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BOOKS DEFACED WITH STICKERS OF MINUTEMEN

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Minutemen stickers have been placed in many books in the Block Book Co. store at 288 North Skinker boulevard, causing defacement and damage of at least \$200, the Post-Dispatch learned yesterday.

"We have thousands of books, and for that reason it has been impossible to determine the full extent of the damage, which may be much greater than \$200," Edward L. Block, owner of the store, said.

The stickers are worded: "Minutemen P.O. Box 68 Norborne, Missouri. We Will Never Surrender" and "A Gun Did Not Kill Kennedy — A Communist Did."

The stickers usually are placed on the title page of the book. Because the glue is strong, it is generally impossible to remove the stickers without tearing or otherwise defacing the title page, Block explained.

The person or persons responsible for the defacements concentrated to a large extent on books by and about the late President and other members of the Kennedy family.

Considerable numbers of the stickers were first noticed in May and June. Several books were sold without the knowledge that stickers had been placed in them.

Customers Complain

"Then we began receiving complaints from customers asking, and sometimes indignantly, why the Minutemen stickers," Block said. "We have had customers bring a book back and say, 'I'm not going to give this as a gift to my husband with this Minuteman sticker on the title page.'"

"We replaced the books, of course, because you can't remove the stickers without tearing out the page," he continued. He said stickers are still being placed in books in his store.

On the morning of last May 13 Minutemen stickers were found all over the windows and doors of the Block Book Co., he related. Coincidentally, Robert Welch, founder of the John Birch Society, had spoken in St. Louis the night before, Block pointed out.

"I certainly will not be told what to sell," Block declared. "We have material that is controversial, material on the right and left. A book store should be a source of information. We're not educators. We're not censors. We have no right to discriminate. We have books for any political persuasion."

Condemns Fascist Maneuver

Block said the placing of stickers in the books "resembles fascist tactics. This is censorship by the individual. This is book burning.

"These people (the Minutemen) pretend to believe in individual initiative," Block continued. "They shout for individual ownership. Yet they try to stifle individual effort. I started this business, and I built it up through hard work, as any proprietor would do."

Block said his customers are continuing to show concern over the defacement of the books.

"This type of action is the real threat to democracy," he said. "We don't know what to do to stop it. We have no idea of the identity of the individuals responsible. It has been reported to police."

Books Defaced

Among the books most frequently defaced with the stickers are the following:

"Profiles In Courage" by John F. Kennedy; "The Strategy of Peace" by John F. Kennedy; "Bay of Pigs" by H. Johnson; "The Life and Death of Lenin" by Robert Payne; "A Republican's Call To Reason" by Jacob K. Javits; "The Two Viet Nams" by Bernard B. Fall, and "The Guerrilla — And How To Fight Him — Selections from the Marine Corps Gazette" edited by Lt. Col. T. N. Greene.

Two magazines carried by the store, "Progressive" and "The New Leader," also have been marred frequently with Minutemen stickers, Block said.

The following books were prominently displayed in the store:

"Where I Stand" by Senator Barry Goldwater; "Rumbles Left and Right" by William F. Buckley Jr.; "None Dare Call It Treason" by John A. Stormer, and "A Choice Not An Echo" by Phyllis Schlafly.

J. Evetts Haley's "A Texan Looks at Lyndon—(A Study in Illegitimate Power)" was not displayed. Block explained that there is great demand for the book and that he had just sold out. He indicated he was having his supply replenished.

Block Book Co. is near Washington University. It was discovered in June that books in Olin Library at the university had been defaced with Minutemen stickers. Handwritten

phrases labeling volumes as "Communist propaganda" also were found in the Washington University books.

The Minutemen organization is an extreme right-wing group that has become nationally notorious in the last three years for its large weapons collections. It has attracted widespread attention by field maneuvers in which it practices "anti-Communist guerilla tactics."