

Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association

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LANDMARK II

The year 1959 had already produced one judicial landmark - the ruling by Federal Judge Bryan that Lady Chatterley's Lover was not obscene and therefore available, the Postmaster General notwithstanding (Sept. Newsletter). The closing days of 1959 produced a second such landmark, this one from the highest court in the land. Put in briefest terms, the Supreme Court justices struck down as unconstitutional a Los Angeles city ordinance which - like many another city ordinance - made the mere possession of an obscene book by a bookseller a crime. The justices were all-but-unanimous (8-1/2 to 1/2), but for such different reasons that the decision produced five opinions. Core of the majority opinion, written by Justice Brennan: "If the bookseller is criminally liable without knowledge of contents, . . . he will tend to restrict the books he sells to those he has inspected; and thus the state will have imposed a restriction upon the distribution of constitutionally protected as well as obscene literature. . . . And the bookseller's burden would become the public's burden, for by restricting him the public's access to reading matter would be restricted. . . . It is plain to us that the ordinance in question, though aimed at obscene matter, has such a tendency to inhibit constitutionally protected expression that it cannot stand." (Baltimore Sun, Dec. 15; N. Y. Times, Dec. 15)

Worth noting is Justice Black's opinion that no censorship of books is permissible and that it should not be given the slightest "foothold" lest it spread to censorship of politics and religion (Washington News, Dec. 15). Justice Black further expressed some doubts as to the proper role of the Supreme Court in this area: "If, as it seems, we are on the way to national censorship, I think it is timely to suggest again that there are grave doubts in my mind as to the desirability or constitutionality of this court's becoming a national board of censors - reading books and viewing television performances to determine whether, if permitted, they might adversely affect the morals of the people throughout the many diversified communities in this vast country." (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Dec. 14)

WILD WORDS IN HIGH PLACES: THE GRANAHAN STORY

It was just another subcommittee; its name, the House Subcommittee on Postal Operations. But at its head was a woman of considerable energy and convictions, author of an anti-obscenity measure or two which died in the last Congress, and devoted supporter of Postmaster General Summerfield. Seizing upon one rather specific aspect of "postal operations," at Congress' end she led her lawmaking fellow committee members off on a cross-country junket to investigate what the FBI and the Postmaster General had often referred to as the "\$500,000,000-a-year racket of filth in the mails." Her name was Kathryn Granahan.

Mrs. Granahan was never one for half measures. An early Fall report from what was called a "House investigating panel" which she headed recommended as ways to fight obscenity just about every step known to man: (1) organized crusades by community leaders; (2) creation by national organizations of local 'watch-dog' panels to keep an eye out for filth as it appears; (3) adoption of tighter state laws; (4) creation of state commissions to study obscenity; (5) adoption of local ordinances to strengthen local crusading groups; (6) self-policing by movie and publications industries against overemphasis on sex, accompanied by crackdowns on their members who disseminate obscenity. (N.Y. Times, Oct. 11)

Promptly upon adjournment of Congress, Chairwoman Granahan and her junketing fellow subcommitteemen were off across the country, visiting, among other spots, Los Angeles, Omaha, and Chicago. Wherever they went, they got press notice, but it was the Granahanisms that got top play: of LA. - "I have never known such perversion as there is out here"; of Chicago - "the heart of the expanding multi-million-dollar-a-year smut-peddling business." While in the midwestern metropolis, she produced one of her wilder ones - and one that was all-too-rapidly accepted as fact because she said it, and subsequently (and often) quoted without credit to source: "The rise in juvenile delinquency and sex crimes can be traced directly to magazines trafficking in smut."

But it was in San Francisco that Congresswoman Granahan's penchant for the sweeping overstatement came full flower. Said she at a press conference: "Eighty per cent of the inmates of juvenile mental institutions in Pennsylvania are children under 15 and everyone of them is there because they read this [lewd] literature." Another of what the San Francisco Chronicle (Nov. 13) called her "amazing statistics": "One of 12 persons arrested in the nation are juveniles and in every case they are found to be hiding this kind of literature in their pockets or under their pillows." (Under questioning, she amended this to "practically every case.") Finally, the "pleasant looking matron in an attractive hat" (in the Chronicle's words) was ready to voice a dark suspicion that the "flood of smut engulfing our nation" was "Communist inspired." Said she: "The same attorneys who defend the Communists" also are the ones who defend persons accused of publishing obscene literature.

The San Jose News (Nov. 14) called the Granahan claims "smut and nonsense." Perhaps the Nation's phrase (Dec. 5) most aptly describes the words and works of the good Congresswoman from Pennsylvania: "Comstock Rides Again."

NATIONALLY ORGANIZED VOLUNTEER DRIVES MUSHROOMING

"Anti-Obscenity Running a Fever," read a headline in the San Francisco Chronicle (Nov. 17). Nowhere was this fever more evident than in the burgeoning number of national organizations which, by membership vote or board action, declared their intention of warring upon "objectionable" material - whether in magazines, books, films, radio, or TV. Perhaps no single feature of the 1959 picture was so significant as these massive concerted drives, conceived at national level, and executed at state and local level. Here were the volunteers, operating without legal powers, loud in proclaiming themselves protectors of the young and the innocent, loud in disclaiming any censorship. In their ranks were parents, churchmen, clubwomen, veterans, and rank-and-file citizens. And their ranks, numbers-wise, were very considerable, indeed.

National Congress of Parents and Teachers: A "double attack on pornographic literature and objectionable television programs" was announced and endorsed at NCPT's annual conclave in Denver. Program (to start in Fall '59) calls for active participation by its 11-1/2 million members, formation of local PTA committees to fight distribution of "objectionable materials" from newsstands and in the mails. On the TV front, the PTA Congress plans a national committee to screen and evaluate TV programs and to publish "decency ratings" in National Parent-Teacher, PTA's official publication. (Denver, Rocky Mt. News, May 21) State and local PTA's, in their early Fall meetings, followed the national line, though their program was questioned here and there. In the words of the Bluefield, W. Va., Telegraph (Sept. 23): "The NCTP is entering the critics' arena from which it could emerge badly scarred... There remain but two effective censors of the material offered to young people - Mom and Dad. If the parents have not developed a proper moral character in the home, it will make no difference how many organizations attempt to take up the slack."

General Federation of Women's Clubs: One look at the Postmaster General's museum of mail filth in Washington was enough to send GFWC leaders hurrying back to their state bailiwicks to announce an all-out drive of national dimensions "from the top level down to the individual club in every state." Seasoned veterans of anti-obscenity skirmishes since 1925, when they moved against "the distribution of sex magazines from newsstands," GFWC members readily listened to Summerfield's claims: "At present one child in every 35 is reached by obscenity in the mails"; "If something isn't done to stop it, within a year the filth will be reaching one child in every 18." (Washington Star, Oct. 1; Phoenix Republic, Oct. 30; San Francisco Chronicle, Nov. 13). GFWC will also press its earlier fight against obscenity on the newsstands, will seek support of other groups to get better newsdealer "cooperation" through greater pressure, will seek or support stronger anti-pornography legislation. (Phoenix Republic, Oct. 30; Milwaukee Journal, Nov. 19). Of GFWC's program, the Bakersfield Californian (Oct. 3) had a word of caution: "It is hoped that in their efforts to suppress this type of thing, they are aware of the line beyond which lies censorship."

Daughters of the American Revolution: Of all the programs by organized groups the DAR textbook investigation, at both national and state level, was the most specific and - for librarian, legislator, and layman alike - the most threatening.

The DAR National Defense Committee's study was made by "women whose education and experience made them eminently able to evaluate the texts studied," in the words of its chairman (Corpus Christi Caller, May 24). However, its "finding" that, of 216 nationally used textbooks, 165 were "unsatisfactory", i. e., not up to DAR standards, prompted many a newspaper editor to remind his readers of DAR's officially recorded position as (1) opposed to the UN, (2) opposed to US participation in UN, (3) opposed to foreign aid, (4) opposed to recognition of Russia and her satellites - and that any DAR approval or disapproval of texts would reflect these positions. For instance, among the disapproved books was Hersey's Hiroshima because, as DAR put it, its stark picture of the destructive force of an A-bomb tends to promote "fear and compromise" in the cold war. (Charleston, W. Va., Gazette, Nov. 16; Charlotte, N. C., Observer, May 24) On the heels of the national DAR study, several state DAR's were reported swinging into action with other groups, like the Farm Bureau and the American Legion, joining in. The effects of such moves were bound to be felt in legislature and library alike, as the DAR, seeking a greater voice in textbook selection, scanned school texts and library shelves, and, as in Mississippi, pressed for legislation to seat parents on state textbook selection boards (Grenada Sentinel-Star, Oct. 13). Of the whole DAR program the Charleston, W. Va., Gazette observed: "It would appear that an open mind, humility, and brotherly love are not among the pedigree credentials [of this organization]."

Citizens for Decent Literature, Inc.: Founded by Charles Keating in Cincinnati, CDL, Inc., has chapters presently in at least 235 cities (Minneapolis Star, Sept. 23); looks for representatives from over 500 communities at its upcoming second national organization meeting, scheduled for the place of its birth on Feb. 26-27, 1960. In a CDL spokesman's words: "This meeting will herald the formation of the first national organization of American communities and citizens united in a legal effort to regain a standard of decency in literature and the arts." (Cincinnati Enquirer, Oct. 30) Founder Keating, along with New York school official Donovan, travels widely, speaks often, repeating CDL's classic claims of "no censorship", only "operation within the law." To date CDL, Inc., has come up short with at least one high public official - Governor Di Salle of Ohio - who vetoed a CDL-initiated bill as an infringement of the freedom of the press and was promptly dropped from CDL's letterhead list of sponsors (Cincinnati Post & Times-Star, Nov. 7; Toledo Blade, Nov. 6). Despite its protestations of no censorship, its avowed determination to achieve results through swaying public opinion and forcing dealers not to handle objectionable materials marks it as a pressure group, taking its place alongside the PTA, the DAR, the GFWC, and other volunteer groups, to which it offers and from which it in turn draws support. Ultimate aim of CDL, Inc.: A CDL in every community in the country. (For an earlier account of CDL, Inc., see Sept. 1958 Newsletter)

National religious organizations: The past year witnessed a spate of moves by various churches and church groups to adopt, at national level, programs which would involve clergy and churchgoer alike in drives against objectionable materials - in print and otherwise. The Protestants now have their Churchmen's Commission for Decent Publications, in many respects a counterpart of the Catholic National Office for Decent Literature. Now, like the NODL, the Churchmen's Commission has issued a list of 88 magazines it deems objectionable, only 30 of which, incidentally,

have ever been involved in Post Office decisions as to mailability (Decatur, Ill., Review, Oct. 12, 13). National drives, prepared and announced by denomination after denomination in annual conference, have been consummated at regional, state, and local levels. The Southern Baptist Convention pledged a fight against "purveyors of obscenity aimed at children," (Chicago American, May 22). The National Association of Evangelicals pledged a battle against "obscenity in the mails" (Natchez, Miss., Times, June 5). Launched by the Seventh Day Adventists at national and regional summer meetings was a "campaign of personal action by every member against pornographic literature" on newsstands and in the mails (Los Angeles Examiner, May 9; Columbus, O., Citizen, July 3; Harrisburg, Va., News-Record, June 20), with committees to be set up by local churches to watch for and report such materials. The National Holy Name Society, convening in New Orleans, considered a drive against smut on the newsstands in their program (Camden, N.J., Courier-Post, Oct. 12). The Chairman of the Catholic Episcopal Committee for Motion Pictures, Radio, and TV which supervises Legion of Decency, reporting to American bishops, sought the help of other religious groups to remove sex and violence from motion pictures (Baltimore News, Nov. 25).

Other groups: Then there were the other smaller, but no less active, groups. The National Society of New England Women recorded their opposition to "TV and radio programs which tend to belittle and undermine American ideals and traditions" (Providence Journal, May 21). A national group called America's Future whose "Operation Textbook" started in 1958 aims at an "objective evaluation" of textbooks, numbers among its key members Merrill Root, whose Brainwashing in the High Schools (March Newsletter) was something less than objective, as was the group's initial announcement that U.S. textbooks are steeped in "the collectivist internationalist philosophy" (From article by Paul Simon, reprinted in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Dec. 2). How widely the Circuit Riders, Inc., are riding is not known, but one of their number, appearing in Mississippi, received quite a welcome as he suggested "book-burning parents as a cure for our Communist textbook situation" (Jackson Clarion-Ledger, Nov. 4).

Add to these national groups the numerous other state and local volunteer groups, whether formed independently or as part of a larger national pattern - and the dimensions of their activity are obvious. And whatever their declared purpose and intentions, their main aim, in sum, is to prevent and protect, rather than to provide, which puts them at basic odds with the library enterprise, at least as ideally conceived.

LOCAL COUNTDOWN

In literally hundreds of communities, large and small, from one end of the country to the other, moves by groups and individuals sought to regulate, control and often curb what their residents could read, hear, see, by some ill-defined standard of what they "ought" to read, hear, see.

Chief target: "objectionable material on the newsstands" - more specifically "girlie" or "male" magazines. Other targets: films, both for content and for methods used in advertising; recordings; radio and TV programs; and, of course, books, especially paperbacks, not alone for content or theme (as Lady Chatterley's

Lover, The Rabbits' Wedding, The Swimming Pool, What is Communism, God's Little Acre) but for covers and illustrations as well.

Favorite method (or at least one most often applied by volunteer and law enforcement officer alike): pressure on dealer and distributor to "cooperate" by removing objectionable materials or face the threat of boycott. Least used method (or at least one used only reluctantly and as a last resort by volunteer and law enforcement officer alike): "due process of law," which provides an orderly and legal procedure in the courts for presentation of evidence, determination of guilt, and setting of sentence. "It all depends on the attitude of the distributors. If we can get rid of obscene books and magazines without court action, so much the better," in the words of one Attorney General (Pawtucket, R.I., Times, Oct. 18). In Buncombe County (N.C.), the Sheriffs' Censorship Committee succeeded in banning some 111 magazines in a 5-year period (Asheville Citizen, Nov. 3). In Rochester, N.Y., the Citizens Advisory Committee on Obscene Literature recommended 26 magazines be barred from county newsstands in the past year - and most of the dealers "cooperated" (Democrat & Chronicle, Nov. 7).

New local anti-obscenity ordinances were passed in some places like Akron (O.), Tulare County (Calif.), Hamilton (O.), and Abilene (Texas); new ordinances were being sought in many more - most of them making the dealer responsible for knowing the contents of every item on his newsracks. The Hamilton ordinance, in addition, made purchasers of obscene literature under 18 "juvenile delinquents" (Middletown, O., Journal, Sept. 24). The Abilene city fathers apparently saw no incongruity in their readiness to pass a broadly worded curb on juvenile and adult reading and their refusal to father a new curfew law on the grounds that "a curfew infringes on a parent's right to tell his children what to do" (Abilene Reporter-News, Oct. 28). In San Francisco, it was attorney Mrs. Molly Minduri and her self-styled "vigilantes" who declared war on books and magazines that "numb the mind and lead to rape." Despite Mrs. Minduri's claim that this was a "spontaneous meeting of San Francisco parents of all faiths," Protestant and Jewish leaders either disclaimed any part of it or remained silent. Next step of the Minduri-led drive appeared to be a new ordinance for the City Board of Supervisors. (San Francisco Chronicle, Nov. 12, 13, 30, Dec. 3)

In many another community, the police chief, sometimes on his own, sometimes supported by other city officials, and aided by a list, moved against the newsstands and - more often than not - got the "cooperation" he was seeking. Sometimes, as in Kansas City (Mo.), the move (and the cooperation) was pretty swift. There the move was set off by an impending convention of the Future Farmers of America, who, so police and welfare officials decided, needed protection in their reading. In Welfare Director King's words: "We're getting a one-day evaluation on these magazines. If a magazine is brought in, it can be evaluated quickly, and, if obscene, put on the list for seizure next day." King promised a later probe into paperbacks, which he was putting off only because "there isn't enough time now." Following seizure of materials by police, 16 dealers were arrested, several of them drug store owners. And following news of the seizure and arrests came a flood of phone calls from citizens eager to inform on other dealers. In desperation, dealer and distributor alike sought a list by which they could be guided to "cooperate", but again the Welfare Director said he didn't have time to draw one up. (Kansas City Star, Times, Oct. 9, 10, 13, 14)

In San Mateo (Calif.), the police chief banned the November issue of Playboy, which was removed from the stands within the hour. Within two days, police chiefs in nearby Menlo Park, Mountain View, and Palo Alto did likewise. When Oakland's police chief followed suit shortly thereafter, distributor "cooperation" was so complete that all copies were removed not only from Oakland's stands but from every stand in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties as well (San Mateo Times, Nov. 5, 7; Times & News Leader, Nov. 17; San Francisco Chronicle, Nov. 15).

In Omaha, there were newsstand raids (Omaha World-Herald, Nov. 18, 23, 25), again led by a police chief. In Danville (Va.), there was the Mayor's Committee for Decent Literature, who, a month in advance, announced a mass meeting at which "every dealer who cooperates will be presented with a certificate" (Danville Register, Oct. 25). In Rock Island (Ill.), it was the Citizens Advisory Committee to the County Juvenile Court who were leading the drive against what one paper called the "planned pestilence" of obscene literature and suggestive phonograph records (Moline Dispatch, Nov. 12). Corpus Christi dusted off and resurrected its Committee on Clean Literature in answer to the plea of a Catholic women's group to clean trash off the newsstands (Corpus Christi Caller, Nov. 26). In Chattanooga a wholesale drive against alleged "film filth" (targets: Room at the Top, Lady Chatterley's Lover, Love Is My Profession), and "obscene literature" (three nudist magazines and "several" books) was launched by the City Commission, egged on by two Protestant churchwomen groups (Chattanooga Times, News Free Press, Oct. 11 - Oct. 26). In Arcadia (Calif.), it was the San Gabriel Valley Group for Decent Literature who, using the NODL list, were checking newsstands every week for objectionable magazines ("those male magazines and Saga and some of the detective magazines") and were sadly reporting only 75% "cooperation" from dealers (Pasadena Independent, Nov. 10). In Memphis, the American Legion's plans to ban Lady Chatterley's Lover and "all books like it" drew public thanks from the Memphis Ministers' Association (Memphis Press-Scimitar, Nov. 7). In Little Rock, the already powerful 15-member City Censor Board was granted even greater powers by the Mayor to ban any book or publication without any advance notice whatsoever (Little Rock Arkansas Gazette, Oct. 6). In Baltimore, the year-old Mayor's Committee for Decency was enlarged from 19 to 29 by the addition of the postmaster, the acting school superintendent, the American Legion Auxiliary president, and several religious leaders (Baltimore Sun, Dec. 8).

These were a few of the local happenings last Fall; there were others - many, many others.

LIBRARIANS SPEAK OUT

Before San Mateo County PTA members, County Librarian Virginia Ross confronted State Assemblyman Francis, longtime advocate of stiffer anti-obscenity legislation, challenged his sweeping claims - and argued him down. Francis stated flatly that salacious writings and pictures "are rapidly replacing textbooks in our children's reading habits" and sought to prove it by showing how few in the audience indicated their children had homework to do. Librarian Ross promptly countered: "Children come to the county libraries in such droves we can't supply them with enough material... There is a definite increase in school homework" -- a remark warmly applauded by her listeners. Of Francis' assertion that "the half-billion-dollar operation in smut aimed chiefly at teen-agers" calls for greater restrictions

through stiffer state laws, Miss Ross asked: "Can it be shown that young people are the major purchasers and can it be shown that such material actually causes delinquency?" As to seeking solutions through more laws, Miss Ross commented: "It's so much easier for us to pass laws than to have parents work with their children in improving their reading habits." (Menlo Park, Ravenswood Post, Oct. 22)

Over in Fresno County, meanwhile, another librarian had something to say against a proposed new county ordinance relating to the sale and distribution of so-called smut literature. Fresno State College Librarian Henry Madden, Chairman of CLA's Intellectual Freedom Committee, addressing himself to each of the county supervisors, stated the CLA is opposed to all forms of censorship beyond those now imposed by state law. More specifically, Madden added: "Local ordinances merely serve to intimidate booksellers and librarians. They are censorship of the worst kind, because they are instituted by sectarian groups." (Fresno Bee, Oct. 28)

And, from a feature story on Salina, Kansas, comes this casual (and cheering) picture of a librarian at work: "Town librarian Jerome Cushman picks up the phone and asks the police not to act too hastily on the demand from women's clubs to stop the sale of Lady Chatterley's Lover" (Wall Street Journal, Sept. 24).

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE BOOKS THEY USE

Throughout 1959, librarian, legislator, teacher, and school administrator alike were under severe pressure, locally and at state level, to remove books, rewrite laws, drop titles from reading lists, and abandon texts deemed "subversive," "un-American," etc. (For news on other troubles in textbookland, and on textbook legislation, see March, June Newsletter.)

Of the DAR-American Legion drive in Mississippi, supported by the Farm Bureau, the Greenville Delta-Democrat (Nov. 2) observed: "To-day the book burners are in full march around Mississippi. Immorality is only a minor target for these latter-day Hitlerites. What they are aiming at is the total thought process of all of us ... But the full force of this drive will not be felt until the legislature meets in January. DAR and American Legion seek removal of 44 texts from state lists as "unsatisfactory", are pressing for legislation to seat parents on state textbook selection committees. (N. Y. Times, Sept. 6; Jackson, Miss., Clarion-Ledger, July 12, Nov. 16) The Arkansas Minutemen's activities led to a suggestion for statewide investigation of textbooks, which was shelved until Fall (Little Rock Arkansas Gazette, May 31, July 17). In Alabama, the Ku Klux Klan "comes sticking its sheeted nose into school libraries," in the words of the Atlanta Constitution (Oct. 9), with an announced campaign against 10 or 12 children's books which it deems "undesirable" as "promoting race-mixing" (Montgomery Advertiser, Oct. 7), and one in particular (Two Is a Team) which it considers "a lot worse than The Rabbits' Wedding" (Publishers' Weekly, Nov. 9). In Tennessee and Virginia, the state education journals (Tennessee Teacher, Virginia Journal of Education) refused to accept an ad from Basic Books for The Integrated Classroom. Use of the ad, said T. T.'s editor, "might cause repercussions." Replied the publisher: "Censorship is abhorrent at any time and place. When exercised by teachers... it becomes dangerous and destructive." (PW, Nov. 9) In Rhode Island, when Charlestown civic clubs who were donating money for a new school library objected to the presence of the ALA-approved title What Is Communism among the proposed purchases, the school

superintendent removed it. Said the superintendent, "I didn't want to jeopardize the school library." (Montgomery, Ala. Advertiser, Nov. 23)

Under the heading "The Hidden Censors," the Greenville (Miss.) Delta Democrat (July 31) took note that "another kind of censorship exercised by the book publishers themselves has gone virtually unnoticed" - whereby deletions or alterations are made in new editions of time-honored classics. Comparing a later version of The Legend of Sleepy Hollow (in a Harcourt Brace collection of prose and poetry) with an earlier one, the Delta Democrat found that the present version omits from the original story an entire passage describing an old grey-haired Negro musician and his admirers. In the same collection, the word "pickaninnies" is replaced by "children" in A Man Without A Country. Likening this to the removal of books and the rewriting of texts in some Southern states, the Delta-Democrat noted: "All of it adds up to censorship, and none of it adds up to either democracy or freedom of thought."

LADY CHATTERLEY REVISITED

In a surprise move in early December, the Justice Department asked the courts to reverse Federal Judge Bryan's now-classic decision (Sept. Newsletter) on Lady Chatterley's Lover wherein, overruling the Postmaster General, he found it mailable. Focal point of the appeal: not whether L. C. L. is or is not obscene, but that "there is no justification in law for the substitution of Judge Bryan's decision for that of the Postmaster General." (N. Y. Post, Dec. 3) At least one newspaper editor was outraged (N. Y. Herald Tribune, Dec. 9), called this "a particularly pernicious and shocking assertion of an absolute administrative authority that does not and should not be allowed to exist," and added: "The job of the Postmaster General is to deliver the mail, not to pass final and binding judgment on the limits of constitutional freedoms or on the merits of literary works . . . Courts, not Post Offices, are the proper places for a determination of what is and is not protected by the Constitution," Counsel for L. C. L.'s publisher expressed a similar view: "The Postmaster General does not have the official status to declare the Constitutional rights of writers, readers, and general public. [He] is presuming to exercise vast powers to impose prior restraint." (Publishers' Weekly, Dec. 14)

LIBRARIANS SLOW TO BUY FISKE STUDY

The Fiske Study on censorship in California libraries, published in mid-October, was selling slowly. It was a unique and important study. No such comprehensive attempt at analyzing censorship in depth had ever been made; perhaps no single study of any aspect of librarianship was ever greeted with such widespread attention in the press - from the date of the preliminary report by its author in early summer 1958 until its publication (samples: San Francisco Chronicle, July 13, 1958; N. Y. Times, Oct. 11, 1959). It was moreover the subject of articles and editorials in general and professional magazines alike (samples: Publishers' Weekly, Nov. 2; Nation, Nov. 21); the general theme of censorship was dealt with on a number of TV shows.

"Despite the widespread publicity," its publisher (University of California Press)

reports, "the book was not widely sold, although by now its contents are national knowledge... To date we have sold 669 copies, most of them to librarians and libraries." (Letter to Newsletter editor, Dec. 10)

There are over 7000 public libraries and over 30,000 school libraries in the U. S. The number of "professional librarians" in these public libraries is over 13,000; the "professionally-trained librarians" in the public schools number almost 12,000. (American Library and Book Trade Annual: 1960, pp. 4, 11, 30) Total libraries 37,000 plus; total librarians 25,000 plus; total sales Fiske Study 669. Somebody wasn't buying.

GOOD NEWS

But the news along the censorship front here and there had its brighter spots... In Ohio, Gov. Di Salle vetoed a CDL-backed anti-obscenity bill as an "infringement of freedom of the press" (Toledo Blade, Nov. 6), next month refused the appeals of CDLers and clubwomen to revive State Commission on Obscene Literature (Cleveland Press, Dec. 7)... In California, Gov. Brown affirmed principle of public's "right to know" by directing all state officials from department heads down to give full and frank information to the press and to shun "self-censorship" (Sacramento Bee, Nov. 10)... In Portland, (Ore.), the mayor called for "parental guidance in the home" as most effective weapon against bad literature; warned, "Don't try to tell newsdealer what he can't sell" (Portland Oregonian, Oct. 30, 31).. In North Carolina, the State Press Association, disturbed by citizen critics of the state's texts, took a look for itself, commended State Textbook Commission members as capable and careful selectors (Hickory, N. C., Record, Aug. 10)... In Santa Ana (Calif.), City Council refused to enact a local ordinance to prohibit lewd literature; commented that responsibility for educating children in these matters was one to be settled by parents, not by city ordinance. (Santa Ana Register, Sept. 23)... In Penn Hills Township (Pa.), the Decent Literature Committee accentuates the positive, has a list of 75 magazines as "recommended reading for youngsters" (Pittsburgh Press, Sept. 16)... And in France, the ban against Lolita has been formally lifted by the French Government (N. Y. Times, Sept. 20).

In Chicago, where the Mid-America Periodical Distributors took the positive approach in (1) making its annual "Maggie Awards" and (2) voting steps to help resolve the problem of obscene publications. "The "Maggie Awards" went to 30 magazines, paperback books and series, children's books and comics for "editorial excellence in newsstand publications." Categories included "creative spirit," "arts, crafts, and how-to," "science fiction," "mystery, crime, and suspense," and "American West," among others. Representative Maggie winners: James Agee's A Death in the Family (Avon); Dreiser's An American Tragedy (Dell); Bruce Catton's A Stillness at Appomattox (Pocket Books). (For a complete list of winners, see Publishers' Weekly, Nov. 30) To help resolve the problem of objectionable literature MAPD elected a 4-man committee of big city distributors to work with publishers to prevent publication of objectionable magazines and books. Other MAPD proposals: support federal legislation putting guilt on publisher; study state legislative measures to compel separate display racks for adult and pre-17-age reading matter. (Detroit News, Nov. 19)

BRIEFLY NOTED

American Book Publishers' Council's Dan Lacy, finding trend towards state anti-obscenity commissions "genuinely disturbing," and noting their preference for pressure rather than legal procedure, saw better solution in state law providing action against publisher rather than dealer (Pawtucket Times, Nov. 2)... "Model statute" on obscenity, now under study by paperback wholesalers, is similar to Lacy's proposal in providing for action against the material itself instead of against persons who handle it (Publishers' Weekly, Nov. 16)... Hawaii's first county anti-obscenity ordinance was unanimously approved by Maui County Board of Supervisors (Honolulu Star-Bulletin, Sept. 4)... In what promises to be a precedent-setting case, veteran civil rights lawyer O. John Rogge has agreed to attack the new 1958 federal anti-obscenity law which provides for "prosecution at point of receipt of obscene matter" as violative of 1st and 5th Amendments (Norfolk Virginian Pilot, Nov. 11)... The New York Public Library has announced a book-burning - but for a legitimate reason. NYPL is "test-burning" 14,000 volumes of discards to determine how rapidly they ignite and burn. Findings will be guide to future fire insurance rates for libraries (Watertown Times, July 23)... Avant-garde literary magazine Big Table, whose ban from the mails by Summerfield aroused a storm of protest (June Newsletter), is still unmailable after two legal go-arounds. Chicago postal judicial officer Duvall upheld Summerfield (Publishers' Weekly, Aug. 3); Federal Judge Hofmann in Chicago's U. S. District Court quashed a motion to release the impounded copies (Chicago Sun-Times, Oct. 17); more legal moves were promised... A new edition of Wilson's Memoirs of Hecate County awakened memories of the split Supreme Court (4-4) decision upholding New York's ban on it in 1948 (no other state has banned it). New publisher will test N. Y. ban and Supreme Court decision sometime in 1960. (N. Y. Times, Dec. 21)

YOU MIGHT LIKE TO READ...

Downs, Robert B.: The First Freedom; Liberty and Justice in the World of Books and Learning. Chicago, American Library Assoc., 1960. A comprehensive anthology of the most notable writings on censorship and intellectual freedom by British and American authors from 1900 to date representing, in author's words, "the liberal point of view on censorship."

Fiske, Marjorie: Book Selection and Censorship; A Study of School and Public Libraries in California. Berkeley, Univ. of California Press, 1959. 145p. This penetrating analysis by a social scientist of librarians and their role in censorship is a MUST for every library to purchase and for every librarian to read.

Strout, Donald E.: "Censorship." In the American Library and Book Trade Annual, 1960. N. Y., Bowker, 1959, pp. 129-132. Summary, by CIF Newsletter editor, of happenings along the censorship front in 1959.

_____ : "Are Librarians Censors?" Nation, Nov. 21, 1959, pp. 379-381. An examination of the findings of the Fiske Study and of the intellectual and social climate within which librarians work.

Kronenhausen, Eberhard and Phyllis: Pornography and the Law. N. Y., Ballantine,

1959. Published simultaneously as hardbound (\$5.00) and paperbound (75 cents). "The bulk of the study is concerned with a side-by-side comparison between what is plainly pornographic and what is plainly literature of serious purpose and honest realism" - Chicago Sun-Times (Nov. 22).

Lawrence, D. H. : Sex, Literature, and Censorship. N. Y., Viking, 1959 (Compass Books) 128p. Contains strong statement of Lawrence's aims: "A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover"; 7 other candid statements on such topics as "Making Love to Music," "Pornography and Obscenity," "Cocksure Men and Hensure Women."

"Paperback Wholesalers Support 'Model Statute' on Obscenity." Publishers' Weekly, Nov. 16, 1959, pp. 30-31. Contains clear succinct summary of provisions of "model statute," written in non-legal, easy-to-understand style.

WHAT NEXT?

Obscenity defined: "Anything which depraves the mind of a child" (Representative Granahan). "Obscenity has a natural meaning that defines itself" (Maui County Attorney, Hawaii).

Exact: "As little as 3% questionable ideology could have a definite effect over a period of 12 years" - a Florida mother's "criteria" [sic] for evaluating textbooks.

Exact, too: Of the moral deterioration wrought on juveniles by reading Lady Chatterley's Lover - "It's like to their swigging down a half a pint of vodka or inhaling three marijuana cigarets" - Memphis American Legion Post.

Direct, if drastic (not to mention confused) solution: "I have written President Eisenhower urging the removal of the Supreme Court whose actions lead [sic] to the publication of Lady Chatterley's Lover now on sale at newsstands where even a child can buy a copy." (Letter from reader in Union City, N. J., Hudson-Dispatch)

Judicial point of view: County Court judge in Houston, Texas, after hearing quotes from U. S. Supreme Court and Federal District Court in New York - "There isn't any use citing me any more of that Yankee law because I don't intend to follow it."