

## The Month in Review

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### Oakland PL gets woman director

A woman has been named director of the Oakland (Calif.) PL after a determined campaign by the Bay Area Chapter of Women Library Workers to convince the city manager to observe affirmative action principles, a resolution passed at the 1975 conference of the California LA, and a report on the selection procedure in *WLB* (February, p.443, 445).

Although the city manager has the power of appointment, the March 2nd meeting of the city council was addressed by WLW's Sonja Morris and CLA President Gil McNamee, who adroitly managed to read the entire CLA statement into the city council record. Fay Blake



**Sonja Morris** urging the Oakland city council to persuade the city manager to appoint a highly qualified woman librarian as director.

(UC/Berkeley SL) had introduced the resolution calling for a nationwide search for a director and adherence to affirmative action guidelines.

Morris added arguments to support appointing a woman to the post, noting that it had been 102 years since a woman had headed the Oakland PL. She added, "As evidenced by an article in the February 1976 issue of *Wilson Library Bulletin* . . . national attention is focused on the selection of Oakland's Director of Library Services."

On April 15th the Oakland city manager announced the appointment of Lelia White, who has been with the Oakland PL since 1970. Her

A.B. and M.L.S. degrees are from UC/Berkeley, where she was an instructor, reference librarian, and bibliographer before coming to Oakland. In 1974 White became supervising librarian for the central district, which includes the Latin American Library and the recently opened Asian Community Library.

### Dateline: Washington

*Ed. Note*—The following accounts were written for *WLB* by W. Dale Nelson, a Washington, D.C., journalist who also holds an M.L.S. degree from the University of Washington.

### ALA files Supreme Court brief in Smith case

On behalf of the Freedom to Read Foundation, the American Library Association has asked the Supreme Court to say which prevails when federal and state obscenity standards come into conflict.

The ALA filed an amicus curiae (friend of the court) brief April 10th in support of an Iowa man's bid for review of his September 1975 conviction on a federal obscenity charge. Jerry Lee Smith was found guilty on seven counts of distributing obscene material through the mails by a federal court jury. He received an effective sentence of six months and was placed on probation for three years.

Smith appealed his conviction, noting that the Iowa legislature has decriminalized the distribution of allegedly obscene material to adults. The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, however, upheld the initial verdict on Feb. 13, 1976, saying that in a federal prosecution "state policy was not controlling, since the determination was for the jury, not the state."

In asking the Supreme Court to review his case, Smith said New Mexico, South Dakota, Vermont, and West Virginia have passed laws similar to Iowa's. In addition Hawaii has repealed its obscenity law and Alaska regulates only the distribution, exhibition, and sale of "objectionable" comic books.

The ALA and the Iowa LA said in their brief that conflicts similar to that in Iowa are likely, because more states are expected to choose de-regulation. The ALA argued that the lower courts allowed the jurors to substitute their