

To The Editor:

In their recently concluded mid-winter meeting the Council of the American Library Assn. unanimously adopted a protest to Mayor Dunaway and the City Commissioners against their discharging the library board and librarian Ruth Brown. The Council also approved the report of the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the Oklahoma Library Assn. This report of the OLA Committee should be required reading for all citizens. It supplies a running scholarly account of the Bartlesville library controversy.

I would like to quote from the next to the last paragraph which I believe highlights the report: "We can infer, in view of the published record, that Miss Ruth Brown was unjustly and cavalierly discharged because of her private beliefs and because of her professional belief in free libraries. Had she been professionally unfit to be librarian then Bartlesville is somewhat tardy in discovering it only after thirty years. We feel that the Public Library of Bartlesville was made the scapegoat for a misguided group, and that censorship of the Library was used as a weapon against Miss Brown. She has suffered the loss

of her position, but the City of Bartlesville has suffered more. It has transgressed against the freedom of its library and thereby transgressed upon its distinction as an institution for free public information."

It seems to me that the report pretty much affirms what has been evident for some time, namely, that Mayor Dunaway and the City Commissioners are guilty above all of bigotry. They callously permitted their personal prejudices to influence their legislative function. As a result they have committed an act of monumental stupidity. They not only have done irreparable damage to the honor and good name of Bartlesville but they have also left our Public Library, which is a priceless heritage, to slowly deteriorate in the hands of the inexperienced.

If it does nothing else the Bartlesville library controversy should serve as a warning to all public officials who would subvert their integrity for political expediency or for bigotry. Our Free American Press, which is also a priceless heritage, is available to all, even to those who would abuse it by indiscriminate name-calling.

Very truly yours,  
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