most invariably, libraries reflect the neighborhood served rather than the ideals of librarianship. Recommended methods of modern management notwithstanding, a fine library agency, architecturally inspiring and exemplary in holdings and talents, located in the very midst of an economically depressed and educationally retarded neighborhood, can do more to end human indignities and spiritual degeneracy, than all the NAACP's, and PAL's and improvement societies put together.

It cannot be hoped that this report is entirely free of flaws. Lies, untruths, and spurious facts will be claimed. Even so, many of us are going to find it difficult to again play the game by the rules. The report has exposed a ghost in our purpose. This ghost is known by many aliases: apathy, cowardice, conformity, weakness, lack of political imagination, expediency, ignorance, inability, security, and defeatism. By any name, this ghost is a poison infecting the spirit of our profession. The critical question prompted by this report never appears in its text: Shall we go on poisoning ourselves?

A GENUINE EFFORT TO SEEK TRUTH

By
Virginia
Lucy
Jones

IT IS A RECOGNIZED FACT that historically throughout the United States, various types and degrees of segregation and discrimination directed toward Negroes and all people on the lower educational, economic, and social levels, have been consciously or unconsciously built into all of our social institutions: churches, schools, hospitals, libraries, political parties, recreational facilities, and public services. In the last two decades, and especially since World War II, Negro and white leaders have become increasingly aware of this situation. As a nation we are being challenged by forces within our boundaries and throughout the world to take great and rapid strides toward the fulfillment of the democratic ideals which we espouse as the American way of life.

Realizing that public libraries have an important and basic role to play in helping to educate all of our citizens to their fullest potential, recognizing that discrepancies exist in regard to the access of all citizens to public libraries, and desiring to take steps to remedy the situation, the Library Administration Division of ALA promoted the Access to Public Libraries study in an attempt to secure an objective picture of types and degrees of discrimination practiced in public libraries. The ALA was among the first of the professional associations to take a stand against some forms of racial injustice. The Association has shown courage in investigating the practices of discrimination in public libraries through this research project. It is greatly to be desired that the Association will continue this type of research to reveal the inequities within the profession which prevent the realization of the American dream and which injure and alienate large segments of the public.

The study's treatment of the history of Negro access to Southern libraries is rather general. This is not meant to be a negative criticism. The major concern of the study was to survey the current situation. The history of Negro access to Southern public libraries may be divided into two periods. The first period embraces the first half of this century, when the problem was that of securing separate library facilities. The second period follows with the struggle to abolish "separate but equal" facilities and to integrate library services. The latter period is dealt with in the Access study.

With the exception of Louisville, Kentucky, and Jacksonville, Florida, when public library service was established in the South little or no thought was given to making this facility or a separate one available to Negroes. Thus the pattern throughout the South was that pressure groups of Negro leaders, often joined by white leaders, sought to secure separate libraries for Negro citizens. In some cities these libraries were eventually established as branches of the main library, and in a few cities they were established as independent libraries with separate boards of trustees. Raleigh, North Carolina, and Savannah, Georgia, were examples of this plan. Negro and white citizens often gave land, buildings, books and money to help to establish and maintain inadequate separate libraries for Negroes as cities, towns and counties were slow to assume this responsibility.
It was more difficult to extend library service to Negroes in small towns and rural areas in the South than it was in urban centers. The contributions of Willie Lee Buffington, a white native of South Carolina, are significant in that through his efforts, beginning in 1932, there were 81 libraries for Negroes established in small towns and in rural areas, 26 in South Carolina and 55 in Georgia. These libraries are known as the Faith Cabin libraries, the books for which were solicited from people in the North. Negro leaders in communities with Faith Cabin libraries sought a wide variety of means to secure buildings, furniture, equipment, and supplies to establish library service. Although the book collections were far from ideal, they did much to make Negroes conscious of the value of libraries and they brought books to communities where there had been none before.

Another noteworthy factor in the development of library services for Negroes in three Southern states, Alabama, Georgia, and Texas, has been the employment of Negro librarians to work in state library agencies as consultants in the establishment and development of separate public and school library facilities.

The legal aspects of segregation in public libraries treated in the body of the report and in Appendix C appear to one who is a layman in the field of law to be one of the most important phases of the study on access to public libraries. The legal analysis explains clearly that segregation in public libraries is in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and demonstrates how the actions of state governments and their political subdivisions are affected by the Amendment in operating public libraries which are considered as government facilities.

The section on the legal aspects of desegregation contains descriptions of five procedures used in meeting demands for public library desegregation: voluntary desegregation, desegregation by court order, under pressure of suit, closure or transfer to private ownership, or delaying as long as possible the process of desegregation. Legally a local government may transfer a library or other public facility to private ownership for operation as a private enterprise and it would not be subject to the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. However, "the existence of a state or local law requiring segregation would make the library's segregation policy take the form of 'state action,' thus violating the Fourteenth Amendment." There is some question as to legality of excluding Negroes from a private enterprise which is designed to serve the general public. Even though local segregation statutes and ordinances are unconstitutional, they still govern their political units and have to be tested in federal courts until they are declared unconstitutional.

Despite the fact that there has been some question about the authenticity of some of the statistical data from which conclusions have been drawn with regard to public libraries in the North, the study is of great value. If the research had not been done in such a short period of time and if the members of the ALA Advisory Committee had worked more closely with International Research Associates, Inc., in the interpretation of the statistical data in terms of ALA standards for public libraries and generally accepted administrative policies and practices of public libraries, questionable conclusions in this segment of the report might have been avoided.

In the case of Washington, D.C., there is a question as to whether or not INRA should have based its evaluation on branch libraries serving the population of census tracts or by the actual areas the branches were designed to serve, cutting across census tracts. It does seem unfair, however, to conclude that "the greatest racial inequality occurs in Birmingham (Ala.) and in Washington, D.C." There may be obvious subtitles in segregation in existence in Northern cities, yet Negroes can use all branch libraries even though they may be inconvenient by traveling distances to reach them. In the South where the materials are more limited in quantity and quality, more restrictions are practiced in services and in actual access to all branches.

While the number of volumes or titles held by libraries is generally accepted as one way of evaluating library facilities, this crude method bears little relationship to the functional value of a library collection and the extent to which the books actually meet the needs and interests of the people in a given community. Surveys of branch libraries serving Negro communities in the South made by students in the Atlanta University School of Library Service, reveal that such branches not only have an insufficient quan-
ility of books, but that the quality of the materials is often inferior in terms of scope of subjects included and recency of publications. In some instances recently established libraries and branches with relatively few carefully selected and more up-to-date books might be superior to libraries with larger collections. This points up the need for continued research with regard to the accessibility of library materials with emphasis on quality.

In criticizing this study, it should be remembered that matters of racial discrimination throughout the nation, in the South in general, and particularly in the smaller communities of the Deep South, are extremely complex and deeply rooted in tradition and in the strong emotional feelings of the people. For these reasons it is difficult for research workers to secure objective responses by questionnaires or by personal interviews. Therefore, persons attempting to seek the truth must be aware of these conditions and get as near the truth as possible in a given research study and then continue to study smaller segments of the problem by probing deeper. The section of the report which contrasts reactions to integration in large and small communities, pp. 34-38, is indicative of the complexity of the problem and the range of opinions expressed from arch-liberalism to rabid reaction.

Some of the data secured about integrated and segregated Southern libraries may be misleading. For example, some librarians indicated in the questionnaires and personal interviews that their libraries are integrated. Further investigation has revealed that the unwritten policy of some libraries is to serve Negro patrons, that no Negro has ever attempted to use these libraries, and that the librarians have never made it known to the Negro community that they could avail themselves of their right to use the public library. On the other hand some Southern librarians quietly serve Negro patrons, but because of local public opinion or attitudes of city officials or library board members, will indicate in a questionnaire that their library is segregated.

Considering the problems and innuendos involved in collecting and interpreting data for the first objective study of the types and degrees of discrimination practiced in public libraries in the nation, it may be concluded that it is a genuine effort to seek the truth and that it is of great significance.

The information revealed should be helpful to the library profession as it continues to work toward complete freedom of access to public libraries by all citizens.

THE DYNAMICS ARE MISSING

By E. J. Josey

The Access to Public Libraries report stirred up a hornet's nest in Chicago. The most vehement denunciations, strangely enough, came from the North and not the South. Many white southern librarians appeared to have been thrilled about the boomerang, for several commented, "I felt so sorry for Ralph Ulvueling and Emerson Greenaway, because they have always fought for Civil Rights." These southern librarians rejoiced, for they were not wholeheartedly in favor of the study anyway.

Yet, "the summer of discontent" has unmistakably shown that the Negro is faced with segregation in the North as well as in the South. Someone recently said, "sectional denials of freedom and equality are not a difference of kind but of degree, and some areas of the East, North, Midwest, the Prairies and the Far West are most vicious — though more subtly covered with the mantle of respectability and self-righteousness . . ."

Since I intend to take respectful issue with several ideas in the sections dealing with "Patterns of Segregation" and "The Dynamics of Integration," permit me to make a general comment about the study. By and large, Access to Public Libraries is a monumental document. It will not be relegated to obscurity, for its sins of commission or its sins of omission, by my criticism or by the criticisms of my fellow reviewers. It will take its right and proper place alongside another historical document, To Secure These Rights (The report of President Truman's Committee on Civil Rights, 1947).

An examination of "Patterns of Segregation," reveals that "library integration was