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State of Oklahoma
Oklahoma Library Commission

MRS. J. R. DALE, SECRETARY
Oklahoma City

March 9, 1950

Mr. Russell W. Davis
Box 370
Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Davis:

We are sorry that the question of censorship of library purchases has arisen in Bartlesville. Your stand as expressed during your phone call is the only possible one for intelligent study of the problem, and you are to be congratulated for your attitude.

I called the Federal Bureau of Investigation this morning, and they inform me definitely that there is no F. B. I. list of Communistic periodicals and that no library need worry about published material, as if literature were subversive it would never reach open publication but would be stopped at the source. As a matter of fact, the man to whom I talked (he did not give his name) said that the F. B. I. encourages the reading of both sides of debatable matters.

When the matter of censorship arises, we usually recommend that the questionable material be withdrawn from the shelves and either withheld from public use entirely or restricted to specific requests from responsible borrowers for a period sufficient to quiet the alarm. It should, of course, be a matter of individual study of each case.

We are sending you the two standard lists of periodicals recommended for libraries. Both of them are accepted by schools and libraries as authorities for selection and purchase. The magazines you mentioned are all included on these lists, and therefore, we would say, acceptable. If they are not widely enough used anyway to be of specific value to your community, the sensible thing to do is to drop them. If they are used a great deal either for reference or school work or for general reading, the fact that they are recommended for schools as well as public libraries should be all the endorsement they need.

With the books, we are sending an issue of the American Library Association Bulletin which is devoted to censorship. We can also refer you to an article in the Library Journal for February 1, 1948, p.149, "Balancing the Books", by H. E. Haines. Our copy is at the bindery, but you may have it on your own library shelves.

Sincerely yours,

Lucy Ann Babcock
Lucy Ann Babcock
Assistant