

On motion by Alice Ihrig, seconded by Alphonse Trezza, it was

VOTED, That the ALA Council adopts CD #49: RESOLUTION ON GAY RIGHTS - Exhibit 13, CD #55: RESOLUTION ON PREJUDICE, STEREOTYPING AND DISCRIMINATION - Exhibit 18, CD #63 & MD #14: RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE THE LEROY C. MERRITT HUMANITARIAN FUND IN THE ALA HANDBOOK OF ORGANIZATION AND WITH MEMBERSHIP SOLICITATIONS - Exhibit 19, MD #8: RESOLUTION ON ETHNIC GROUPS AND THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE - Exhibit 20, and MD #12: COMMENDATION TO BOOKLIST FOR ITS EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF FEMINIST PRESS MATERIALS - Exhibit 21.

The original motion included CD #49: Resolution on Equal Access to Information, but was omitted by Council's request (see pp 9-10).

THE SPEAKER - Exhibit 22. E. J. Josey, with Suzanne LeBarron's second moved adoption of CD #61 (Exhibit 22(a)) and stated that the Resolution which seeks the withdrawal of ALA's name from the film, "THE SPEAKER..." speaks to a wide variety of the concerns of the majority of the black members of the Association and a large number of other members of ALA. In view of the "extended and detailed and balanced membership debate this morning," Richard Darling moved with Ruth Tighe's second, and Council VOTED TO LIMIT DEBATE TO THIRTY MINUTES. Grace Slocum, as a member of the Intellectual Freedom Committee pointed out that a majority of the Committee supports both the method by which the film was produced as well as the end product and urged Council to vote against the Resolution; later in the discussion she stated the charge of the Committee to its subcommittee, "to produce a film that would provoke discussion and add to the enlightenment in matters of the First Amendment." Suzanne LeBarron reminded Council of the strong feelings on both sides of the issue expressed in Membership and the close vote which defeated the Membership Resolution; she asked Council to remember it was not addressing suppression but the question of removing the Association's name from the film. Council's attention was brought to "THE SPEAKER: A Minority's Minority Assessment" by Ella G. Yates who urged that ALA keep to its endorsement and direct IFC to solicit questions and statements from the Black Caucus which are indigenous to the concerns and sensitivity of all Black members and the membership as a whole for incorporation into the discussion guide; also to devise an introductory statement for insertion in the films that have already been issued and subsequent prints to clarify the purpose of the film in terms of its utilization for discussion and teaching purposes (Exhibit 22(b)).

Charles Bunge moved, with an unidentified second, to amend by substituting for Exhibit 22(a), Membership Resolution #2 (Exhibit 22(c)), with the insertion of, "Whereas in the portrayal of the races, the characterization of the Black is negative and stereotyped," from the Council Resolution (22(a)). Ruth Tighe and Richard Buck did not think the whereases are accurate reflections of the problems Council was concerned about and Ms. Tighe suggested waiving the Rules in order to incorporate the points made by Ms. Yates. The motion to substitute was DEFEATED.

Jean-Anne South noted passage by Council at the 1976 Annual Conference of the Resolution on Racism and Sexism with the charge to ALA units to implement a program of awareness of racism and sexism which would be not only for ALA but

the public at large, and submitted that "The Speaker has proved that it has addressed the issue of racism and has brought about an awareness among the membership and Council on the issues of racism, and the very sensitive nature of the problem."

Edward Howard, member of the Council Committee on Publishing, pointed out that the Committee is charged with the control of the ALA imprint but was not involved in this early effort at producing a film and therefore did not control the imprint. (The fact sheet on the production of the film is attached as Exhibit 22(d))

At the stipulated time limit, President Elect Moon called the vote, and the motion to adopt Exhibit 22(a) was DEFEATED.

Mr. Josey asked a point of personal privilege to state, "This Association twice today in the Membership Meeting and in the Council has shown serious disregard for the feelings and concern of an overwhelming majority of its Black members. I am certain that all of us who are Black will seriously question your genuine concern about our humanity if you continue to support that film."

With Mr. Darling's assurance that his suggested thirty minute time limit on the resolutions then before the house did not apply to further steps to remedy the dilemma, on motion by Carolyn Coughlin, Council VOTED to waive the twenty-four hour Rule in order to consider Ella G. Yates' remarks in the form of a motion. Council also, on motion by Ruth Tighe, waived the Rules and moved consideration of the new resolution up on the agenda, whereupon Ms. Yates moved with Ms. Tighe's second, that

WHEREAS, strong concerns have been evinced over the racial insensitivity in the film, "The Speaker" and

WHEREAS, the membership's vote for ALA's continued endorsement of the film was marginal, and

WHEREAS, many who voted for continued endorsement registered concern over the lack of clarification surrounding the purpose of the film and its usage, and

WHEREAS, the concerns against endorsement bear addressing, Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That (1) Council direct the OIF and the IFC to solicit and accept questions and statements from the Black Caucus which are indigenous to the concerns and sensitivity of all Black members of the Association and membership body as a whole, for incorporation in the Discussion Guide which accompanies the film, or serves as a supplement to the Discussion Guide, with the decision on format left to the Black Caucus for inclusion or as a separate entity. And (2) Devise an introductory statement insert for the films issued which will clarify the purpose of the film in terms of its utilization for discussion and teaching purposes without

intention to offend any racial or ethnic group. This wording submitted to the Black Caucus and Executive Board for unanimous adoption before the print is finalized for insertion in films already distributed and all future prints issued. The introducer should be a person who commands the national respect of both minority and majority Americans.

President Jones reported to Council her deep concerns over the effect upon the membership in terms of trust across any kind of lines of race as a result of the film and the discussions held during the week. It was her hope to be able to prepare a thoughtful article for publication in the near future.

Questions were raised as to whether the resolution's objectives can be implemented in terms of altering the film and in other areas which could not then be answered with certainty by the chair, staff or by Ms. Yates. Alphonse Trezza moved, and Ruth Tighe seconded, that the question be divided. Carl Jackson and Rebecca Bingham spoke against the motion in the hope that Council would approve the Resolution in the sense of its spirit rather than dealing with specific technicalities. The motion to divide the question was DEFEATED. The Chair and Parliamentarian advised against adopting a motion "in spirit" when Mr. Bunge with several seconds moved that the Council adopt the spirit of Ms. Yates' resolution and that it refer the Resolution to the Executive Board to work out the details. The Executive Director stated, "As I have listened to the debate this spring, received letters and calls and listened to the debate at this Conference, it is obvious that we need to reflect a bit and to try to develop ways to create a better understanding of what has happened and to deal with the essence of the motion that Councilor Yates has presented to this body. If Council were to pass this motion, then I would see that we would make our best efforts to discuss this problem as is indicated in the motion and try to work it out to implement the details to the best of our ability with the understanding that there may be some limitations to it, but above and beyond that, I think it is important to give some assurance that there is a larger issue that has been raised this week, and that also will get our attention, and we will bring back appropriate safeguards to the Executive Board to provide assurance to you that we can, indeed, try better to avoid such future occurrences as have happened this week." Upon voting to close debate, it was

VOTED, That Council approves the Resolution submitted  
by Councilor Ella G. Yates.

AFFILIATION OF THE ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION. The Executive Director reported that the Constitution and Bylaws Committee has examined the constitution of the Oral History Association sent with its application for affiliation, and there being no conflict with the ALA Constitution, the Executive Board, on recommendation of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee submits the application for Council approval in accordance with Constitution Article X, Sec. 1. The Executive Director read for Council's information, the purposes of the Association as specified in its Constitution which is on file at ALA Headquarters. On motion by Richard Darling, seconded by Ruth Tighe, it was

Resolution on "The Speaker"

- WHEREAS, the film "The Speaker" was presented to the American Library Association in a membership meeting June 19, 1977 as a film which purports to deal "with the issue of the First Amendment in a contemporary setting"; and
- WHEREAS, "The Speaker" is designed "to serve as a major resource for public broadcasting and community programming, provide material for students in high school and college, offer continuing education for library professionals, teachers and community leaders"; and
- WHEREAS, "The Speaker" is intended to enable school, colleges and libraries to achieve increased understanding of their roles in the promotion and protection of ideas under the First Amendment"; and
- WHEREAS, the Black Caucus of the American Library Association declares this film does not do justice to either the First Amendment or Intellectual Freedom, rather, both subjects are dealt with superficially; and
- WHEREAS, the Black Caucus is disturbed by the interjection of the issue of race relations which destroys the intent of "The Speaker", and
- WHEREAS, in the portrayal of the races, the characterization of the Blacks is negative and stereotyped; and
- WHEREAS, "The Speaker" is condescending, simplistic and insulting to Blacks; and
- WHEREAS, the development of the theme utilizes the Black characters as victims and scapegoats; and
- WHEREAS, the process by which "The Speaker" was commissioned, produced, reviewed, edited and authorized for distribution is obscure and questionable; and
- WHEREAS, the subtleties and innuendos of the film contribute to deteriorating social and interpersonal relations; and
- WHEREAS, "The Speaker" violates the library Bill of Rights by failing to provide a mechanism for the discussion of both sides of a controversial issue; and
- WHEREAS, the Black Caucus expresses its serious concern in the strongest terms by declaring that its members are outraged at the apparent capricious choice of the subject matter and the stereotyped depiction of Black people;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that out of respect for its black members and out of a real concern for the preservation of the integrity of the Association in terms of its own Library Bill of Rights, the Black Caucus requests that the American Library Association withdraw its name from the film.

\* "The Speaker ... a film about THE FIRST AMENDMENT" - a promotional brochure.

Black Caucus of the American Library Association  
(Mrs.) Avery W. Williams, Chairperson

GUIDELINES  
by Council Resolutions Committee  
6/20/77  
John

Sum of 2

THE SPEAKER  
A Minority's, Minority Assessment

by

Ella Gaines Yates

Member of Black Caucus  
Intellectual Freedom Committee and  
Member of Council of the A.L.A.

Background

In the planning stages of producing a film on intellectual freedom, the Intellectual Freedom Committee, in 1975, debated at great lengths, the parameters of a film, its theme, and the audience to be reached. Should it produce a document solely for librarians? Should it produce a document which could be used with community groups in interaction, and programming which would elicit discussion, raise awareness on First Amendment issues, and assist in developing more enlightened community support for the First Amendment, in light of the Supreme Court decisions on community standards, and the increase of community groups seeking to censor school textbooks and other collections? The trend created apprehension in two areas: the school and school library today, the public library tomorrow.

From within the profession and from the state intellectual freedom committees the requests were stronger for means of heightening public awareness on intellectual freedom issues. The film which has been produced was done with hopes and aspirations of producing a series related to intellectual freedom issues generally, but a second one specifically for the profession. The film was produced with a partial script. The students were given guidance in situational dramatization, not complete scripts per se. Their responses were spontaneous reactions to the situation, as spontaneous as the reactions seen in the discussion following the first publicly announced showing of the film. The situational theme was derived, from consultation with outstanding Americans, all internationally known, and proponents of intellectual freedom.

Discussion: My Own Personal View

From the above simplified background, the Intellectual Freedom Committee, with the Office for Intellectual Freedom, has indeed produced a tool which elicits discussion! I do not see the stereotypical characterizations charged by some of our membership as the film was a personal reliving of two-and-a-half years experience (from 1970-1972), in the Montclair, New Jersey library community. I was recognized as a public librarian in the confrontation. But the settings there were in a school library, a school auditorium, and the school board room. In THE SPEAKER, the students were far less emotional, the community groups much smaller and far less vocal, and the faculty far more courageous than what I personally encountered. The film posed for me a reliving of one of the most intense and lengthy periods of daily confrontation and advocacy for First Amendment issues

in my 26 years experience as a professional librarian. My greatest pride from this experience is a highly competent practitioner now in the library world whom I met and recruited out of the confusion.

With this film, one can deal with many issues: freedom of speech, freedom of the press, access to information and censorship. It is provocative, and in spite of its technical and content weaknesses, it merits more positive dialogue than it has received in our professional assessments. If the film's assessment and fate was predicated upon the opinion of a jury in court, an unbiased jury would have been difficult to strike from our august body; we were exposed to too many opinions prior to the official viewing to bring the open-mindedness needed to judge unemotionally.

Earlier this year, a South African was invited to speak at a major university center in Atlanta. A sufficient number of faculty and students protested his right to appear, and with no compromise provided, the speaker was not allowed to come. This is our film, and it is timely. What initial film topic would have satisfied ALL members of our Association?

The deed is done, a contract must be honored. I can personally accept its release with ALA's imprimatur affixed, with greater pride than I could have accepted a replay of our professional performance in discussion on Sunday evening, had the television media been present. The film should be judged for its merits and potential usage, rather than others' opinions we feel necessary to adopt as our own, as the popular thing to do for acceptance. Each of us has a given right, under the First Amendment, to speak as individuals.

In the name of intellectual freedom, do so!

RESOLUTION ON " THE SPEAKER"

WHEREAS, a film, "THE SPEAKER, a film about freedom" has been produced under the sponsorship of the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association and bears the name of the association, and

WHEREAS, <sup>^ ^ OKG from do not</sup> the subject matter of the film is, at most, peripheral to the experience of libraries and librarians in the area of intellectual freedom, and

WHEREAS, the film fails to address relevant intellectual freedom issues such as censorship of library materials and free access to information, in favor of a hypothetical issue set outside of a library, and

WHEREAS, regardless of merit, the film does not well represent the concerns of either librarians or the American Library Association,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the American Library Association remove its name from this film.

Submitted by Nancy Kellum-Rose

*Substitute for Case #61 with;*

*Whereas, in the portrayal of the <sup>race</sup> ~~black~~, the characterization of the blacks is ~~negative and stereotyped,~~*

F A C T S H E E T

THE SPEAKER...A FILM ABOUT FREEDOM

- June 30, 1975 ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) and the Association of American Publishers Freedom to Read Committee (FRC) decide to produce First Amendment film.
- Jan - March 1976 IFC and FRC interview 16 documentary film producers for the purpose of selection.
- April 29, 1976 IFC proposal and budget of \$100,000 for film production presented to the ALA Executive Board (EB). EB approves proposal, contingent upon receipt of 200 advance orders to assure financing is available.
- July 20, 1976 FRC withdraws, feeling that a film producer should have to look in only one way for his direction.
- July 21, 1976 IFC votes to recommend approval by the EB of Vision Associates joint venture proposal. IFC authorizes a subcommittee of Florence McMullin, Robert Delzell and Judith Krug, as OIF Director, to bring the project to completion.
- July 22, 1976 IFC returns to EB with 100 advance orders and a joint venture proposal which offers budget reduction to \$75,000. EB authorizes joint venture with Vision Associates and gratefully accepts a \$12,000 grant from Beta Phi Mu to launch the film project.
- August 1976 ALA Executive Director meets with Lee Bobker of Vision Associates and discusses the project plan.
- September 1, 1976 Contract agreement with Vision Associates reviewed and authorized by Executive Director as drafted by ALA legal counsel. Film to be financed through advanced subscriptions.
- September 14, 1976 Lee Bobker and Barbara Eisberg interview a number of civil libertarians and scholars. The idea for the film theme emerges in an interview with former Watergate Special Prosecutor, Archibald Cox, who related that his most difficult First Amendment challenge was not Watergate, but his inability to deal with student efforts to prevent a controversial speaker from appearing on campus.
- October 1976 Film treatment (script outline) developed and presented to IFC subcommittee.
- Nov - Dec 1976 Script developed and film location chosen by Vision Associates with the approval of IFC subcommittee.
- January 1977 Film shot on location in high school.
- January 30, 1977 IFC subcommittee and Lee Bobker report to IFC and show slides selected from the film. IFC and Bobker report to EB. Al Trezza requests script which EB has not previously requested or seen.
- Feb - April 1977 Film edited by Vision Associates in consultation with IFC subcommittee.