

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



Hell Hath No Fury Like a Scorned Librarian, American Motors Learns

CHICAGO, Nov. 10—The nation's librarians have got their dander up.

They are upset with an American Motors ad, created by Wells, Rich, Greene, which ran in Oct. 23 *Life*, Nov. 2 *Time* and elsewhere. Headline says, "We made the Javelin the hairiest looking sporty car in America, even at the risk of scaring some people off."

After ticking off such features as the Javelin's "new 'curved cockpit' instrument panel" that "may make you feel more like a pilot than a driver," and the car's "range of engines up to a 401 CID 4-Barrel V-8," copy closes with, "We may lose a few librarians for customers, but we think we'll gain a few enthusiasts."

■ Well, by American Library Assn. estimates, there are about 75,000 librarians out there, and many of them at this point are hopping mad.

Wrote one disgruntled chap from Vineland, N. J.: "Two months ago I sold my Corvette because my family is getting too large. In the meantime, I've been thinking of buying a car in the Javelin class. I agree completely with your ad; i.e., you have lost this librarian as a customer."

■ The association here isn't taking it lying down, either. "The ad is in very poor taste," complains Curtis E. Swanson, public relations manager, in a two-page letter to the nation's fourth largest auto maker.

"It categorizes an entire profession on the basis of a stereotype existing in the minds of the people who prepared—and approved—this ad. How much advertising, based on a false image, could have been used by a company obviously aware of the power of an erroneous image is incomprehensible," the letter sputters.

■ Editors of the field's trade publications—*American Libraries*, *Library Journal* and *Wilson Library Bulletin*—also are getting letters from miffed librarians, asking that American Motors be tweaked for its attitude toward a professional group (and potential market) that apparently thinks it swings as much as anybody else does.

American Motors officials have promised to make amends. "We appreciate your taking time to remind us of this, and assure you that steps will be taken to rectify the stereotype image to which you strongly object," wrote William A. Murphy, American's national advertising manager, to the Vineland librarian.

The graduate program of library education offered by the Palmer Graduate Library School of Long Island University, Brookville, New York (John T. Gillespie, dean), has been officially accredited by the American Library Association.

This brings the number of library schools offering programs accredited by the ALA to 53.

Copies of the brochure *A Guide to Library Cooperation/1971 White House Conference on Aging* are available free of charge on receipt of a stamped, self-addressed envelope by the Order Department, American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, Ill. 60611.

The brochure, prepared by the Adult Services Division of ALA, has sections on the librarian's responsibility to the aging, objectives of the White House Conference on Aging, to be held in November, 1971, and a checklist for librarians in preparation for special services before, during and after the Conference.



Goings-On at ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom

SYLVESTER AND THE MAGIC PEBBLE

The New Year has begun with a bang—or more specifically—an oink! A major problem has arisen which will most likely affect librarians in every state before it runs its course.

The problem involves the 1969 Caldecott Medal winner, *SYLVESTER AND THE MAGIC PEBBLE*, by William Steig, published by Windmill Books and Simon and Shuster. The controversy stems from one illustration in the book which depicts policemen as pigs. According

to our information, the picture was brought to the attention of policemen from all over the nation at the International Conference of Police Associations in St. Louis, during an early fall meeting, 1970.

Since then, several state police associations and individual policemen have protested the inclusion of *SYLVESTER* . . . in library collections. The Office has received reports of incidents in California, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Utah, and Wyoming.

Reports from Illinois have come to the Office of Intellectual Freedom at the rate of one or two per day. The campaign in that state was initiated by a letter (which follows) to all law enforcement agencies in Illinois. The letter condemns the book, dwells on the allegedly damaging influence of the picture upon

children, and urges policemen to publicize the matter in local newspapers and request that libraries remove the book. The letter ends with the statement: "Liberty and Democracy without controls [sic] is chaos. You represent this Liberty, this Democracy and supply the controls."

ILLINOIS POLICE ASSOCIATION, INC.
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December 28, 1970

To All Law Enforcement Officers:

It has come to the attention of this office from the International Conference of Police Associations that a book has been published by Windmill Books and Simon and Shuster called "SYLVESTER AND THE MAGIC PEBBLE," written by William Steig.

This book contains a full color picture depicting the law enforcement officer as a pig, and the public as "jack asses." It is written for our youngsters in their formative years, ages 5 to 8. The picture shows two "jack asses" requesting assistance from the police and has the police officers as pigs dressed in police uniforms. This most certainly must mold the minds of our youngsters to think of police as pigs, rather than as their good friends.

We should all check our grade schools and libraries to see if this book is on the shelves for our children to read. A newspaper chain in the area where I live gave out this story and a check by them resulted in finding this book in all school libraries and in the public library as well. It is recommended reading and it appears that some of our educators are hell bent to downgrade the law enforcement profession just because a small band of degenerates banded together and referred to police officers as pigs. It may be stated that this book was published before the police were referred to as pigs; but let me call your attention to the fact that it was copyrighted in 1969, long after the reference to pig was made.

You may be told that many story books depict people as pigs dressed in human clothing; but none have ever before singled out an individual profession to degrade.

Please check your grade school libraries and public library to see if this book is there. If it is, ask them to remove it, and if they do not, please go to your local press. I am sure they are in favor of proper recognition of the police officer.

Liberty and Democracy without controls is chaos. You represent this Liberty, this Democracy and supply the controls.

Victor J. Witt
Secretary-Treasurer

VJW/jmc

"An Organization For The Professional Law Enforcement Officer"