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In 1953, the American Library Association (ALA) and segments of the US government clashed over a series of Senate hearings investigating the presence of Communist and "subversive" books in the State Department's overseas libraries. The public opposition to these investigations was the culmination of a series of increasingly outspoken efforts by the ALA to oppose censorship dating back to before World War II. From the 1939 Library Bill of Rights to *The Freedom to Read* and Overseas Library Statement in 1953, this paper traces the evolving nature of the ALA's stance on matters of intellectual freedom and censorship, both at home and abroad. The paper also addresses the development of the United States government's overseas information program, from one that initially sought to foster cultural exchange into one that later became a primary tool for American propaganda abroad, and documents the ALA's response to these changes.

Headings:

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THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, US GOVERNMENT, AND THE FIGHT FOR INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM, 1939-1953

by
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Introduction

In 1953, the American Library Association (ALA) and the United States government would find themselves at odds with one another over the presence of Communist and "subversive" books in the Department of State's overseas libraries. Reactions to the growing Communist threat, which many government officials perceived to be spreading rampantly around the world, would ultimately cause the ALA and segments of the government to take opposing sides during a Joseph McCarthy led investigation of the overseas library programs. This divergence of opinion, however, was hardly a spontaneous reaction by librarians. For the ALA, events which had been begun in the late 1930s marked the beginning of an increasingly mobilized effort by the library profession to combat all forms of censorship. By 1953, the publicly expressed opposition to censorship by the ALA could be seen as the culmination of a series of increasingly concerted efforts to protect intellectual freedom not only within libraries, but society as a whole.

The immediate post-war plans implemented by the U.S. would soon prove to be of great significance to the social and economic development of the nation at home and in its standing around the globe. With much of the world nations literally exhausted by the tremendous conflict that was the Second World War, it seemed logical (and perhaps a bit idealistic) to conclude that the time was ripe for world peace. However, not long after the Germans and Japanese surrendered to Allied forces, the U.S. found itself locked in

another world struggle, one of uncompromising ideologies with overtones of extreme violence.

It was within the framework of this ideological fight that the ALA also went through a dramatic evolution. Just as the nation as a whole went through a change during the post-war development, the library profession itself saw significant developments occur as a result of the nation's post-war planning. These changes were most heavily felt in the profession's stance on censorship and "intellectual freedom," at home and eventually abroad with the overseas library programs of the State Department. Prior to WWII, the ALA had taken few public stances in favor of intellectual freedom within libraries. Many librarians were completely comfortable going along with (and at times instigating) attempts to remove certain offensive and controversial materials from the shelves of various libraries.[1] In addition, the ALA lacked a consensual stance on these issues. As a result, organizational support for individual librarians who resisted efforts to curb intellectual freedom was practically non-existent. However, in 1939, when the first Library Bill of Rights was created, the profession's stance on censorship and intellectual freedom within the library began to change.

After WWII, and throughout the 1940s, the ALA became increasingly outspoken against censorship of thought within libraries. This change within the ALA set the stage for a confrontation between the ALA and the US Government. In the years leading up to WWII, the ALA had worked to establish several overseas library programs in Europe (Paris) and in Latin America. The purpose was to foster cultural exchange between nations, and many librarians (and non-librarians alike) believed books could be an influential component in creating awareness and understanding of the United States and

its culture. After WWII, the U.S. government continued this line of thought; however they did so from a different perspective. Using the Communist threat overseas as a justification, the U.S. began to work towards expanding overseas information programs in order to counter Communist propaganda abroad. However, what had previously been a system designed for cultural exchange between nations quickly became one of explicit American propaganda. This change would mark a dramatic shift from the original goals of cultural exchange within the overseas library programs originally envisioned by the ALA and its leaders; as a result it would lead the ALA to become increasingly outspoken and critical of the government's information programs as it fought for intellectual freedom.

In order to understand why events in 1953 transpired as they did, it is necessary to understand how and why the ALA came to exist as it did in 1953. As will be shown, the government's increasingly severe reaction to communism at home and abroad essentially pushed the library profession to review its own ideals, and consequently strengthened many librarians' resolve to fight for the preservation of intellectual freedom.

I

The American Library Association and the Roots of Intellectual Freedom

In the 1930s, as the library profession began to assert more "professional autonomy," librarians gradually began to push for greater control over the selection of books within the public library. The initial efforts undertaken by the ALA would provide a foundation upon which the profession would continue to build. These are the roots of this struggle, and while the initial hopes stemming from these early efforts were not realized as fully as some hoped at the time, they nevertheless established an important foundation.

Down with censorship, up with intellectual freedom; the library profession had not always been this way. In years before, librarians acted as willing participants when it came to censoring certain books from the general public.[1] However, as the dire effects of totalitarian oppression around the globe became increasingly apparent to the ALA and others, the library profession became more open to offering a wider representation of viewpoints within the library. Librarians began to advocate more neutrality in book selection. This would certainly not be the final time the profession took a stance on maintaining free and open shelves to all areas of thought, it was a dramatic shift away from past practice

[1] For a book length treatment of this subject, see: Evelyn Geller, *Forbidden Books in American Public Libraries, 1876-1939: A Study in Cultural Change* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984).

Library Bill of Rights (1939)

In November 1938, the board of the Des Moines Public Library adopted a "Bill of Rights for the Free Public Library." Written by the library's director, Forrest Spaulding, the Des Moines Bill of Rights statement came about as a result of "growing intolerance, suppression of free speech and censorship," which the librarians disturbingly saw to be taking place around the world. In the original statement, Spaulding held that the selection of books should be done based on a book's "value and interest" regardless of "the race, nationality, political, or religious views of the writer." The previous month, Bernard Berelson had written in the *Wilson Library Bulletin* (*WLB*) that librarians needed to "stand firmly against social and political and economic censorship of book collections; it must be so organized that it can present effective opposition to this censorship and it must protect librarians who are threatened by it."[2] The Des Moines Library Bill of Rights would serve as a first step towards achieving this type of professional support nationwide.

Several incidents in the late 1930s propelled the American Library Association to begin reconsidering the profession's stance on intellectual freedom. In 1937, a librarian at the University of Montana named Philip O. Keeney lost his tenured position with the university. The official reasoning had to do with an "incompatibility" of library philosophy that clashed with the school's president. However, many saw the cause for his dismissal to be much different.[3] When asked about the case, one librarian at Montana responded by saying "Professor Keeney, according to the facts, has lost his position because he attempted to include in his library material on all sides of the social and economic trends of our time."[4]

John Steinbeck would prove to be the final straw for the ALA. Published in 1939, Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath* came under intense public scrutiny, primarily for the social views espoused by its author as well as the overall "immorality" of the work.[5] *Collier's* decried the novel as being "propaganda for the idea that we ought to change our system for the Russian system" and the Associated Farmers of Kern County, California described it as "propaganda in its vilest form."[6] The book was banned, among other places, in the libraries in East St. Louis, Illinois; Camden, New Jersey; Bakersfield, California; and several other libraries around the country.[7] Prior to this public outcry against *The Grapes of Wrath*, the American Education Board had urged the ALA to take up the Des Moines library statement at the upcoming 1939 Annual Conference in San Francisco. The Steinbeck controversy only strengthened this call to address the growing concerns of censorship on a national level. And so, with the Des Moines standard to build upon, and with a sense of growing unease towards recent infringements upon intellectual freedom, the ALA moved to adopt its own version of a library bill of rights. At the 1939 annual convention, the issue was brought before the ALA council. Opposition to the Library Bill of Rights was virtually non-existent within the council, and little discussion was needed for it to pass unanimously.[8]

The 1939 ALA statement differed from the Des Moines statement in several ways. First, Article II of the original statement called for *equal* representation "in the selection of books on subjects about which differences of opinion exist." The ALA council changed the word "equal" to "fair and adequate" to account for the fact that *equal*, in terms of actual number of volumes, would almost certainly be an impossible task for librarians to collect. Second, Article III of the Des Moines statement was

completely cut because it addressed an individual library's budget and patron needs. Finally, Article IV of the Des Moines statement was broadened from: "Library meeting rooms shall be available on equal terms to all organized nonprofit groups for open meetings to which no admission fee is charged and from which no one is excluded" to "Library meeting rooms should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of their beliefs or affiliations." Following the approval by the Library Bill of Rights, the ALA Council recommended the statement to individual governing boards of libraries around the country.[9]

As important as an official statement like the Library Bill of Rights was for the defense of intellectual freedom in libraries, it was nevertheless deficient on several levels. The most glaring omission from the statement was its failure to define how the ALA would uphold its Bill of Rights. It failed to mention what the ALA would do to support any library or librarian who fought to uphold the principles espoused in the statement. Furthermore, it did not explicitly call for librarians to oppose censorship and it was limited to public libraries in the United States.[10] Finally, all discussion of propaganda in the library was left out of the ALA version. The ALA's statement lacked the commitment found in the Des Moines which obligated a library to actively seek out within and avoid collecting overt propaganda from all sides.[11] As will be shown later, this omission would later become an extremely pertinent topic. Within the next decade the issue of propaganda would rear its head in a rather explicit way in regards to the overseas libraries, and the ALA would be forced to reexamine (and revise) its original Library Bill of Rights statement. Before doing so, however, it would have to establish some way to uphold the principles being espoused.

Committee on Intellectual Freedom

The 1940 Annual Conference in Cincinnati saw the issue of censorship and subversive propaganda move to the front of issues discussed. Shortly after the adoption of the Library Bill of Rights in 1939, a Special Committee on Censorship was appointed. This special committee included Sterling North, Alfred C. Nielsen, and Forrest Spaulding, recent author of the Des Moines Library Bill of Rights of Rights statement. With the threat of war overseas looking increasingly likely, calls for restricting all forms of propaganda deemed to be subversive increased in 1940. Because the Library Bill of Rights had largely avoided this issue, the job of reviewing the ALA's policies on censoring propaganda was given to the special committee. They were to report their findings to the ALA council at the Annual Conference in Cincinnati later that summer.[12]

At the Annual Conference, the issue of restricting subversive material was debated by Gilbert Bettman and Arthur Garfield Hays. Bettman, former attorney general of Ohio, favored the idea, arguing that Americans did not want their democracy to be undermined by "the purposively poisoned arrows" of authoritarian propaganda. Public librarians, therefore, were obligated by an almost moral duty to restrict access to such materials. On the opposing side, Hays, a lawyer for the American Civil Liberties Union, argued that such restriction was in itself an undemocratic act. As a result, limiting access for dissent and opposing views would in no way be an appropriate policy for a library to take.[13] Both of these arguments would continue to surface during debates involving intellectual freedom.

Under the shadow of this debate surrounding the conference, the Special Committee reported to the ALA Council. In their report, they told the council that if the

Library Bill of Rights were to mean anything, further protection and support would have to be given to librarians.[14] It would not be enough to simply encourage librarians to resist efforts to censor certain books. These were real people working in the library and facing very real community members, groups and individuals who could certainly present a grave threat to the employment of a librarian who challenged their calls for censorship of certain materials. There had to be some form of national organizational support to back these librarians in their effort. The special committee called for a permanent committee to be established which would support librarians. The ALA council unanimously accepted this proposal, thus creating the Committee on Intellectual Freedom to Safeguard the Rights of Library Users to Freedom of Inquiry.[15*]

Perhaps it was simply a case of bad timing, but the build up for the oncoming war effort greatly hindered the IFC's efforts to establish itself as an organization with teeth. Despite many concerns throughout the country regarding various attacks on democracy around the world, the idea of intellectual freedom was simply not a prominent concern among many individual librarians. The idea of defending democracy by defending intellectual freedom had not yet sunk in on a nationwide scale. In a poll conducted by the *Wilson Library Bulletin* in January 1940, only 7 percent of librarians perceived threats to the Bill of Rights to be "the most vital library problem today." Instead, 28 percent believed the "need of funds" was the most pressing issue, with "Need to extend library services" coming in second at 20 percent.[16]

Although the ALA had worked diligently to first create a set of guidelines for librarians and then an organization to support librarians who followed those guidelines, it

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[*] In 1947 the name was shortened to the Committee on Intellectual Freedom. It is now known as the Intellectual Freedom Committee, or IFC. From here on, "IFC" will be used to refer to this organization.

still had a way to go to win over librarians as a whole. For many people, the looming possibility of war took precedence over a war of ideals on the home front. Once the US entered the war, and as it slowly progressed, the IFC became seemingly irrelevant. By 1942, and through 1943, it was not even active.[17] Not until after WWII would the ALA succeed in earning widespread support for its fight against censorship. The issue would first hit at home, but would soon escalate to overseas as the US government underwent plans to defeat communist propaganda with its own form of propaganda, which included the use of libraries as part of a new post-war reconstruction effort. As a result, in years following the Second World War, developments both within the ALA and the government's overseas information programs would send the two sides down a path of inevitable confrontation. For this to happen, however, there would first have to be an established precedent for an international program of information and cultural exchange that included libraries.

II

International Cultural Exchange, the Development of Overseas Library Programs, and the Use of Propaganda Abroad

By the Second World War, the United States' overseas information services were still a relatively new venture for the country. For various reasons, participation in a worldwide cultural exchange was something that had been tenaciously avoided for many years. Despite Melvil Dewey's 1919 call for the library profession to become "missionaries of the book," the ALA lagged behind with the rest of the country in large-scale efforts to foster international cultural exchange after the First World War. Recent past efforts had demonstrated signs of optimism for such cultural exchange. During the WWI, the ALA had worked with the State Department to provide reading materials for soldiers fighting overseas. By 1920, efforts to continue library work abroad took an encouraging step forward when the first American public library opened in Paris. However, while this international movement would remain committed to cultural exchange abroad, it would remain relatively small and largely informal as the rest of the country fell back into complacent isolationism.[18]

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

This attitude began to change in 1927 with the creation of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA). The direct roots of the IFLA can be traced back to 1926 and a man by the name of Gabriel Henriot. In 1926, at the International

Congress of Librarians and Booklovers in Prague, Henriot called for the creation of an international library committee. At the time, Henriot was the President of the Association des Bibliothécaires Français and a professor at the American Library School in Paris. Largely a European effort, Henriot worked with representatives from Czechoslovakia, England, Germany, and Sweden to draft a nine-point resolution for the creation of a Standing International Library Committee. For additional support, Henriot began to pull the ALA in to the discussion, setting up the final resolution that was to be decided upon during the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the (British) Library Association in Edinburgh, Scotland [19]

On 30 September 1927, in Edinburgh, the IFLA was formed.[20] With signatures by the delegates from fifteen countries (including the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, France, and the U.S.), the final drafted resolution to create the IFLA was the result of several days of deliberations between seven members of a working group. Isak Collinjn, chairman of the group and Swedish Riksbibliotekar, was elected to be the first president. This resolution was intended to be a starting point for further discussion. Two years later, at the first World Congress of Libraries and Bibliography, the statutes for the IFLA were written and agreed upon.[21]

Coming on the heels of the ALA's 1929 Annual conference in Washington, a group of fifteen international library delegates met in Rome for the first World Congress of Libraries and Bibliography. Twelve hundred people attended the event, representing eighteen countries, with representatives from America that included Carl H. Milam (ALA Executive Secretary), Herbert Putnam (Librarian of Congress), Arthur Bostwick, and Andrew Keogh.[22] At the conference, Benito Mussolini gave the welcoming address, and

his words were warmly received within the pages of *Library Journal*. Pope Pius XI also made an appearance at the conference, temporarily leaving "his throne and his pontifical aloofness to mingle with his fellow librarians."[23] During one important address, Herbert Putnam promoted the idea of establishing an international system of libraries. Doing so, he argued, would allow librarians from around the globe to pool library resources and share them on an international scale.[24]

Although the IFLA had come into being two years before, it was not until this conference that the official Statutes for the organization were adopted. Written by the Carl Milam, the statutes were a significant contribution from the ALA. With acceptance for the organization's statutes solidified in Edinburgh, the IFLA was officially constituted as an international union of national library associations a year later at the 1930 Stockholm Session. The creation of this organization reflected a growing trend of librarians around the world who wished to see more direct involvement with one another. It was established with optimism, with hope that the international effort would be a stepping block in the interest of world peace.[25]

Development of International Cultural Exchange

By the 1930s, the American effort to move beyond its borders intensified. Spurred by the efforts of Fascist regimes and their attempts to influence the Latin America populace, the State Department established the Division of Cultural Relations on 27 July 1938. The US decided it must prevent the spread of fascism in the region, and books and libraries became key components in this effort. It was part of a recent emphasis on Pan-American Relations that had largely begun in 1933 with President Roosevelt's "Good Neighbor Policy." The creation of such a department, while

seemingly minor in the grand scheme of things, marked a significant step forward for America's efforts at cultural diplomacy. When it came to cultural diplomacy, the US had significantly lagged behind Europe for many years. Several reasons were the cause of this lack of effort, including the dominance of state and local governments and private institutions in education, a laissez-faire type reluctance by the federal government to intruded upon a traditionally private sector role, and a general fear of foreign entanglements which resulted in significant political isolation in the wake of WWI. Additionally, many within the U.S., including both government officials and the public, were hesitant to support an official policy involving cultural exchanges because such program tasted a bit too strongly of official state propaganda. With the excessive propaganda abuses of the Committee of Public Information (a.k.a. Creel Commission) during the First World War still fresh in the public's mind, many were hesitant to support additional propagandistic efforts abroad.[26] As a result, the creation of the Division of Cultural Relations marked a significant development for proponents of international cultural relations.

Although the State Department had largely been responsible for the government's focus of cultural exchange with Latin America, it desperately sought outside leadership from the private sector. Among those the State Department worked most closely with was ALA Executive Secretary Carl Milam, who agreed to join the General Advisory Committee to the State Department to provide direction for the Division of Cultural Relations. Despite his limited background in international relations, Milam was behind much of this effort for cultural exchange. Through his leadership, the ALA came to be

highly regarded by the State Department as "an educational force of the greatest significance." [27]

During this time, the ALA began to refocus its own international library activities through the International Relations Board (IRB), created in 1942. Four subcommittees were established to address library activities in specific areas of the world. The four subcommittees were: Aid to Libraries in War Areas, Library Cooperation with Latin America, Library Cooperation with Europe and Africa, and Library Cooperation with the Orient and South Pacific. After the State Department created the Office of the Coordination of Inter-American Affairs (CIAA) in 1940, headed by Nelson A. Rockefeller, the ALA continued to work closely with the government to promote book exchanges and American libraries throughout Latin America.[28]

By the time WWII had ended, the ALA had developed a reputation for being at the forefront of international cultural relations as well as *the* representative model for American librarianship, something that would play a role in the post-WWII rebuilding effort overseas. It also established the organization as a prominent proponent for overseas librarianship at the same time that some within the US Government were viewing these activities with a growing sense of importance for American global interests.

ALA and Post-WWII Rebuilding Efforts

Like many industries and professions at the time, America's entry into WWII following the attacks on Pearl Harbor helped spur the ALA to begin to think more seriously about librarianship on a truly international level, something that had been gradually building since the founding of the IFLA and with the recent library activities in

Latin America. This rise in international library interests seems to have coincided with a decrease in support for intellectual freedom on the home front. As the war effort both at home and abroad increased, however, the State Department started to feel less and less inclined to allow others control over the U.S. information programs overseas. As a result, the U.S. government began to exert increasing control over these overseas activities.[29]

In June 1942, the Office of War Information (OWI) was created by an Executive Order of the White House with the purpose of countering Axis propaganda being disseminated abroad. Despite trepidation over American propaganda being directed towards the American public, there was widespread public support for similar activities as long as they were aimed at foreign audiences. However, while the public may have supported these endeavors, from its inception the OWI was racked with partisan opposition within Washington. In actions that would later resurface during floor debates of the Smith-Mundt Act of 1948 (an act that would later make permanent the organization behind international information and cultural diplomacy activities of the U.S.), Republicans decried the agency as being nothing more than another New Deal-era program of the Roosevelt administration. In addition to "traditional" feelings of isolationism, many of FDR's political opponents feared that such an agency would be used to simply publicize and advocate the accomplishments of Roosevelt and his administration. Bitter partisan rancor, however, did not prevent President Roosevelt from selecting his top choice Elmer Davis to serve as director of the organization, a man who prior to his appointment as head of the OWI had served as the chief news analyst for CBS radio.[30]

The OWI was an amalgamation of four other wartime information related agencies. These included the Office of Facts and Figures, the Office of Government Reports, the division of information of the Office for Emergency Management, and the Foreign Intelligence Service, Outpost, Publication, and Pictorial Branches of the Office of the Coordinator of Information. While there were some domestic efforts undertaken, the OWI was officially charged with the duty of "disseminating information," not molding public opinion at home.[31] Part of this effort included libraries overseas, also known as information centers.

Following the war, however, the OWI faced a serious challenge for survival. Many political opponents of the New Deal disliked the continuation of another Roosevelt-era program, and one critic argued that the OWI had become "a hide-out for privileged intellectual New Deal cowards and Communists."[32] Further, the overall cost of the program, which by the war's end had over 13,000 employees on its payroll, provided conservative Republican and Southern Democrat opponents in Congress with additional ammunition to attack the OWI. Many independent media outlets also regarded the OWI with skepticism, viewing the agency as a "thin wedge of government control" over their own media activities. Therefore, largely as a result of this opposition, the OWI was slated to close within weeks following the Japanese surrender in 14 August 1945.[33]

Not every government official was so willing to abolish this overseas information and propaganda agency. Shortly after the OWI was set to be terminated, President Truman signed an Executive Order transferring all functions of the OWI to the State Department. This provisional agency became known as the Interim International Information Service (IIIA). This move, however, did not prevent the agency from

succumbing to drastic financial cuts. Over the next few months following the Japanese surrender, roughly 90% of the 13,000 employees were let go. Still, despite shedding a substantial amount of "weight," the IIIA remained functional under the new direction of William Benton, a former partner of the New York advertising agency Benton and Bowles.[34] This new interim agency kept a number of the OWI's previous functions, which included the Voice of America radio broadcasting service, education exchange programs, and cultural information centers, including libraries. Along with the OWI libraries, three additional library collections were placed under the direction of the State Department. These included the ALA's libraries in Latin America; information centers in Austria, Japan, and Korea; and libraries in Amerika Häuser ("American Houses").[35] The Amerika Häuser was part of the Allies "de-nazification" effort. They served as small cultural institutions with libraries and lecture rooms available for use, along with classes that taught English.[36] Had prior post-war planning not been fully considered while the war was still going on however, even these limited efforts may have fallen by the wayside.

In May 1942, Carl Milam contacted the State Department to "remind" them that there would have to be *some* type of post-war plan for maintaining cultural relations. The State Department responded by proposing the ALA itself support these endeavors overseas by raising $10 to $50 million. The ALA balked at this idea, seeing its role as one that would provide support and technical assistance, but not act as principal fundraiser. Quite simply, the ALA did not believe it should bear the bulk of the financial responsibility for the cultural reconstruction of Europe.[37]

Following the war, a six-month mission was sent to Germany with the support of the Library of Congress (LC) and ALA. The LC mission was given several tasks, which included gathering war-time publications from war-torn Europe, particularly Germany. The seven-member team included Harry Lydenberg, the 72 year old member of the ALA's International Relations Board and former director of the New York Public Library. The War Department viewed the main task of their mission to be the acquisition and duplication of Nazi war documents. Lydenberg, however, was more concerned with acquiring books and materials for American libraries back home. This included stored wartime publications and copies of all books published in Europe during the war.[38]

Members of the mission expected to find Europe's cultural institutions in disarray, but nothing could prepare Lydenberg and Milam for the actual conditions they would encounter. They were horrified by just how great the devastation of Germany's libraries was. Those collections that weren't destroyed by bombings had their collection development severely hindered by the Nazi's ironfisted control of book purchasing. All orders had to be cleared by the Gestapo headquarters in Berlin, which naturally limited the type and number of purchases that could be made.[39]

Once in Germany, Lydenberg worked with the US Office of Military Government (OMGUS), the primary military organization responsible for overseeing the capturing of Nazi documents in the American Zone of post-war reconstruction. It was during this time that relations between the ALA and the US government became slightly heated. The controversy primarily involved the disposal of pro-Nazi propaganda materials. On 13 May 1946 the four occupying powers had signed Order No. 4, which called for the destruction of "any literature of a national socialist or militarist nature." All libraries,

bookstores, and publishing houses were instructed to hand over these materials. Included among the items to be destroyed was a list of 1,000 book titles and 35 periodicals. Not surprisingly, there was intense opposition among librarians and academics alike. Among the official orders for disposal of these titles was burning, an act that set off many librarians' alarms. After some protest, but not necessarily because of it, the instructions were revised so that at least 150 copies of each questionable item would be preserved "in the interests of research and scholarship." Despite some difficulty in procuring documents from Soviet occupied territories, by the end of the LC Mission 500,000 separate Nazi documents had been shipped back to the US. In addition, over 800,000 volumes of "the most significant literature published in Europe during the war years" were collected for American libraries back home. In the end, the mission was considered an overwhelming success, having fulfilled its duty of evaluating the impact of war on cultural institutions abroad during what Truman designated to "an emergency situation."[40] If there was one thing that was clear from the LC Mission, it was that the use of libraries was still firmly within the United States' foreign policy plans. Increasingly, however, as the ALA worked to keep these libraries largely apolitical institutions, the State Department was attempting to mold these libraries to project a certain American point-of-view of the world.[41]

Smith-Mundt Act of 1948 and Overseas Propaganda

Through the leadership of Executive Secretary Carl Milam, the ALA had made it clear that it wished to see these overseas institutions remain apolitical by refraining from advocating a specific "pro-American" bias in its collections.[42] This view, however, did not coincide with the Truman administration's plan for post-war relations abroad. On 31

December 1946, the Interim International Information Agency that had been established by executive order the previous year was replaced by the Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs, keeping these activities under the control of the State Department. Its necessity, according to Truman, was derived from the fact that "present day foreign relations" made it "essential for the United States to maintain informational activities abroad as an integral part of the conduct of our foreign affairs." No longer would these international information programs be focused on cultural exchange, as had previously been the case. Advocating American interests abroad would be first and foremost on the list of priorities. Assistant Secretary of State William Benton, who had previously headed the interim agency, was selected to head the new office. He further echoed Truman's earlier remarks, stating that "All programs in the field of so-called 'cultural relations' should be designed to support US foreign policy in its long-range sense, and to serve as an arm of that policy."[43]

Still, opposition to keeping this arm of the State Department up and running persisted. These feelings however, which were espoused by both Conservative Republicans and Democrats, began to subside as the issue of Soviet-sponsored propaganda became a more pressing concern among anti-communists in Washington. In an action that went against the dominant party line opposing international institutions, a Republican Representative from South Dakota, Karl Mundt, introduced legislation that would lead to Congressional authorization for a permanent overseas information organization. Mundt had been known to support international educational efforts in the past, but his outlook on this subject now was largely influenced by his own intense loathing and distrust of communism and communist sympathizers.[44]

Introduced in May 1947 and co-sponsored by Senator H. Alexander Smith (R-NJ), the initial legislation that would later become the Smith Mundt Act of 1948 (H.R. 3342) faced an uphill battle in both houses. Mundt chaired the subcommittee of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs which discussed the bill. Consisting of three Democrats and three Republicans, the subcommittee favorably sent the bill to the House floor where it was passed 272-97. Mundt had been able to secure over half of the Republican vote, having assured his skeptical anti-Communist colleagues that "no Communists or parlor pinks or crypto-Communists or fellow travelers would have any part of this program in any way, shape or form." However, once in the Senate the bill hit a wall of Republican opposition and was blocked before it could come to a vote before the end of Congress's first session.[45]

The lack of support in the Senate prompted Mundt to lead a Congressional investigation of the overseas information activities. The bipartisan investigation in 1947 was a five week trip abroad lasting from September to October. It consisted of twelve Senators and Representatives of a bipartisan nature and involved visits to twenty-two countries. This investigation proved to be a tremendous boost to Mundt's legislation, as it highlighted the Soviet's "aggressive psychological warfare against us [United States] in order to discredit and drive us out of Europe." Additionally, the debate surrounding the State Department's overseas information programs suddenly became connected to the overall recovery efforts in Europe associated with the Marshall Plan, still in the planning stages. This association greatly aided the bill's proponents. Eventually, enough support was garnered in the Senate, and in early January 1948 the Smith-Mundt Act (officially

known as the US Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948) passed unanimously. It was signed by Truman on 30 January, becoming Public Law 402.[46]

ALA and the Smith-Mundt Act

As stated previously, the ALA was firmly in favor of an overseas information program that promoted cultural exchange, not overt American propaganda. Despite fears that the new legislation would cause this very thing to occur, the ALA supported the passage of the Smith-Mundt Act. With its passage, however, many in Congress became more vocal in advocating the use of these institutions as tools for the very thing the ALA opposed. Carl Milam and the ALA became greatly concerned that this would happen when they received word in 1947 that the State Department wished to use the overseas libraries to promote the Marshall Plan. In late 1947, the ALA sent a critique of the overseas libraries to Secretary of State Marshall. They urged the State Department to honor the original objectives of the international cultural programs by offering "a broad, honest, and non-propagandistic interpretation of US life and thought." Its conclusions, however, were perhaps counterproductive as they gave the State Department more incentive to continue down the path of direct propaganda. In their critique, the ALA described the overseas information programs as being the most effective and least expensive form of media of all State Department cultural programs. Not wishing to see the overseas libraries, and thus foreign perceptions of American librarianship, become associated abroad with one particular American point-of-view, Milam pushed to have cultural and informational activities separated from one another. While his recommendation initially fell on deaf ears in Washington, after much effort Congress eventually acknowledged within the final Smith-Mundt bill that there was a fundamental

difference between informational and cultural activities. Despite this acknowledgement, by the time Smith-Mundt became law the ALA had very little influence over policies controlling these libraries.[47] As a result, the ALA's concerns over the use of libraries abroad for propaganda quickly became a reality.

Refashioning "Propaganda"

Despite the growing concern over Soviet-sponsored propaganda, there was still a significant amount of apprehension when it came to supporting overt propaganda efforts at home. As a result, the Truman administration began to refashion the meaning and perception of US propaganda, in order to build support for increased efforts abroad. One of the key components to this objective was to differentiate between types of propaganda. A 1944 War Department publication (part of the G.I. Roundtable Series) titled "What Is Propaganda?" had laid out the difference between "good" and "bad" propaganda. "In the struggle for men's minds that is constantly being waged by propagandists there is…a fundamental difference between the propaganda of dictatorship and the propaganda of democracy." According to this pamphlet, the essential difference between the two could be boiled down to one crucial "fact": democratic propaganda contains the "truth" while propaganda like that of the Nazis suppressed the truth from the people. Furthermore, it held that the "promotion of a worth-while cause is good propaganda."[48] As the Cold War began to heat up, and as the Truman administration began to promote a revamped propaganda effort abroad, promoting it this view of propaganda would become crucial in the effort to gain Congressional and public support for their efforts. During the debates over the Smith-Mundt Act, Mundt and Assistant Secretary of State Benton insisted that

the US would not engage in deceitful activities.[49] As a result, it became necessary to distinguish between "good" and "bad" propaganda in order to overshadow accusations of compromising the American tradition of a "free press" overseas.

The refashioning of propaganda as good vs. bad boiled down to propaganda that attempted to portray a "mirror" of society as opposed to one that merely "showcased" a society's positive aspects. Soviet propaganda was portrayed as deceitful, since it only reportedly told the positive aspects of communisms. Conversely, American propaganda was deemed a "mirror" in that it offered a "true" picture of American society. However, even this designation did not sit well with some government officials, who were concerned that a completely honest depiction of American society (involving such things as racism and worker's rights) could damage America's overall image overseas. As a result, America's "good" propaganda was simply deemed to be the "truth" while the Soviet's were depicted as spreading nothing but lies. In reality, as with any effective propaganda program, the US worked diligently to "showcase" the positives of society under the guise of being completely truthful in its attempt to mirror American society. Nevertheless, it was assumed that the truth emanating from the US would ultimately convince the foreign public that America was the superior nation in this new "war of words," thus causing free citizens to reject the false hopes espoused by communism.[50]

Simply redefining America's propaganda activities, however, would not be enough to suppress all criticism of the Truman administration's overseas information plans. Kenneth McKellar, Democratic Senator from Tennessee, questioned the necessity of a propaganda program during a Senate Appropriations Committee meeting: "What does it [propaganda] do? What does it accomplish? … I don't believe you have ever

influenced a single individual."[51] Others decried its use overseas because it created, in the words of Rep. Katherine St. George (R-NY), feelings of resentment around the world as a result of various luxuries in the US being highlighted.[52] Others, such as Rep. George Meader (R-MI) questioned the effectiveness of propaganda by wondering whether the US's interests could be better served through actions rather than words.[53]

By 1950, despite these differences of opinion coming largely from the opposite side of the political aisle, Truman made a concerted effort to increase these propaganda efforts. Overseas, the Soviets had already launched their own propaganda offensive against the US, dubbed the "Hate America" initiative. In this campaign, the Soviet Union stressed its own desire for "peaceful coexistence" with all countries. At the same time, they portrayed the US as the real Cold War aggressors. As a result, the Truman administration was willing to take political flack from its opponents in order to counter this image.[54] Dubbed the "Campaign of Truth," the new propaganda plan was publicly launched during a speech by Truman to the American Society of Newspaper Editors in April 1950. In order to counter the Soviet's propaganda, the US would coordinate overseas information activities with other free nations "in a sustained, intensified program to promote the cause of freedom against the propaganda of slavery." Again, the justification was based on the oft heard notion that simply disseminating the "truth" would discredit the Soviets and win support for the US throughout the world.[55] When Truman announced this program, it garnered considerable praise, especially within America's newspapers. The *New York Times* called it "a task worthy of our best national efforts."[56]

This new "Campaign of Truth" led to an increasingly militarized approach to overseas information dissemination. As a result of this Campaign of Truth, the overseas information programs were being run completely counter to everything ALA officials had publicly fought for involving intellectual freedom. However, there were a series of developments regarding the book collections that attempted to instill a more "open" feel within these libraries. The government saw books as an ever more effective strategy to influence worldwide opinion. According the recently created Psychological Strategy Board (PSB), books were "by far the most powerful means of influencing the attitude of intellectuals."[57] In addition to community leaders, the Campaign of Truth also began to specifically target other segments of the population that had traditionally not been the subject of direct propaganda, but who were believed to be more susceptible to the promises of Communist propaganda. These included urban laborers, farm workers, and poorer white collar individuals. With the new book collection policies, however, the State Department moved even further away from a well-rounded book collection and focused on books that advocated a specific anti-communist message.[58]

New books that were collected for the information service program fell into three primary three categories: (1) books by former Russian citizens with connections to the Soviet government; (2) books by non-Russians who had previously joined the Communist party; (3) books by people living in the US but who possessed knowledge of Communism. Of course, the most important stipulation ensured that all author were avowed anti-communists. It was believed that authors who had lived under and been subjected to the Communist regime, and who had later rejected that form of government, would be much more effective at convincing susceptible nations that communism was an

outright evil. Therefore, these books were purchased and placed within the overseas libraries, which by 1953 were attracting over 36 million visitors a year.[59]

By 1952 the Republican Party had begun to advocate an even harder lined strategy with the Soviets, and rode a wave of aggressive anti-communism into the White House. With the former WWII General Dwight Eisenhower now in the nation's highest office, Republicans began to reclaim much of the political power Democrats had held for years. In 1953, a junior Senator from Wisconsin named Joseph McCarthy assumed the position of chairman of the Senate Committee on Government Operations, which included the Senate Subcommittee on Investigations. While the Committee on Government Operations was often considered a minor, and rather dull, committee, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations possessed a great deal of influence over the government's policies and operations. Using this authority, Senator McCarthy would begin his infamous campaign to rid the government of all communist and subversive elements, ultimately leading to his own discrediting and downfall. Before that occurred, however, McCarthy would take aim at the overseas information programs. The first target would be the Voice of America radio network, and following that McCarthy turned his sights on the overseas libraries. Although the ALA had in recent years become greatly displeased with the developments within the overseas information programs, they would ultimately view this challenge as a threat to librarianship as a whole.

As the next chapter illustrates, libraries and librarians would figure heavily in upcoming Senate investigations in which intense criticism was leveled at these overseas programs. Before addressing this confrontation, however, it is important to first demonstrate how the rising level of ALA opposition to censorship at home, set the ALA

up for a showdown against anti-communist crusaders within the US Congress. Before the ALA could take on McCarthy, it had to develop a spine that would permit it to stand up and defend matters involving intellectual freedom.

III

ALA and Intellectual Freedom Challenges Post-WWII

The political atmosphere in the United States following the Second World War was dominated by suspicion, distrust, and outright threats against all "communist" elements within the country. With the anti-Communist hysteria that would come to define the McCarthy era just beginning to become ingrained within the American psyche, anyone and anything that even hinted of left-wing ideology could be construed as "communist (regardless of the actual political affiliation of the accused). In reference to members of the Communist party, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director J. Edgar Hoover stated: "They want civil license to do as they please, and if they get control, liberty for Americans will be but a haunted memory."[60] It was within this atmosphere that librarians found themselves operating after WWII, and this environment would provide fertile ground for censorship proponents to launch a series of increasingly virulent challenges to intellectual freedom in libraries.

In 1944, Leon Carnovsky replaced Forrest Spaulding as head of the Intellectual Freedom Committee. Despite making some important advances in publicizing intellectual freedom challenges, Carnovsky believed that such public statements were of little benefit without the full cooperation of librarians around the country.[61] Again, he was of the mindset that the words Library Bill of Rights should be reflected in the actions of librarians. Referring to reluctant librarians in a speech, Carnovsky said they

practically "do *not* accept it (Library Bill of Rights, IFC statements, etc) when they submit, either willingly or under protest, to pressures of whatever sort which result in denial of freedom of inquiry to the library user."[62] Carnovsky also became frustrated by a lack of censorship reporting among librarians. Writing in the *ALA Bulletin* in October 1945, Carnovsky stated:

> The lack of information about such incidents may mean that they do not exist—that librarians are generally free from interference in their book selection practices. On the other hand, it may mean that librarians do not care to report interference. Or, finally, it may mean that librarians are so cautious in policies of book selection that they avoid "incidents" before they have a chance to occur. Whatever the meaning, the fact remains that the committee has received very little indication of interference with the freedom to read in libraries.[63]

The next year, in 1946, a mere four cases were reported.[64]

Carnovsky's tenure as IFC chair ended in the summer of 1945, when he was replaced by Alice G. Higgins. Higgins continued to push for a more active role by the IFC, and under her leadership the IFC became increasingly outspoken. Like her predecessor, Higgins felt the Library Bill of Rights of 1939 had failed to make much of an impression on librarians as a whole. To help remedy this situation, she continually pressed the issue and urged the rest of the librarian profession to join the IFC in devoting more attention to acts of censorship in libraries.[65]

By 1947, others began to join her. The library literature at the time reflected a growing concern among librarians that censorship issues were not being dealt with in an effective manner. However, some librarians took steps to put out the fire before it even began. In Massachusetts for instance, Hiller C. Wellman pressed for self-censorship by authors and publishers in order to preemptively suppress a public outcry against certain books. His reasoning involved an understandable desire "to avoid the increase in legal

censorship" and "to emphasize the importance of decency and good taste," but it also precisely reflected Carnovsky's criticism in 1945. In essence, Wellman was saying "don't write bad stuff, and librarians won't be forced to censor it" (not his words). Flawed as his reasoning was may have been (for in truth he was simply adopting the role of the "all-knowing" censor and putting a slightly nicer face on it), he had the support of many librarians behind him. The Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) even adopted a version of Wellman's statement.[66] The MLA statement reflected a growing trend among the profession. Censorship was clearly becoming a hotter topic of discussion among librarians, it was not going to simply disappear, librarians wanted a practical way to deal with the issue, and the ALA *still* lacked a clear and committed policy regarding the issue. The 1939 Library Bill of Rights and the creation of the IFC were important steps, but they still lacked a certain authority to backup statements against censorship. Things were changing however, and by 1948, the time would be ripe to seriously reexamine the issue and establish a profession-wide consensus on dealing with it.

Revising the ALA's Stance on Intellectual Freedom

In early 1948, Higgins wrote Milam to criticize the IFC midwinter report for being "so weak and routine." Librarians, she felt, were "not yet ready to adopt a resolution which will have deep meaning for the profession and influence its practices." She felt the original Library Bill of Rights had "failed to make an impression upon librarians." Librarians had to be made more aware "of how vital the maintenance of civil liberties is to them professionally." Higgins urged the ALA to take up the issue at the next annual conference. However, she did not wish to simply repeat the process of 1939.

There had to be a deeper change among librarians as a whole before the profession could be expected to stand united against unjust censorship efforts. Education was a key component to her plan, as she believed that neither the ALA nor the professional library schools had devoted enough time stressing the importance of intellectual freedom. Furthermore, as Louise Robbins points out, librarians were also American citizens who could easily be caught up in the growing Cold War paranoia, preferring a sense of security over one's own civil liberties.[67]

Before the Midwinter Conference, however, Higgins resigned from her position, citing personal reasons involving time and money. Replacing her was David K. Berninghausen, a man who had developed a firm commitment to intellectual freedom dating back to his education at the Columbia University School of Library Service. Berninghausen had briefly studied under Helen E. Haines, an early advocate and defender of intellectual freedom. She was responsible for having organized the California Intellectual Freedom Committee and was behind the fight of California's ban of *Building America*, a social studies textbook that had been labeled "un-American." Haines had been an early critic of the Library Bill of Rights, believing the ALA could and should do more to uphold the principles of intellectual freedom, and was extremely critical of the federal government's attempts to censor communist and other un-American texts. This influence on Berninghausen would help guide the IFC and the ALA through several upcoming storms and cause the organization to refocus its mission as stated in the original Library Bill of Rights.[68]

Under the new leadership of Berninghausen, the IFC was further poised to take on censorship challenges. Others were speaking up as well. In an *ALA Bulletin* guest

editorial, Ralph Ellsworth urged librarians to resist outside efforts to control the content within libraries. "Assaults on intellectual freedom," he stated, "…are as old as man." The current situation involving fear of subversive Communist elements was merely the latest example in a long line of abuses that often occurred "when man is about to take some new forward looking step in self-improvement or after some new idea has disturbed man's habitual complacency." In a statement that certainly should have made Higgins proud, he equated the public library tradition with the democratic heritage handed down by the founding fathers. "We can and should resist, individually and collectively through the ALA by means of public statements, the pressure of those who say you may not buy this, you must destroy this, you may not circulate this, all interpreted in light of sound professional experience," he continued. However, the fight for intellectual freedom, he argued, should not be limited to libraries. He urged librarians to take up the cause universally and not wait for censorship attacks to hit their own library. "I hope we will not stand like chickens, waiting for our turn on the block."[69]

Berninghausen echoed these sentiments in a May *ALA Bulletin* editorial in which he contended that free inquiry is an essential aspect of any free society. "In a democracy this responsibility for critical thinking, especially about one's own government, is a fundamental necessity," he wrote. Berninghausen declared that librarians had three choices of action they could take regarding attempts to limit intellectual freedom. They could sit out and hope for the best, they could personally write their Congressmen and President and hope their voice would be heard, or they could take action themselves and make the issue the prominent focus of the upcoming annual conference in Atlantic City,

Berninghausen urged the latter, thus setting the stage for what would become an extremely important conference in the ALA's history. [70]

1948 Atlantic City Conference and the Library Bill of Rights

As one might suspect based on the increasingly outspokenness of librarians against censorship, the IFC dominated the overall agenda of the 1948 Annual Conference. Overall, the committee brought three items before the ALA council to discuss: (1) a revision of the Library Bill of Rights; (2) the creation of state committees to monitor and investigate censorship activities; (3) and a resolution protesting the Loyalty Oath programs.[71]

On June 15, during the Second General Session of the conference, Robert D. Leigh gave a speech in which he argued that the librarian profession should not allow individual "martyrs" to confront "pressure-group censorship" but should act as a whole to confront the problem. In his speech, he stated:

> The more prudent tradition is the one I observe in my visits – of bowing quickly to pressures, and of retiring questionable books to the inner sanctum of the librarian's office, where they remain, to save the librarian's conscience against burning them, and to avoid any trouble. What I suggest for consideration is not lonely individual heroism, but the development of group policy, solidarity, and action in this matter of resisting improper pressures.[72]

It was with this line of thinking that Berninghausen urged the ALA council to revise the original Library Bill of Rights to "clearly place libraries in the position of being aggressive defenders of the right to freedom of research and inquiry." The decision to do so required little discussion by the ALA Council, having already heard numerous arguments in favor of doing so. As a result, it passed easily.[73]

There were several prominent changes in the 1948 revision. Article I, which addressed the issue of material selection, was prefaced with an opening phrase that stated,

"As a responsibility of library service," a move that helped link the issue of intellectual freedom with the process of selecting materials and emphasized the responsibility of all librarians to do so. Furthermore, the 1939 reference regarding the use of public funds for the purchase of library materials was deleted in order to include *all* materials in the library, not just those that were purchased for the collection. Additionally, the 1939 version stated that the selection process should not be influenced by the race, nationality, political, or religious views of an author. In 1948, this became more explicit, stating that "in no case" whatsoever should materials be excluded based on these characteristics.[74] Most importantly, two entirely new articles were added to address the issue of censorship and the methods of challenging such efforts. Article III stated, "Censorship of books…must be challenged by libraries in maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment through the printed word." Article IV urged "the cooperation of allied groups in the fields of science, of education, and of book publishing in resisting all abridgement of the free access to ideas and full freedom of expression…."

Opposition to this new version was nonexistent among the members of the ALA Council, who proceeded to adopt the revisions on June 18.[75] With the 1948 Library Bill of Rights, the ALA had finally addressed the numerous concerns that had been espoused by numerous librarians and intellectual freedom advocates since the original Library Bill of Rights in 1939. This move garnered national attention and was praised across the nation. *The New York Times* printed the revised Library Bill of Rights in its entirety and the *New York Herald Tribune* praised the ALA's "courageous leadership in resisting the negation and futility of censorship" while urging others to follow in the ALA's footsteps.[76]

However, as with the 1939 Library Bill of Rights, the revised version was determined to be an ineffective piece of paper without some form of organizational enforcement to back it up. As a result, the IFC called for the creation of state committees to monitor and investigate incidents of censorship. However, getting these individual state associations to create these committees proved to be rather difficult. By March 1949, only twenty-eight states committees were formed (including the District of Columbia).[77] Nevertheless, the new bill of rights marked a dramatic step for the ALA in its effort to promote and defend intellectual freedom.

The Nation Public School Banning

Following the adoption of the 1948 Library Bill of Rights, there were several immediate challenges to the ALA's stance on intellectual freedom. One of these challenges which garnered a good bit of press within the library literature and the national media at the time involved *The Nation*, a politically focused journal of opinion that was consistently aligned to the left of the political spectrum. This description alone was enough to cause the *Nation* to be viewed with suspicion, but when a series of articles by Paul Blanshard were deemed to be anti-Catholic, the New York City Board of Education banned the publication from all NYC public schools. The reasoning for doing so was laid out by William Jansen, Superintendent of Schools. In an issued statement, Jansen declared, "If a magazine has an objectionable article, that one issue is not circulated in the schools; if a series of articles are objectionable, the magazine is no longer ordered." The previous January, Newark, NJ public schools had already taken action by banning the publication from its schools for similar reasons. The decision to do so was immediately protested by the American Civil Liberties Union, the Public Education

Association, the United Parents Associations, and the American Jewish Congress.[78] The ALA would soon join them.

Berninghausen and ALA President E. W. McDiarmid debated about how the IFC should respond. On 13 July 1948, Berninghausen attended a hearing on the matter that was held in the school superintendent's office. Berninghausen adamantly opposed the ban, stating that such a ban was "a threat to the right to disseminate information…" Later that fall, ALA Interim Executive Secretary Harold Brigham summarized the ALA's stance on the issue with the following statement: "We protest the ban of the *Nation* from the libraries of the New York City schools as an act that is a threat to the freedom of expression and contrary to the Library Bill of Rights and the United States Bill of Rights. We hope that the ban will be lifted." Despite these efforts by the ALA and others to lift the ban, the New York City school system stood its ground. In fact, the *Nation* remained on the list of banned publications until 1957. Nevertheless, despite its lack of success, the *Nation* incident proved to be a good test case to see how the ALA would respond to censorship challenges by aligning itself with other organizations in support of intellectual freedom. This incident would help lay the groundwork for future incidents in the near future and further contributed to the ALA's resolve to confront public censors.[79]

Opposition to Loyalty Oaths

Around the same time that idea of intellectual freedom was solidifying itself as a cornerstone of the ALA's philosophy, leading up to the 1948 Annual Conference, President Truman provided another issue that forced the ALA to respond. On March 21, 1947, Truman issued Executive Order 9835. This executive order was designed to ensure the loyalty of all federal executive employees to the United States and its system of

government; however it soon began to be applied in other areas of the government such as the Library of Congress, and eventually found its way into the realm of public librarianship.[80]

Although the Library of Congress (LC) was not initially required to participate in the Loyalty Oath program, it did so largely out of fear of drawing the ire of suspicious Congressmen and being consequently being accused of harboring Communists. Many Republicans had been suspicious of the LC during Franklin Roosevelt's presidency because the Librarian of Congress, Archibald MacLeish, had been an ardent supporter of Roosevelt and the New Deal programs. Conservatives also viewed the LC as a potential haven for Communist infiltrators. As a result, current Librarian of Congress Luther Evans took steps to quell these accusations by voluntarily submitting to the loyalty check program.[81]

The Library of Congress's decision drew intense criticism from the ALA, which expressed grave concerns that such loyalty checks could later be applied to other institutions not affiliated with the federal government. Fears surrounding the implications for public librarians were realized in August 1947 in Los Angeles with creation of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors' Loyalty Check Committee. The L.A. County Public Library fell under its jurisdiction, and as a result public librarians were subjected to a loyalty oath. The employee loyalty check included swearing that they had never "been a member of, or directly or indirectly supported" any organization on a list of 141 organizations. The library's director, John Henderson, did not force his employees to submit to the check, and when the oath was submitted to all county employees in February 1948, 19 librarians refused to sign it. The Los Angeles County

Board of Supervisors was not pleased with this action, and it led the board to investigate Henderson personally. He later accused of harboring, in the word of one commissioner, "liberal thoughts that we don't like in the mid of the head of our library," which resulted in a serious threat to his employment.[82] These actions helped attract the attention of the ALA and IFC, and they contributed to the third item of discussion (loyalty oaths) before the ALA Council at the 1948 Annual Conference.[83]

The loyalty oath issue did not attract as strong support as the Library Bill of Rights however. Many librarians feared that if the ALA publicly opposed such measures, the organization itself would be added to the list of subversive organizations. Despite these differences in opinion, however, the loyalty oath resolution passed 32 to 23. The issue, however, was far from over. Berninghausen in particular was concerned that the resolution's wording severely weakened the IFC's position to oppose these checks. The wording of the initial resolution read: "The Council of the American Library Association…record[s] its unqualified condemnation of the *abuse* of loyalty investigations in libraries…" Berninghausen felt this wording could lead to great confusion, since those who initiated such investigations rarely viewed their own behavior as an "abuse." As a result, this wording was changed at the 1949 Mid-winter conference to "use," thus clarifying and strengthening the ALA's own position.[84]

Still, the issue did not go away. Many librarians felt the ALA resolution had been hastily passed without full consideration of the circumstances surrounding the loyalty oaths. As a result, the IFC was led to take the issue up again at the 1950 annual conference. After considerable debate, the new resolution passed unanimously. Members of the council were able to reach a compromise which softened the initial

blanket condemnation of loyalty checks.[85] The new resolution focused on specific aspects of the loyalty oaths, protesting those programs "which inquire into a library employee's thoughts, reading matter, associates, or membership in organizations, unless a particular person's definite actions warrant such investigation." In the event of a warranted investigation, the statement further condemned those "which permit the discharge of an individual without a fair hearing."[86] This final resolution proved to be an acceptable compromise between opposing sides, and it marked one more step by the ALA in its evolving fight to protect and preserve free thought within the library.

Preparation for Future Challenges

The 1940s had certainly served as an extremely important decade for the ALA and the development of intellectual freedom. By the decade's close, the IFC had gained a considerable amount of influence on a national level, especially when compared to its initial standing before WWII. For the most part the various challenges to intellectual freedom had helped galvanize the profession during confrontations with censorship proponents. By 1950, intellectual freedom had clearly solidified itself as one of the profession's defining principles. Writing in the November 1949 *ALA Bulletin*, ALA President McDiarmid stated that American librarians must, "Stand firm and strong for intellectual freedom and devote our whole-hearted energies to its preservation." McDiarmid cautioned librarians to not be shortsighted by keeping their focus within American libraries.

> Intellectual freedom is one of those intangible objectives that some might criticize as being impractical and of little immediate value to libraries and librarianship. Perhaps this is true or perhaps some people cannot see how fundamental it is to librarianship. We must face that problem and try to meet it as best we can, but we must not permit any such feelings to make us waver for one moment in our vigorous support of intellectual freedom throughout the world."

The next decade would bring such challenges to intellectual freedom literally “throughout the world.” The Cold War was still in its initial phases, and as a result the anti-communist fervor that had begun to sweep the nation after WWII continued to be an increasingly pervasive issue that would continue to affect the ALA in its defense of intellectual freedom.

IV

McCarthy, the ALA, and the Investigation of Overseas Libraries

Before Edward R. Murrow's landmark *See It Now* documentary aired on CBS in 1954, attacking,[87] before Army attorney general Joseph Welch's infamous retort during the 1954 Army-McCarthy Hearings ("Have you no sense of decency, sir, at long last? Have you left no sense of decency?"),[88] and before the mainstream press in general began to seriously question the motives behind 'McCarthyism,' the American Library Association was on the front lines defending intellectual freedom in the heat of the McCarthy era. Although the ALA was adamantly opposed to the explicit propaganda activities that had been transferred to the overseas libraries, the organization had come to accept the importance of creating "a full and fair picture of American life and of the aims and policies of the United States government," in the words of Truman.[89] Under Truman's "Campaign of Truth," it became official policy of the overseas libraries to collect books that made attempts to create a balanced book collection, including the words of known Communist authors (many of whom had recanted their Communist beliefs and were staunch anti-Communists). However, in 1953, with a new Republican in the White House and a Republican controlled Senate, Senator Joseph McCarthy was presented with an opportunity few ardent anti-Communists could refuse. Since 1950 McCarthy had been going after the so-called Communist infiltration of the State

Department. When he became head of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, he was suddenly thrust into a position of importance which he would immediately begin to use to "out" all Communists and Communist sympathizers, as well as for his own personal media exposure.

The Investigations Begin

Before McCarthy began his series of hearings in February 1953, there had already been serious debate within Congress and the State Department over the future of these programs. Newly appointed Secretary of State John Foster Dulles wanted the information programs completely removed from the State Department, a sentiment that was later echoed by Iowa Republican Bourke Hickenlooper in a Senate Investigation on the subject. Conversely, a separate White House investigation led by Abbot Washburn and Henry Loomis proposed the opposite, which would keep the IIA under the State Department while giving the program independent bureaucratic status. Before a decision could be arrived at, however, McCarthy's investigation of these operations caused the programs to grind to a virtual halt and threatened their very existence.[90]

McCarthy began investigating the overseas information programs largely out a desire to attract national media attention to his anti-Communist endeavors.[91] These hearings offered the Senator his first opportunity to appear publicly on television on a regular basis.[92] McCarthy would begin his subcommittee investigations by targeting the Voice of America radio program, and from this investigation McCarthy would soon shift his focus to the overseas libraries' book collections.

Early on, McCarthy relied on insider information from a group of "friends" within the International Information Agency (IIA). Calling themselves the "Loyal American

Underground," these inside informants were largely guided by their own zealous anti-Communist sentiments. On 3 February, in response to the pressure from this investigation, the State Department issued an internal revision of its book collection policy that had been in effect since the beginning of the Campaign of Truth. Authored by several prominent individuals within the library profession, including 1953 ALA President Robert B. Downs and Harvard Libraries director Keyes Metcalf, this new directive stated:

> The reputation of an author affects the active utility of the material. If he is widely and favorably known abroad as a champion of democratic causes, his creditability and utility may be enhanced. Similarly, if – like Howard Fast – he is known as a Soviet-endorsed author, materials favorable to the United States in some of his works may thereby be given a special creditability among selected key audiences.[93]

Many individuals, of course, felt that *any* sense of balance in the libraries' collections was an automatic capitulation to the Communists. The directive was promptly leaked to McCarthy, who then went on national television to lambaste the State Department for its decision to include "subversive" books overseas. As a result of this directive, Howard Fast was called before the subcommittee to testify on 18 February. During Fast's testimony McCarthy repeatedly berated the author, and Fast refused to answer many of McCarthy's questions by pleading the Fifth Amendment (an act that would continually repeat itself with future witnesses).[94]

As a result of Fast's appearance before the Subcommittee, the State Department issued a new directive titled "Information Guide 272." This new directive banned all book, music, and paintings by "controversial persons, Communists, fellow travelers, et cetera" from all overseas information centers and ordered the immediate removal of all publications that fit this description. A subsequent investigation of the libraries' book

collections led to a charge that 30,000 "Communist" volumes were present overseas, a number that had been drawn from individual titles from 418 authors.[95] This vague directive set off a sea of confusion within the libraries overseas. Chaos ensued as librarians were forced to decide what constituted a "controversial person," who a "fellow traveler" was, and what "et cetera" meant with very little guidance from lawmakers in Washington, D.C. While some librarians reacted slowly at first, waiting for a clarification of the terms before they attempted to make a practical policy, others acted with hastiness and indiscretion. Usually volumes that were removed were placed in storage to await further instruction, but in several instances books were actually burned. Although there were only eleven titles destroyed in manner, the incidents caused a public outcry back in the States.[96] In early April, chief counsel Roy Cohn and subcommittee consultant David Schine embarked on a seventeen day trip across Europe to assess the progress being made in ridding the libraries of Communist materials. Their presence disturbed many librarians and overseas staff members and generated a great deal of negative press overseas. As Cohn and Schine entered one site, a librarian reportedly pocketed a Dashiell Hammett as they went about their inspection.[97] Librarians had certainly grown overly paranoid as a result of this investigation, but they would soon find a more focused and committed to protecting intellectual freedom overseas.

The Westchester Conference and *The Freedom to Read*

As the Subcommittee's focus shifted from the Voice of America to the overseas libraries hearings, which began 24 March and continued for the next four months, the ALA and IFC began to consider how to respond. Prior to McCarthy's investigations, IFC Chairman William S. Dix had called for an "off-the-record" conference to "give some

guidance to librarians in defending their basic principles." Dix believed the country was headed down the wrong path regarding intellectual freedom, so he pushed for a conference that would help incite librarians to stand up. He foresaw challenges arising in the near future, and warned of an "era of book burning such as we have never seen before." The IFC contacted the American Book Publishers Council (ABPC), and a conference was arranged to take place May 2 and 3 at the Westchester Country Club in Rye, New York. Over the course of these two days, a group of twenty-five librarians, publishers, and citizens met, and from these meetings emerged a document that would become known as *The Freedom to Read*.[98] Later in May, as repeated witnesses continued to refuse to answer McCarthy's questions based on their Fifth Amendment rights, it was discovered that a directive to the overseas libraries had ordered the removal of all works by any author or individual who refused to testify. This only furthered the urgency under which *The Freedom to Read* was first composed and then distributed.[99]

The effect of the McCarthy investigations could immediately be felt with *The Freedom to Read'*s opening statement: "The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is under attack." Within the statement, however, was recognition of current attempts to pressure and influence films, TV, the radio, and the press. "The problem is not only one of actual censorship," the statement read. "The shadow of fear cast by these pressure leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy." The statement concluded with seven propositions to affirm a commitment to intellectual freedom by librarians and publishers:

(1) It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

(2) Publishers and librarians do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as the sole standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

(3) It is contratry to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book solely on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

(4) The present laws dealing with obscenity should be vigorously enforced. Beyond that, there is no place in our society for extra-legal efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

(5) It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

(6) It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

(7) It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, bookmen can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad ideas is a good one.[100]

After the Westchester Conference ended, Dan Lacy (who had recently left his position with the Library of Congress to join the ABPC) and IFC Chairman William Dix worked on refining the "Freedom to Read" statement for the upcoming ALA Annual Conference in Los Angeles.[101] With the Westchester Conference coinciding with McCarthy's hearings on the overseas information programs, the issue of intellectual freedom was as hot and relevant as it had ever been within the library profession. As the

ALA was preparing to take the issue up in full force during its upcoming annual conference in late July, President Eisenhower caused a national stir in the press when he gave the commencement address at Dartmouth College. During his speech, Eisenhower remarked:

> Don't join the book burners…Don't think you are going to conceal faults by concealing evidence that they ever existed. Don't be afraid to go in your library and read every book, as long as that document does not offend our own ideas of decency. That should be the only censorship. How will we defeat communism unless we know what it is, and what it teaches, and why does it have such an appeal for men, why are so many people swearing allegiance to it?[102]

Eisenhower's remarks initially set off a firestorm in the press. Given the fact that they coincided with McCarthy's investigation of overseas libraries, many took his words as a sign that Eisenhower (who had largely remained silent on the recent investigations) was attempting to criticize and distance himself from McCarthy. President Eisenhower, however, was quick to clarify his remarks during a press conference three days later. During this press conference, Eisenhower made it clear that he was not as open to all books being in the overseas collections. The subject remarks had primarily been focused on the issue of domestic censorship, something he adamantly opposed. However, when it came to Communist books overseas, Eisenhower was quick to clarify that he did not support the dissemination of materials which advocated the overthrow of the American government and/or the destruction of America's capitalist society.[103] As discussion over Eisenhower's remarks and subsequent partial retraction swirled around the country, the ALA prepared to meet for what would be an extremely important, and rather groundbreaking, annual conference in Los Angeles.

1953 ALA Conference, *Freedom to Read*, and the "Overseas Library Statement"

As the ALA was gathering in Los Angeles for its annual conference, the book collection controversy was still making national headlines. With witnesses continuing to refuse to testify before McCarthy's subcommittee, the list of banned books overseas grew to include sixteen additional authors who were banned as a result of these hearings. Authors included such individuals as Howard Fast, Earl Browder, Helen Goldfrank, Dashiell Hammett, and in some instances the works of Langston Hughes. In late June the *New York Times* reported these actions and revealed the "clearing" process that books now had to go through if they were going to be included in the libraries abroad. When it came out that Mark Twain's works had to be cleared before they could be circulated overseas, it highlighted the rather excessive hysteria over subversive titles that was now controlling book selection process.[104]

The ALA conference convened on June 21 in Los Angeles. On the 22nd, newly appointed ALA President Robert B. Downs gave the presidential "stocktaking" address. Downs opened his address with an attack on 'McCarthyism'. Describing it as a "virulent disease," Downs warned his audience that the current book hysteria, which was threatening the very foundations of the profession, was also "infecting nearly every segment of our governmental structure from nation down to local levels…Stringent censorship directives, issued in the atmosphere of fear, hysteria, and repression now prevailing in Washington, threaten to place the entire information library program in jeopardy." As a result, he called on every ALA member, all 21,000, to "stand firm" in the face of these challenges.[105] Following Downs's speech, *The Freedom to Read* statement was distributed the ALA members and council for its official adoption.

Proponents of the statement had little to fear during this conference, for *The Freedom to Read* was adopted "overwhelmingly by a shouting and enthusiastic vote" on June 25th.

The 25th also saw the adoption of the ALA's "Overseas Library Statement." While the federal government had for years now been attempting distance the principles of American librarianship from those being employed overseas, the ALA continued to view the overseas libraries controversy from the perspective of American librarianship. Since the end of WWII the ALA had increasingly fought for the intellectual and cultural exchange in these libraries, and this line of thought continued in full force throughout the ALA conference.[106] Largely composed by Dan Lacy, the "Overseas Library Statement" was the culmination of events that had been leading up to the conference. The statement began by declaring, "The American Library Association has been intimately associated with the overseas library program of the United States Government from its initiation." The statement acknowledged the importance of libraries overseas as "effective weapons…in the battle to preserve free men and free minds from the enslavement of the Communist political and intellectual tyranny." However, the statement stressed that the effectiveness of these programs "depended on the conviction among foreign users" that the overseas libraries were "a free and open source of truth…" As a result, "the confused and fearful response of the State Department" to charges of subversive books in the libraries' collections had "seriously damaged the effectiveness of the program." The statement closed with four requirements if the overseas information programs were to remain effective:

(1) The libraries must express in themselves and their services the ideas of freedom for which they speak.

(2) They must provide a service of uncompromising integrity. Their usefulness to the United States rests on the assurance of their users that they are places in which to learn the truth.

(3) The Information Administration must be free to use in its libraries what books soever its responsible professional judgment determines are necessary or useful to the provision of such a service. To deny itself the tools it needs to serve the United States fro irrelevant reasons of the past associations of authors and in fear of domestic criticism is indefensible.

(4) Though no one could justify or would seek to justify the use of the overseas libraries to disseminate material harmful to the United States, it is unworkable to abandon the simple criterion of whether a book is useful to the purpose of ht libraries and to substitute elaborate, irrelevant, and offensive schemes of "clearance" of authors.[107]

Given the intensity with which the McCarthy hearings had gone after the overseas libraries, the actions by the ALA the annual conference were certainly bold. They also garnered considerable praise in the national press. *The New York Times* printed the text of *The Freedom to Read* in its entirety, as did the *Washington Post, Christian Science Monitor, Baltimore Sun,* and *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot.*[108] Additionally, the ALA appeared to have the support of President Eisenhower, who applauded the ALA's firm stance against censorship in a letter to President Downs that was read in its entirety to the librarians attending the conference. "Our librarians serve the precious liberties of our nation: freedom of inquiry, freedom of the spoken and the written word, freedom of exchange of ideas," wrote Eisenhower. "Any who act as if freedom's defenses are to be found in suppression and suspicion and fear confess a doctrine that is alien to America."[109]

Eisenhower's letter, along with the supportive newspaper accounts across the nation, was seen as a reaffirmation of the ALA recent actions. As a result, the ALA saw an opportunity to take advantage of the positive press. In a September 1953 editorial in

ALA Bulletin, Ransom Richardson urged librarians to use the moment to further promote the tenants of intellectual freedom. "The evidence indicates that a great many people have suddenly realized for the first time what the library stands for and how much it means to them…Suddenly they are aware of the library, like an old star newly fanned to brightness in the sky," he wrote.

> No one can afford to wait. Now is the time for libraries and library associations to put into action widespread, hard-hitting programs. Now is the time for the individual librarian, in city and crossroad, to realize that in his own person he is truly a power potential, a public relations program, the son of a great heritage. The public is stirring into wakefulness; the librarians have the initiative; the time is now.[110]

The position the ALA found itself in at this time was in stark contrast to its position before WWII. Society had certainly changed over the last fifteen years, as had American librarianship. Had the ALA not responded as it did during this time to intellectual freedom challenges at home and abroad, it is quite possible that this "time" described by Richardson may never have occurred when it did.

Conclusion

Writing in the *Wilson Library Bulletin* in 1953, Lester Asheim sought to differentiate between the *selection* and *censorship* of books. In what has become one of the classic pieces on censorship in libraries, Asheim wrote: "Selection seeks to protect the right of the reader to read; censorship seeks to protect – not the right – but the reader himself from the fancied effects of his reading. The selector has faith in the intelligence of the reader; the censor has faith only in his own."[111] In light of recent events at the time of Asheim's writing, his statement could not have rung more true. Whether it was the banning of *The Nation* in a high school library or a Howard Fast novel in an overseas library, by 1953 the ALA had repeatedly demonstrated its "faith in the intelligence" of individuals to make up their own mind when it came to their choices in reading material.

In looking at the changes within the ALA and the US Government post-WWII, it can be concluded that the confrontation between the two involving the overseas libraries in 1953 was virtually inevitable. After WWII, both groups increasingly found themselves on opposing sides of the intellectual freedom fence. While the ALA had opposed the use of libraries as tools for American propaganda before WWII, there was not a commitment to defend this ideal throughout the profession as a whole. However, as the brief peace following WWII gave way to the Cold War, acts of censorship within the US galvanized the ALA and IFC to fight against these acts of censorship. The profession had to find its way at home before it could truly have an impact outside of the US. Once this foundation

was firmly established, the ALA began to vocalize its opposition to the government's attempts to consciously manipulate public opinion overseas.

With the library profession, what had begun as a vague and rather weak Library Bill of Rights statement in 1939 had, by the time of the McCarthy hearings, become a cornerstone of the profession. Perhaps one of the most important and indelible aspects of this period in library history was the fact that the ALA as a whole, not just a few select individuals, publicly stood in opposition at a time when doing so could have dire consequences to one's own livelihood. Challenges to intellectual freedom certainly continued to arise after the Library Bill of Rights, *The Freedom to Read*, and the "Overseas Library Statement," but thanks to the diligent efforts of the ALA and IFC during this period, there was a commitment to intellectual freedom that had did not exist in years past. As a result, librarianship today owes much to the efforts of the ALA and IFC, for without this foundation the profession as a whole would be a much weaker institution for free thought. "If we are to gain the esteem we seek for our profession, we must be willing to accept the difficult obligations which those ideals imply," wrote Asheim. As a result of events during this span of library history, the library profession became more firmly committed and able to fulfill such obligations, and thus paved the way for future defense of intellectual freedom.

Notes

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[3] Ibid., 12.

[4] Minnie Rubin, "The Keeney Case," *Wilson Library Bulletin* 12 (September 1937), 43.

[5] Judith F. Krug, "ALA and Intellectual Freedom: A Historical Overview," *Intellectual Freedom Manual* 6th ed. (Chicago: American Library Association, 2002), 6.

[6] Robbins, 13.

[7] Krug, 7.

[8] Robbins, 13.

[9] Krug, 61.

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[24] Thomison, 110-111.

[25] Wieder and Campbell, 108.

[26] Kraske 6, 16.

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[28] Héctor J. Maymí-Sugrañes, "The American Library Association in Latin America: American Librarianship as a 'Modern' Model during the Good Neighbour Policy Era," *Libraries and Culture* 37 (no. 4, Fall 2002), 309, 310-311.

[29] Kraske, 8.

[30] Wilson P. Dizard, Jr., *Inventing Public Diplomacy: The Story of the U.S. Information Agency* (Boulder, CO: Lunne Rienner Publishers, 2004), 17.

[31] Thomas Howell, "The Writer's War Board: U.S. Domestic Propaganda in World War II," *The Historian* 59 (4) 1997, p. 796.

[32] Wilson P. Dizard Jr., *Strategy of Truth: the Story of the U.S. Information Service* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1961), 34, 36.

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[34] Dizard, *Inventing Public Diplomacy*, 38-39.

[35] Mary Niles Maack, "Books and Libraries as Instruments of Cultural Diplomacy in Francophone Africa during the Cold War," *Libraries and Culture* 36 (No. 1, Winter 2001), 65.

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[38] Ibid., 213.

[39] Ibid., 215.

[40] Ibid, 215-216, 218.

[41] Maymí-Sugrañes, 311, 314.

[42] Héctor J. Maymí-Sugrañes, "The American Library Association in Latin America: American Librarianship as a 'Modern' Model during the Good Neighbour Policy Era," *Libraries and Culture* 37 (no. 4, Fall 2002), 311, 314.

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[44] David F. Krugler, "'If Peace is to Prevail:' Karl E. Mundt and America's International Information and Education Programs, 1943-1953," *South Dakota History* 31 (Spring 2001), 58.

[45] Shawn J. Parry-Giles, *The Rhetorical Presidency, Propaganda, and the Cold War, 1945-1955* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 12; Krugler, 68.

[46] Dizard, *Inventing Public Diplomacy*, 45-46 ; Krugler, 69 ; Parry-Giles, 12-13 ; "United States Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1948," Public Law 402, 80th Congress, 2nd Session, 27 January 1948.

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[94] Reeves, 479.

[95] Reeves, 480.

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[100] "The Freedom to Read," *ALA Bulletin* 47 (November 1953), 481-483.

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