

Report On City Library Is Made By Citizens Group

To: The Members of the Bartlesville City Commission.

The members of the citizens' committee appointed in February for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not there is subversive literature in the Bartlesville Public Library, wish to make a further report to the Mayor and the City Commissioners upon the subject of subversive literature.

The members of this committee have pointed out to the Library Board, certain magazines present in the racks of the public library, against which official citations have been made.

In order to learn whether or not the Bartlesville library was on a par with other libraries in neighboring cities, the members of this committee have visited libraries in six other cities, namely, Coffeyville and Independence, Kas; Ponca City, Sapulpa, Tulsa and Dewey, Oklahoma.

This report will cover the handling of subversive literature, and the general manner of operating libraries in the cities visited by the citizens' committee members.

The Bartlesville Library Board furnished this committee with a list of periodicals now in the library, and of the books purchased during 1949. Since the book list was without the names of authors, the members of the committee, have not as yet had time for making any appraisal of the book list.

The periodical list has been studied, and compared with the lists of periodicals in other libraries. Several periodicals, now in the Bartlesville library, we believe are subversive in character and are aimed at the destruction of the traditional American system of life and government. The purpose of these periodicals is to replace the present republican form of government, with one of radical socialism. We shall discuss these periodicals specifically as follows:

1. SOVIET RUSSIA TODAY.

The Committee on Un-American Activities of the United States House of Representatives has placed three official citations against this magazine. It is distributed by the Communist, Progressive Book Shop in Boston, Mass. (Massachusetts House Committee on Un-American Activities, Report 1938, pp 281 and 517). The cost of the magazine is 15 cents a copy, and the usual method of distribution is through gift subscriptions by Communists or Communist sympathizers in the community in which the gift subscription is received. We believe that the Library Board should be asked to make an investigation to determine who was the donor of this gift to our public library. Members of the citizens' committee found that none of the six libraries visited had copies of this magazine. All of the librarians questioned said that the magazine had come at various times to their libraries, but that it had been destroyed.

The three official citations listed by the Committee on Un-American Activities U.S. House of Representatives are as follows:

(1) Cited as a Communist front (Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Report March 29, 1944, PP 167; also cited in Report, June 25, 1942 PP 21.)

(2) Among the "more important" Communist-front organizations "for the sole purpose of carrying on propaganda on behalf of the Soviet Union." (California Committee on Un-American Activities, Report, 1948, pp 199.)

(3) A magazine published by Friends of the Soviet Union and distributed by the Communists' Progressive Book Shop in Boston, Mass. The articles and pictures in this magazine seek to show the great benefits and advantages enjoyed by Russian

workers, stressing the theme that Russia is the only successful nation in the world today. (Massachusetts House Committee on Un-American Activities, Report, 1938, pp 281 and 517.)

If there still remains any doubt as to the character of this publication, this quotation from the December 1949 issue is offered:

"the war-mongers are becoming more and more infuriated. With every day that passes the program of the main opponent of the peace (referring to the U.S.) becomes more obvious.

"This program proposes the creation, by means of violence and new wars, of a world American empire which, in scale, is to surpass all the world empires of conquerors that ever existed in history. It is nothing more or less than a matter of converting the whole world into a colony of the American imperialists, or reducing sovereign peoples to the position of slaves." (pp 7).

This is only a sample of the 32 pages of literature offered monthly by Soviet Russia Today, available to the public in Bartlesville, through the public library.

2. NEGRO DIGEST:

There is an official citation against the Negro Digest by the Committee on Un-American Activities, United States House of Representatives, as follows: "Among the publications which the committee found to be 'Communist initiated and controlled, or so strongly influenced as to be in the Stalin solar system' (California Committee on Un-American Activities, Report 1948, pp 225.)

3. THE NATION:

There is ample evidence that The Nation, lends its support to Communist causes and vends the wares of the Communist party in its advertising columns. It is not only peddles the prattle of the Communists, but offers its advertising space for such subjects as sexology and homosexuality. (See The Nation, Feb. 18, 1950, pp 165). ("The Sexual Aspects of Anti-Semitism", "Sex Penal Laws in the Soviet Union", "Minor Sex Deviations and Marital Adjustment", "The Psychology of Feminine Sex Experience", "Homosexuality and Oscar Wilde". These topics were discussed in a recent issue of "The International Journal of Sexology", a quarterly journal published in India. The above quotation is from an advertisement appearing in The Nation.)

Not only the advertisers, but also the book reviewers appearing in The Nation recommend to their readers the literature of homosexuals. (On Page 520 of the Nation, Nov. 26, 1949 under the heading of Books and the Arts, we find Ernest Jones recommending a revival of the works of Ronald Firbank whose "writing is reminiscent of the Wilde of 'Dorian Grey.'" Mr. Jones speaks further of "The exquisite and frivolous dream world of his (Firbank's) fiction, with its international elite, and rococo palaces", and of "A Nirvana in which, like Negroes in Paris in the twenties, homosexuals are the ultimate chic..." In the same article the writer adds that Firbank was "old-fashioned in his toying with the ceremonial of Rome", and that he had an "aesthetic interest in evil, of for no other purpose (than) to add color to life.")

To further establish the character of The Nation, let us refer again to the official report of the Committee on Un-American Activities, U. S. House of Representatives, PP143 "For the guidance of the American people in detecting Communist-front organizations, we present the following criteria:

"7. Does the organization's official publication reflect the line of the Communist Party,

publish articles by Pro-Communists, advertise Communist activities, or those of other front organizations. . . ."

A perusal of the Nation will afford an affirmative answer to this question. In the Feb. 18 issue of The Nation is an article by Carey McWilliams, against whom there are literally scores of citations by the Un-American Activities committee. The Nation (Nov. 19, 1949) on p. 495 advertises the Monthly Review as follows: "Whether you like it or not Socialism is here to stay. It is fast becoming the way of life for nearly half the population of the earth. That it will spread further is as sure as tomorrow's sunrise. . . Without an understanding of socialism, the world of the 20th century is incomprehensible. To help achieve that understanding is the purpose of the Monthly Review." With the subscription for this socialist periodical is the offer of a free book selected by the Book Find Club. There is an official citation against the Book Find Club report of the Committee on Un-American Activities, U.S. House of Representatives, pp 22: "Book Find Club, 1. Cited as a Communist Front. (California Committee on Un-American Activities, Report, 1948, p. 392.)

Again in the Nov. 19, 1949 issue of the Nation we find this advertisement, p. 496: "Books of all kinds from the U.S.S.R., just arrived. . . 1950 subscriptions open for all Soviet newspapers and magazines. Four Continent Book Corp.

The Four Continent Book Corp. is cited by the Un-American Activities Committee report p. 43 as follows: "Four Continent Book Corp. 1. Cited as a Communist publishing house located at 253 Fifth Avenue, New York City. (California Committee on Un-American Activities, Report, 1938, p. 154.)

The Nation is now available at the Bartlesville Public Library.

4. THE NEW REPUBLIC:

This is another publication offering the views of the pro-Communist press, along with advertisements of erotic literature and atheist books.

On Dec. 26, 1949 p. 22 the New Republic published this advertisement: "Masterpieces of Erotic Literature Joseph McCabe's New Study of the outstanding works of sensuality in ancient, medieval and modern times. (So far as we know, this is the first book ever devoted to the library of forbidden literature in the form of the listing of the authors and their book titles, accompanied by authoritative comments. It is both a discussion on an unusual, fascinating subject and something of a directory of the main works of erotic literature. . . .")

On P. 23 of the same issue is this advertisement:

"Poetica Erotica: 770 pages, rare, curious, amatory verse! Unusual VBolue! Unexpurgated! Again on the same page, another sample of New Republic advertising is this "Atheist Books, 32 page catalogue free. Truth Seeker Co."

Proof that The New Republic is not averse to the dissemination of the Communist line is this advertisement appearing in the New Republic, April 3, 1950 p. 22. "Are your ears bent by propaganda? Read 'In Fact' the weekly newsletter edited by George Seldes. . . ."

Here is what the Un-American Activities committee has to say about "In Fact."

1. Cited as a Communist front whose president and editor is George Seldes. (Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Report, March 29, 1944, p. 48.)

2. A 'Communist newsletter' written and published by George Seldes. (California Committee on Un-American Activities, Report 1948 p. 148.)

3. Cited as a Communist front. (Pennsylvania Commonwealth Counsel before the reviewing board of the Philadel-

phia County Board of Assistance January 1942.)

Further evidence of the character of the New Republic is found in the issue of March 27, p. 23: "Debate Sensation! Is Russia a Socialist Community?" "Yes" -Earl Browder, former general secretary of the Communist party. "No"! Max Shachtman, Chairman, Independent Socialist League. . . ."

The above citations we believe are sufficient to warrant the removal of Soviet Russia Today, Negro Digest, The Nation and The New Republic from the list of literature offered to the public in Bartlesville. This is no incursion upon the right of any individual citizen, or group of citizens to subscribe to and read these publications.

The members of the citizens' committee found that none of the six libraries visited had Soviet Russia Today or The Negro Digest. Two of them had The Nation and three of them had the New Republic.

Thus it is within the province of the library board to decide whether this brand of literature shall continue to be financed and distributed to the public at the expense of the Bartlesville taxpayers. There are available various official citations, which the members of the citizens committee found in other libraries, for the guidance of librarians in discerning subversive trends in literature. It is the suggestion of the citizens' committee that the citations be studied by the librarian and the members of the library board.

After visiting six other libraries, the members of the citizens' committee believe that in order to conduct the functions of the library the library board should meet at least once a month.

These citizens are of the opinion that the presentation of contrasting points of view on controversial subjects does not require the surrender of our libraries to fifth column invasion. The freedom of the press has never been interpreted to tolerate the printing of counterfeit money. Counterfeit literature, designed to defame and destroy the heritage of American freedom, should be exposed instead of tolerated.

The inspection of other libraries has been the means of bringing out methods which might be used to improve the Bartlesville Library without raising the library budget, which is indeed small by comparison with other cities.

One city (Sapulpa) which operates on a smaller budget than the Bartlesville library features most impressively, the memory shelf. An interested citizen recently gave the library a complete interior decoration job as his gift to the library. One librarian keeps a scrap book of the news stories about the library and another one publishes annually a pamphlet reporting the years' activities. Encyclopaedia year books were found in all libraries (save one) and children's magazines were available in all of the libraries visited.

Citizens committee
M. Warren, chairman
Henryetta B. Wills,
Secretary