

Pro-Castro Books Removed From Dade County School

By Lynn Feigenbaum
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MIAMI, March 30—Six copies of a book about the history, economy and politics of Cuba were removed from the library of a Dade county junior high school after the principal ruled that the book is anti-American and presented a distorted pro-Castro viewpoint.

The book, "The Land and People of Cuba," is one volume of a reference series for elementary and junior high school students.

It was removed from the library of Rockway Junior High, located in a suburb of South Miami.

The Dade County public libraries system, which carries most of the other books in the series, has also refused to handle the Cuba book.

"We didn't purchase it," said Anne Boegen, the library system's coordinator of services for children and young adults. "We thought it was quite biased in favor of a Castro regime and we had other books on the subject which were more factual."

Mrs. Boegen said three professional book reviewers had described the book as unobjective.

"The Land and People of Cuba," released last summer, is one of nearly 75 books in

the "Portraits of the Nations" series published by J. P. Lippincott Co. of Philadelphia and New York. "By and large it's a very reputable series," Mrs. Boegen said.

The six copies of the Cuba book were purchased by Rockway with federal funds under the National Defense Education Act.

"At every opportunity it portrays Castro as the benefactor and savior of Cuba," Rockway principal James Davis said. "It's not that I'm for banning or burning or anything of this nature. I just feel you have to consider Dade County and its people. Fifty per cent of the children in this school have Cuban parents."

Beginning with a quotation by the late pro-Castro revolutionary Che Guevara, the book describes Cuba as an island whose people and natural resources were exploited by its early settlers, landowners, and subsequently American business interests.

A short biography on the author of the book, Victoria Ortiz, says she grew up in Mexico, the United States and Europe, graduated from Barnard College and attended Brandeis University as a Woodrow Wilson Fellow. During the summer of 1963 she visited Cuba and in 1968 translated Che Guevara's "Reminiscences of

the Cuban Revolutionary War." She is now a graduate student at City University of New York.

Richard White, director of program development for the Dade County school system, said, "I have asked the librarian to check other books in this extensive series, especially those about the Iron Curtain countries to see if these materials should be used in a restricted sense here."

A memo was also sent to all school librarians urging them to review the Cuban book and advising that it contains propaganda, a spokesman of the school system said.