

April 1947

REPORT TO OUR MEMBERSHIP

The current hysterical attacks emanating from the White House and Congress and directed towards people and organizations which believe in and fight for the democratic ideals inherent in our Constitution have touched our Bookshop. We were recently mentioned by the press as one of those organizations considered "subversive" by the infamous Dies Committee.

Many of us remember well why our Bookshop was founded, but we feel that this is a good time to recall the purpose and principles of our Association.

The Washington Cooperative Bookshop was organized several years ago by a group of individuals who felt the need for a cultural organization where Washingtonians of all races could meet and discuss topics of social and cultural interest, and through the actual practice of democracy and interracial harmony, combat the undemocratic racial ideas so prevalent in our community.

Since that time the Bookshop has been a potent factor in the intellectual and cultural life of our city. We have made books, music, and art work available at liberal savings to our membership. We have sponsored forums and lectures on current topics, based upon books appealing to the intellectual and cultural interests of our members. People expressed themselves freely at these forums and lectures -- not all holding the same views, but all finding through these discussions a medium of expression and a place to hear different views.

Because of the Bookshop, Washingtonians had the opportunity of hearing excellent musical artists, both in the classical and jazz fields. Picnics, parties, and other recreational activities have also been sponsored by the Bookshop for its members and the public.

Most important, our Association has shown the way towards breaking down preconceived notions of racial differences. At all times during its history, Negroes and whites have worked together harmoniously, both making constructive contributions to each other.

Our Bookshop Association is a non-political organization bearing no affiliations with any other organization. The membership is varied -- we are made up of professional people, clerks, housewives, students -- all walks of life as well as all racial elements. We welcome into membership all people interested in the democratic principles of free speech, social and political equality for all people.

These principles are the guideposts of our organization -- they were voted on by our membership and have been followed by the Board of Trustees which was elected by the membership. We stand firm on these principles.

-- Board of Trustees
Joseph L. Pierce, Chairman