscenity. About a year ago I heard, through the protest of an irate Southern lady who was quite unknown to me, that the same book had been banned by a county school board in Georgia. In that case, I gathered, the fundamental objection was to my writing about a dark race—American Indians—as though its members were as good as white men or sometimes better, so the news merely amused me and saddened me somewhat for what it showed about one bit of America.

Ever since I was young, I have wondered what it would feel like to have someone rule that one's book was obscene. Boston used to be the great city for it, and when I was beginning to write it was a cynical but practical observation that getting the censors there to declare one's work

immoral was an excellent way to boost sales.

It seemed to me, and still does, that this is not the way I would like to promote the sale of anything I had done. It certainly never occurred to me that it could happen to me. When I thought about censorship, I thought about it as affecting me only to the extent that it might prevent me from seeing or reading works of art that I might think worthwhile.

Thus, I was shocked and annoyed to learn that there were objections by local church authorities to the public showing here of a film called "Never on Sunday." This film had high praise from all reviewers, had been much honored, is undoubtedly one of the few really good pictures made in the last year or so.

The heroine of "Never on Sunday," like the heroine of my first novel, is not all she should be. My heroine's sins had a reason in the structure of the book, and it never crossed my mind that I could make my story juicy or sexy or more popular by exploiting them. I simply wanted a woman with a certain background, which would lead her into a certain error in her marriage.

The book came out in 1929 and was immediately followed by the stock market crash of that year. I do not believe that anyone has suggested that there was a connection between the two events. The book had a wide success, was published in foreign countries, and was made into a very poor movie. By the time it had been out ten years, I discovered that it was being used or recommended in college and high school English courses.

When I went to lecture or to do a spell of teaching at some college, it was a common experience to have students bring me copies of the paper-back edition to autograph. Some even had splurged and brought the hard cover version. All this has been most gratifying. The book has been in print now for more than 30 years. It has become old-fashioned and a bit dated, yet it still sells, and people much younger than I still tell me of their pleasure in it.

Naturally, the last thing I would expect, after all these years, was that a school board would find this novel obscene. And now it has happened. Now I know how it feels, insignificant though being banned in the schools of Amarillo (pop. 51,686) may be.

My first reaction was that some people on that school board must have remarkably dirty minds. I still think that. Yet there is something else. I wrote that book with love, think of it with affection and pride, remembering an unworldly young man from whom I am descended and his quite pure pursuit of artistic beauty.

Now that work, that product of mine, in a real sense my unexpectedly successful child, has been smirched. It is a false smirching. It has no real meaning. Still, it has caused me a disagreeable sensation. I feel as if some nasty person had come up to me and drawn a slimy, unwashed finger across my hand. It is his dirt, not mine, but I would sooner not have been touched. (Column, Feb. 4, 1962)

'CALORIES' CUT IN DETROIT LIBRARY

The bestselling book on dieting, *Calories Don't Count* by Dr. Herman Taller, has been withdrawn from the shelves of the Detroit Public Library because it was determined to be "nutritionally unsound."

The action followed criticism of the book by some medical authorities and by officials of the food and drug administration. One local critic of the library's book ban asserted that "if enough Detroiters want to read a book to justify the expense to the library of buying it, it is the purpose of the library to supply it."

Editorials

'RACE AND REASON' AND REASON

The controversy in Arlington, Va., began innocently enough. At a semi-monthly meeting of branch librarians and supervisors to select books for the Arlington Central Library, the book *Race and Reason: A Yankee View*, by Carlton Putnam, came under consideration. It was turned down, as were all but 17 of the 325 books under review. One person mentioned in passing that, because Putnam favored the United Nations and Eisenhower and did not advocate lynching, the book would "not quite satisfy either the John Birchers or the Citizens' Councils."

Overnight Putnam's book, which asserts that Negroes are innately inferior to whites and must be segregated so they will not contaminate and debilitate the white race, became a *cause celebre* for the right-wing. Letters appeared in the press denouncing "left-wing" librarians, accusing them of "book burning" and not giving Conservatives a fair hearing.

Whatever the reasons for passing over the Putnam book—reasonable though they may have been—Arlington library officials were duty-bound to add the book to the library after demand was assured. The Arlington librarians realized this, and acquired the book the first week in March with little fanfare.

However, one argument given by the dissidents for selecting the book was the favorable comments, of Westbrook Pegler ("one of the most important books of our day") and Senator Strom Thurmond ("a challenge to objectivity which no American, regardless of color or status, can afford to ignore"). It scarcely need be said that the opinions of these men are not commonly sought by librarians as book selection aids.

Then in April, Mrs. Jane B. Nida, Arlington Library director, received a letter containing threats from the Ku Klux Klan. The KKK demanded that the Putnam book either be included in the library or Mrs. Nida resign. It was obvious that the Klan had not bothered to check the card catalog; the book had been available for nearly a month prior to the threat.

Even more disturbing was a resolution introduced in the Virginia House of Delegates in February which proposed a study to consider the book for use "by selected mature high school and college students" in the state. Thirteen sponsors of the resolution, lamenting the trend toward "genetic amalgamation," called Putnam "an eminent American scholar who has written a book that exposes the flagrant distortion and perversion of scientific truth by so-called social anthropologists and socialistically oriented sociologists."

The resolution was not without precedent. In Louisiana last year the book was made required reading for "selected college personnel," viz.: all deans, professors and instructors; all students enrolled in courses in anthropology, sociology and psychology; all students enrolled in the mandatory course, Americanism vs. Communism; and for other special students chosen on the basis of "maturity, sincerity and dependability."

And what of author Putnam, chairman of the board of Delta Airlines and self-confessed "amateur anthropologist?" In the Deep South—where over 60,000 cop-

pies of his book have been sold—he is understandably popular. Governor Ross Barnett of Mississippi proclaimed last Oct. 26 "Race and Reason Day" throughout the state in Putnam's honor. A television program featuring his writings and speeches has been prepared by the Mississippi Citizens' Council Forum and called "Project Understanding."

Putnam's reception has been less cordial, however, with the American Anthropological Association, which recently passed a resolution repudiating the contents of the book and accusing Putnam of "monstrous error."

Putnam responded by saying the anthropologists were "deceiving the American public," then urged them to "throw off the yoke of hard-core radicals" who controlled the organization. The "radical minority," Putnam answered under questioning, were Jews. He added that many anthropologists shared his views but were forced to conceal them for fear of retaliation.

Book selection is a process fraught with hazard, and prejudices are almost certain to be with all selectors, individual or committee. Yet there are generally accepted guidelines which minimize these pitfalls, and above all there is reason—divorced from race in this case. Librarians should make *Race and Reason: A Yankee View* available when there is a demand, just as legislators should not force *Race and Reason: A Yankee View* when there is not a demand. Coercing a person to read a book is no less reprehensible than denying a person the right to read a book. And true objectivity in book selection may remain, forever, a chimera just beyond our grasp.

D. B.

L. L. M.

Reproduced below is the Ku Klux Klan's letter to Mrs. Nida. Evidently spelling is not one of the Klan's strong points.

Mrs. Jane Nida
Director of Libraries
1015 N. Quincy St.
Arlington, Virginia

April 9, 1962

Dear Mrs. Nida

Because of the fact that you refuse to place the publication called RACE and REASON by Carleton Putnam in the Arlington County libraries even tho (sic) there is a great demand for it not only in Arlington and the entire state of Virginia, but throughout the United States, we ask you to do one of two alternatives.

Either put this book in the libraries, or resign from your present position.

We do not care if the book has been approved by the so-called Human Relations Committee or not because our only concern is the rights of the American people. This book is perhaps the most significant (sic) publication in regards to the White race that has ever been introduced to the public.

The White Christain (sic) American stock was bred under highly selective surroundings and have proved their value, and we shall not succumb to the Communist plan of a Mongrel race. And to become a mongrel group is the only outcome of social mixing with the Negro. The interracial marriage between a few individuals eventually leads to a mass population degeneration.

If libraries are to carry Communism and intergration (sic) trash then thay (sic) must certainly will carry literature on Americanism, and it is the duty of the Arlington libraries to carry this book.

If you do not comply with our demand we shall bring

'Carpetbaggers' Ban Spreads In Four States

The Carpetbaggers, best-selling novel by Harold Robbins, has been banned in Bridgeport and Waterbury, Conn.; Fall River, Chicopee, and Somerset, Mass.; Warwick, R.I.; and Nashville, Tenn. In each city the suppression of the book was by direct police action without a judicial determination of its obscenity, and all bans were inflicted between March 5 and 15.

In Nashville a magazine distributor ordered all copies of *The Carpetbaggers* collected from newsstands and returned to the publisher after two persons had been arrested for selling the book.

Don McGehee, the sheriff's chief juvenile officer, said the arrests were made after Mrs. W. T. Callaway, a PTA council president, purchased a copy of the book and swore out a warrant against one of the defendants. "It was too filthy for an adult to read, much less a child," Mrs. Callaway said.

In Warwick, Police Chief James F. Lynch announced that he was acting as his own literary censor when he ordered storekeepers to take the book off the racks. Lynch said he decided against the book after he had read "parts of it" and found it "obscene."

In Somerset the book's disappearance resulted from a direct order by Police Chief John O. Soares forbidding the book's sale. Detective Lieutenant Alfred Campos, of Fall River, explained that the book's withdrawal in his community had been achieved on a "voluntary" basis. Campos said he had picked up the book thinking it was a Civil War story, but discovered it to be a "filthy book." He then notified booksellers of his determination.

Police normally act, said Campos, against books that are listed objectionable on a guide list published by a "Chicago agency." The National Office For Decent Literature — a Catholic agency — does publish such a list in Chicago, and it seems likely that it is the one used in Fall River. The NODL list, however, is supposed to be only a guide for Catholic parents in supervising their children's reading. According to Father Harold C. Gardiner, editor of the Jesuit magazine *America*, the church does not approve of the list's use in community censorship campaigns. A local priest, who is described as "directing" the drive on *The Carpetbaggers*, has asked that as little publicity as possible be given to the ban because the demand always increases for an "obscene work."

In Bridgeport, Superintendent of Police Joseph A. Walsh used the threat of prosecution to force the book from the newsstands; here, however, the action has provoked a great deal of criticism. Sidney S. Postol, of the American Civil Liberties Union, wrote to the mayor: "It is not due process to substitute, as has been done here, the opinion of one man, even such a man as Superintendent Walsh, for the courts of the State of Connecticut. This would not be done in a traffic violation case; it should not be done when one of our basic freedoms is involved."

The ban also angered author Robbins, who lives in nearby Norwalk, Conn. "Ridiculous," Robbins called the action. "Police cannot suppress ideas and know-

ledge, or shape them to what they think knowledge and ideas should be."

Pocket Books, Inc., publisher of the paperback edition, was denied an injunction in the U.S. District Court in New Haven to restrain Bridgeport police officials from interfering in the book's distribution. The decision has been appealed. The firm also named Superintendent of Police Walsh, Captain John J. Carroll, and the Waterbury police superintendent as defendants in a suit for \$100,000 damages. Robbins was not involved in bringing the suit.

Specter Over Texas

This is the year for selecting history and geography textbooks for schools in the state of Texas. It is also the year of massive attacks by Texas right-wing groups on the schools in general and textbook selection in particular. These groups, led by ultra-conservative J. Evetts Haley and his Texans For America and receiving strong support from the American Legion, the DAR, and the John Birch Society, have met with both successes and setbacks, and the hysteria they have provoked has spread throughout the state.

The battle of the books appears to have begun in the state capital, Austin, where the Texas legislature — under right-wing pressures from within and without the body — established a textbook investigating committee. The duty of the committee of five was to hold public hearings on charges that books now used, or planned for future use in the state schools, are subversive.

The resolution which established the committee was effusive, if somewhat vague: "The House expresses its desire that the American history course in the public schools emphasize in the textbooks our glowing and throbbing history of hearts and souls inspired by wonderful principles and traditions."

The suspect books and authors were many; the specific charges — some familiar, others novel — were even more numerous. Following are some of the demands from the right:

Remove books with favorable descriptions of the New Deal, the United Nations, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and federal aid to just about anything.

Banish books that describe the United States as a democracy rather than a republic (a now familiar shibboleth of the John Birch Society).

Oppose references to Pete Seeger and Langston Hughes due to "past Communist affiliations."

That Webster's *New World Dictionary* not be used because its definition of Communism does not call it "a world menace."

Remove the name of Albert Einstein from textbooks.

Eliminate those books which "glorify" government control of economy and use only those which "praise the virtues of capitalism."

Use books which point up the evils of the social security system.

Object to references to Ralph Bunche as a distinguished American.

Protest books which give "casual" treatment

to Douglas MacArthur, or contain too little material on Nathan Hale, Patrick Henry and Davy Crockett.

Remove a music book which contains Jewish folk songs with musical instructions "to be sung with spirit."

Oppose books which refer students to books of Eugene O'Neill, Pearl Buck, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, Theodore Dreiser, Ring Lardner Jr., and historians Charles A. Beard, Henry S. Commager and Bernard De Voto.

Several other objections were raised, many of them far removed from the content of history and geography textbooks — which was all the resolution explicitly empowered the committee to investigate. When a housewife urged the committee that references to the Abominable Snowman be taken out of encyclopedias used in the schools ("take this missing link . . . out of the curriculum"), two committee members suggested that the inquiry had wandered too far afield. But the dissidents, Ronald Roberts (teacher) and John C. Alaniz (lawyer), were overruled and reprimanded by chairman, W. T. Dungan (stockman), R. W. Bass (rancher) and Nelson Cowles (real estate dealer). The majority insisted the resolution charged them to investigate all textbooks.

Not all those appearing at the Austin hearings represented the right-wing groups. Two widely respected Texas writers, J. Frank Dobie, a historian, and Joseph Martin Dawson, a retired Baptist minister, made eloquent defenses of the freedom to read.

By this time, however, the fever had spread throughout the state, and other communities demanded that the investigating committee hear their complaints. A trip was made to Amarillo, which earlier had distinguished itself by weeding out a number of "obscene" books from the Amarillo College library and all the city's high school libraries.

Among those "obscene" books were: John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*; A. B. Guthrie's *The Big Sky* and *The Way West*; Oliver La Farge's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel about a Navajo Indian — *Laughing Boy*; Herman Wouk's *Marjorie Morningstar*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*; MacKinlay Kantor's *Andersonville*; Thomas Wolfe's *Of Time and the River*; and George Orwell's *1984*.

The Amarillo hearings seemed to indicate an unanimity seldom found these days in a community of 138,000. All who testified criticized the textbooks on one pretext or another; no one raised the question of censorship.

The censoring mania next appeared in Corpus Christi, where a Mr. Paul Vogler and his following had a temporary success in having 11 books withdrawn from the city's senior high schools. Among the familiar victims: *Catcher in the Rye*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Andersonville*, *The Way West*, *The Big Sky* and *1984*. But the triumph was brief. A week later the school board unanimously voted to return the books to the shelves. A significant factor in the Corpus Christi book suppression was the hostile reaction of students to Vogler's group — a reaction that received prominent coverage in the press.

At the same time some controversies were coming

to a climax in Dallas. The Dallas School Board finally voted to retain a fifth-grade history book, Edna McGuire's *The Story of American Freedom*, which is currently causing an uproar in at least three other states — California, New Mexico and Maryland.

The book repeatedly describes the Allied Forces during World War II as the United Nations. The Macmillan Company, publisher of the book, has come to its defense by producing historical evidence that President Franklin D. Roosevelt officially designated the nations opposing the Axis as the United Nations on January 1, 1942 — though the appellation was seldom used thereafter. It is quite likely that the use of the term is misleading, but in Dallas the book is in double trouble because it calls Ralph Bunche a "peacemaker" for his part in the U. N. settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute.

A few days later City Councilman Joseph Moody demanded a probe of the public library which contained, by his estimate, "possibly as high as 60 per cent" books in the "obscene category." (The book which came into Mr. Moody's possession and prompted his demand was John O'Hara's *From the Terrace*.) Moody's attack was followed by another of a different nature from Mrs. David Schultz, a library trustee, who called for an investigation of the balance of library books "promoting the liberal and conservative points of view." Mrs. Schultz and Mr. Moody were opposed by the League of Women Voters and Everett L. DeGolyer Jr., a prominent Dallas philanthropist. The librarian and library staff then were given a vote of commendation by the city council. The uproar in Dallas, at least for the moment, had subsided.

The resolution of the situation in Texas at the time of this writing is unclear, the reports often contradictory. J. B. Golden, director of the Texas Education Agency's textbook division, has admitted that history books have been altered to satisfy right-wing groups. On the other hand, the state has approved 21 textbooks condemned by Mr. Haley and his Texans For America.

It will be the task of the 58th Texas Legislature to decide whether the State Board of Education and the State Textbook Committee will continue to select textbooks, or whether this responsible duty will be assumed by the Texans For America and the John Birch Society.

MISSISSIPPI CONSIDERS BANNING 35 TEXTBOOKS

A bill to ban 35 textbooks considered "unsatisfactory" by the Daughters of the American Revolution has been introduced by two Mississippi state senators, Hugh Bailey and Edgar Lee. They said their bill was designed to "protect the youth of the state by declaring certain books and publications unfit for consumption through public school systems."

All the suspect books, called "foreign to the American heritage" in the bill, were on a list investigated three years ago by the General Legislative Investigating Committee following pressures by the DAR and other related groups.

Louisiana Librarian Resigns

In Censorship Row

Librarian John Uhler, who resigned his post as Plaquemines Parish county librarian in February, has accused Louisiana political boss Leander H. Perez of interfering with library administration and censoring books—some of which were favorable to Negroes and others that were critical of Perez. (Perez is one of three persons recently excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church by Archbishop Rummel for racist activities.)

In his letter of resignation, Uhler outlined for the library board eight specific examples of interference by Perez, but the contents were not made public because Uhler said he did not wish to involve the library in a controversy between Perez and himself. When Perez, as president of the parish council, denied the charges and called Uhler's resignation "timely and a service to the parish," Uhler revealed his story to the press.

Uhler claimed Perez had ordered him, in the summer of 1960, not to extend library services to Negroes under any circumstances. This resulted in the suspension of bookmobile service to Negroes. Uhler said Perez also ordered him to exclude from the library anything concerning the United Nations, anything printed by UNESCO, and books by Eleanor Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt or Dean Acheson, and any other book "showing a liberal viewpoint." Perez, according to Uhler, also demanded the suppression of any book which attacked him personally.

Perez refused to admit he had acted as a censor, saying he only "advised" the library board to set up a screening committee to decide what books should be ordered. He declared that he had merely asked Uhler to prepare a list of books and authors in order to be sent to a "competent authority" in Washington to ascertain whether the authors had "Communist or subversive affiliations."

Uhler was given a letter of recommendation by the library board expressing the unanimity of its members regarding his significant ability and integrity.

Miami Catches 'Catcher' Fever

J. D. Salinger's novel *Catcher in the Rye* is in trouble again, this time in Miami where a member of the school board asked her colleagues to eliminate the novel from all school reading lists. Mrs. Eunice Anderson said that she had heard the book was "a psychiatric study" and had asked her husband, a psychiatrist, to review it. Mrs. Anderson said her husband's opinion was: "Trash containing nothing of educational value . . . repetitive and dull."

"Unadulterated trash," concurred board member Robert S. Butler. "Terrible," added Mrs. Helene J. Vosloh. The sole dissenter was Jack D. Gordon, who remarked that Salinger's book had been recommended by the American Library Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, and was well received by literary critics. "It is utterly necessary to err, if

we have to, on the side of freedom. Censorship is one of the outstanding characteristics of a totalitarian society," Gordon said.

The board's concern proved to be unnecessary, however. Dr. Joe Hall, school superintendent, assured the board in a memorandum that the book was not in any school library nor on any recommended reading list. "We have a firm conviction that reading lists should be extensive enough that pupils will not be required to read specific books which are objectionable to an appreciable number of parents," he said. Thus placated, Mrs. Anderson withdrew her recommendation.

Pressure Attempt Fails

Librarian Ursula Meyer of California's diminutive Butte County has successfully survived attempts by local right-wing extremists to alter the library's book selection procedures. The dispute began when Miss Meyer refused a gift subscription from a local citizen to an obscure, four-page "anti-Communist" weekly newsletter, *Tocsin*, published by six University of California students and teaching assistants.

Miss Meyer pointed out to her "benefactor" that the library lacked space, that all political points of view were sufficiently represented in the library, and that meager funds permitted her to buy only indexed periodicals. The result was an insulting letter from the *Tocsin* editor, and demands from the area's extremists that the County Board of Supervisors appoint a special committee to select books for the library in the future.

Miss Meyer told the board in a letter how books were selected from the recommendations of generally accepted reviewing media. At a public hearing the assistant county counsel, investigating the need for such a committee, advised the board to await the outline of selection policies from the librarian. The Board of Supervisors has agreed to do so.

El Segundo Restricts Magazines

The Reporter and *The New Republic* have been suspended from classroom use at El Segundo High School (California) and six social studies teachers have been reprimanded by school district trustees for publicly protesting administrative practices.

The school board ruled that the two magazines would be kept in the school library for use only by those students who had a teacher's permission to do so; the board also decided that only *Time* and *Newsweek* would be permitted in classroom work.

The six teachers had expressed their discontent over delays in "evaluating" the restricted magazines after they were withdrawn from classrooms last September by Principal Thomas P. Cahranan and referred to a committee for study. Board President Charles Schumann chastised the teachers for raising the question of book-banning which he claimed "subjected the community and board to ridicule and criticism."

The board also established a committee to examine the library's magazine collection "to be sure all points of view are represented."

Iowa Librarians Give Views On Gift of Soviet Books

A number of public and school librarians in Iowa found themselves the recipients last February of three Russian books mailed by the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D. C., and the center of some controversy. The books are all English translations of official Soviet documents, two being translations of Khrushchev's addresses to the Party Congress, and the other the text of the Communist Party's 20-year plan.

The reactions of librarians to the gift have varied considerably; some have placed them on the shelves, others committed them to the wastebasket, and still others put them under lock and key pending a library board decision on a course of action. In the larger cities — with the exception of Dubuque — the books were retained for the library collection. In some of the smaller cities and towns the books were discarded. Both policies provoked controversy in the press and among citizens. Following are comments made by some librarians in explanation of their actions:

Dan Williams, Des Moines library director, who had all three books bound in hard-cover: "We're adding them to our permanent collection . . . Libraries of our size have the responsibility to make such information available."

Mrs. Lois Meyer, West Union librarian, who had the books in her desk after the president of the library board, W. H. Antes, expressed his opposition to putting the books in general circulation: "I was told they shouldn't go on the shelves. . . . I can't see where they would be particularly interesting to anyone."

Ruth Dennis, Dubuque librarian, who discarded the books: "We didn't think they were authentic or worthwhile enough to have rebound. You have to be very cautious about what you put on the shelves. Some of the propaganda we receive is very cleverly done, and people won't always detect which side the material favors. We don't give serious consideration to such material. We get a lot of things that go into a wastebasket."

Ray Smith, Mason City librarian, who had the books placed in the pamphlet file: "Our policy is to make available information about what others think of us as well as information about what we think of ourselves and others."

Ruth Tabor, Oelwein librarian, who has decided to leave the fate of the books to the library board: "Library patrons should have access to both sides of every question, but if it's purely propaganda, I'm going to label it as such."

Margaret Nordholm, Waterloo librarian, who has placed them in the reference room: "Probably no one will read them, but we'll keep them for awhile."

Marjorie Humby, Waverly librarian, who questioned the books' accuracy and had not decided whether to put them on the shelves: "But then I've got Dr. Fred Schwarz's book (*You Can Trust the Communists — To do as They Say*) on the shelves, and that came as a gift."

William Garton, Simpson College librarian, who said

he would have ordered the books even if they hadn't been sent as a gift: "The books were sent with a propaganda motive but they aren't of the propaganda type. They're merely translations of reports to the Soviet Congress."

Librarian Testifies to HCUA

As part of a series of hearings on the mailing of Communist propaganda through the U.S. mail, a librarian from Shelby, N.C., was called to testify before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. John C. Walsh, counsel for the HCUA stated that Communist propaganda has been mailed by the Soviet Embassy to every public and private library in the country. After Mrs. Maude Kelsy, the librarian, read excerpts from the three pamphlets which had been sent, unasked, to her library, she told the committee the booklets were "the purest Communist propaganda of the most harmful sort." She also said they "would definitely be harmful in the internal security of our country."

Mrs. Kelsy claimed that reading such books would be harmful to immature and emotionally insecure persons and to "crack pots just waiting to mount the soap box." The news report did not make it clear how Khrushchev's utterances could be harmful to the internal security of the U.S. One committee member protested that the books were sent under a third class mailing permit, which, he alleged, meant that the mailing was subsidized by U.S. taxpayers ". . . and I'm one of those taxpayers," Mrs. Kelsy commented.

Student Attacks Censorship In Salt Lake City Schools

A high school sports editor in Salt Lake City has provoked a public controversy by protesting censorship practices in his high school. Allan Smart, writing in the East High School *Leopard*, said he and his fellow students "were deemed too emotionally immature" to read *Grapes of Wrath* and *Catcher in the Rye* — neither found in the school library. The student also said Hemingway's *A Farewell To Arms* had been taken from the open shelves and reserved for teachers only.

Miss Melva L. Guiver defended school policies in the same edition of the *Leopard*. "The American Library Association and the National Council of Teachers of English have said there is a need for a policy on book selection — not to ban books, but to suggest books worth young people's reading," she wrote. Miss Guiver said she exercised her discretion in requesting books for the library, adding that she had removed the autobiography of Ethel Waters after parents expressed shock that it was available to young people.

Principal Joseph W. Richards declared that he didn't believe any of the books mentioned by Smart had ever been stocked in the library. "Because of budget limitations, the school can't hope to stock all popular books, and any books the students wish to read outside the library is up to them," he declared.

this matter to the attention of the Governor and every other official in this state.

Every black rapist and one worlder is opposed to this book, but we have the support of every God fearing, law bidding, (sic) White Christain (sic) American, and we shall rise.

If you are prepared to subject the people of Arlington to the Communist plan of racial humiliation by rejecting this book then you must be prepared to suffer the consequence, and we assure you if you disregard our demand you will regret it.

In the Faith of our Forfathers, (sic)
The Del.-Mar.-Va Klans
Knights of the Ku Klux Klan

A PLEA

Since the spring of 1960, the *Newsletter* has been dependent upon the good graces and favors of the American Book Publishers Council and the Freedom of Information Center at the University of Missouri. The ABPC has provided the editor of the *Newsletter* with newspaper clippings on the topics of censorship, libraries, legislation etc. which the ABPC receives from a commercial clipping service. The Freedom of Information Center prints and mails the *Newsletter* from copy provided by the editor. The *Newsletter* has been essentially self-supporting; that is it has made its way in the main on the funds received from subscriptions.

Last winter, Eric Moon, editor of the *Library Journal*, called attention, in an editorial, to the fact that the *Newsletter* was not really a newsletter in that it appears quite late after the occurrence of the items which it reports, and also that a quarterly mode of publication is not best suited to the dissemination of the latest news. The editor has undertaken to do what he could to speed up the appearance of the *Newsletter*, and to improve the content so that it is more pertinent, despite the fact that its appearance is rather slow and the items of news are not always the latest.

The editor does not feel that there is much more that can be done at the present time, as long as the *Newsletter* must continue to operate within the present set of restrictions regarding production and publication. Readers of the *Newsletter* should be aware, if anyone is, that at the present time the pressures of censorship are ever-increasing, both in numbers and extent. The cause of intellectual freedom and the freedom to read has had its victories, to be sure, but scarcely is one case laid to rest than a new one springs up to take its place. Despite the fact that the *ALA Bulletin* carries a regular column on intellectual freedom, the need for a publication such as the *Newsletter* is even more apparent now than before. We need a publication which can carry in-depth coverage of all of the manifold developments on the intellectual freedom and censorship front. I use the word "front" here, because we are as much in a war as are the U.S. and the Soviet Union in the so-called "cold war."

Once a year, the *ALA Bulletin* carries a complete listing of all ALA committees, officers, publications etc. The editor was somewhat shocked when he did not find the *Newsletter* listed as an official publication of the ALA. The *Newsletter* was buried in the description of the activities of the Committee on Intellectual Freedom.

Now the *Newsletter* is not going to increase in sta-

ture and effectiveness by magic. It will improve only if and when members of the ALA make their point with ALA officials that the *Newsletter* should be an official publication. The mechanism exists in the ALA revenues, to provide it with at least a half-time editor, and to publish it as frequently as the need warrants. These are drastic changes. The *Newsletter* would be far different than we know it now or than it has ever been. If the *Newsletter* now serves a useful purpose, it should be improved and enlarged to the point where it can serve even better. If it does not now serve a useful purpose, then it should be laid to rest, once and for all.

D. B.

For Your Attention

As a delightful diversion from the usually heavy-handed philosophical, and somewhat dismal, writing concerning Intellectual Freedom, the freedom to read, and particularly obscenity — on or off the newsstand — we should like to recommend an item by Paul Standing entitled, "Nipples on the Newsstand" which appeared in *Canadian Forum* for October, 1961 (p. 155). Mr. Standing used the advent of what he calls "skin books," such as *Playboy*, *Swank*, *Gent*, *Escapade*, *Caper*, *Rogue*, etc. as an encouraging phenomenon, and he hopes an enduring one. Mr. Standing reviews the factors which made this development possible and which forced the acceptance of the most striking features of these publishing ventures. He touches, lightly, on some problems regarding the three socially valuable institutions of Medical School, Art School, and Marriage. He concludes by making some prognostications regarding the effect of so-called "skin books," and the potentially glorious future if these "skin book" publishers advance to new triumphs. He believes that the "skin books" could well make the 21st Century indeed the century of Canada. For this prospect he thanks the publishers of the "skin books." For this hope he feels that "... the publishers of the skin books, like the breasts, which it is their pleasure and pride to present, ought to be supported."

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The *Kansas Business Review*, for March 1962 (vol. 15, no. 3) carries two rather surprising items, surprising in that they are found in a business journal. First, "Book Banning vs. the Right to Read," by Robert B. Downs of the University of Illinois, and the second, "Celtic Twilight: the Irish Censorship of Publications Act, 1946," by L. R. C. Agnew of the University of Kansas. Mr. Downs examines some of the historical background, in our country, of censorship, cites several famous judicial opinions concerning censorship cases, levels the finger of responsibility at the home and private citizens and parents in the area of protection of the young, and ends with a delineation of two basic facts about censorship: "First, banning a book, given the contrary streak characteristic of human nature, automatically creates a universal desire to read it and, frequently, has been responsible for making best sellers out of what would otherwise remain mediocre failures.

Second, ideas cannot be killed by suppression. There is scarcely any record of a book's total disappearance being caused by a censor's ban. Somewhere, almost invariably, a copy has survived, which can be multiplied and passed on to succeeding generations. Only when the idea is expressed in books which have lost their interest and meaning do the books vanish."

Mr. Agnew, in his article, tells of some personal experiences in Ireland last year. For those who have never seen a listing of the authors who are on the *Register of Prohibited Publications* the first encounter is rather hair-raising. Mr. Agnew quotes sections from the censorship act, in order the better to terrify his readers. He ends with a thought which we should all echo: "In the meantime, we, in the United States, should give thanks for such literary freedom as we now enjoy, and be ever alert lest we be enveloped in the equivalent of Ireland's dreary, Celtic twilight of unreasonable and unwarrantable literary censorship."