

Library of Congress

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AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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A report calling for the Library of Congress to take further steps to ensure success of efforts to attain equal employment opportunities for minority employees and affirmative action programs was accepted by the ALA Council, governing body of the American Library Association, at the recent Midwinter Meeting of ALA in Chicago.

The report was made by a select group of Association members and Robert Wedgeworth, Executive Director of ALA, after two on-site visits to the Library of Congress in 1973. Following careful study of the situation, the select group recommended that:

1. A Coordinating Committee, that is representative of more divergent points of view, be organized to assist in drafting and implementing policies and procedures regarding equal employment opportunities and affirmative action. This Committee should include representatives from the major staff organizations in the Library of Congress.
2. That the Librarian (and his top administrative staff) become more visible in directing the efforts of the Library's supervisors to implement changes in personnel policies, procedures and practices. Toward this end meetings with the supervisors and visits to departments and divisions of the Library would be beneficial.
3. That the Library of Congress should review its Affirmative Action programs relative to those areas with high percentages of lower grade positions and with the assistance

of employees affected, develop realistic plans for training, upgrading and promotion.

4. That the Librarian's Liaison Committee be reactivated to assure the continuous cooperation between the Library of Congress and the profession on all matters of concern, but with particular emphasis at this time on the personnel policies and procedures in the Library.
5. That the American Library Association through cooperation with the Library of Congress Union and staff organizations continuously monitor the progress of the Library of Congress in meeting these recommendations in the spirit as well as the letter of the recommendation, that the Library of Congress be requested to send its Affirmative Action plans to ALA, and that along with the plans submitted, it should send the names and officers of the employee organizations in existence. Reports should be made periodically to the ALA membership by the Executive Director of the Association as to progress or lack thereof by the Library of Congress.

The ALA Staff Committee on Mediation, Arbitration and Inquiry recommended to the ALA Executive Board that copies of the report be sent to the Library of Congress, the Chairman of the Joint Congressional Committee on the Library of Congress and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The two visits to the Library of Congress were made as a result of action by the ALA Council in January, 1973. The Council, after receiving

a Staff Committee on Mediation, Arbitration and Inquiry (SCMAI) report, directed the committee to "extend its efforts to an on-site investigation into the Library of Congress' failure to comply with the recommendations of the LC Inquiry Team (25 January 1972)."

In rejecting suggestions by some ALA members that the Association censure the Library of Congress for failing to implement fully those recommendations, the select group said:

"The frustrations of a significant number of the Library's staff still exist. The problems will not go away on their own, but the ALA group can see no solution which can be effected immediately. It is clear that effective and lasting solutions can be found only through the consistent application of sound judgment and the willingness of the Library's staff and its administration to work together. In view of these needs and the opportunity to develop a better understanding between the staff and administration of the Library of Congress, the ALA group does not feel that a censure would be appropriate."

Members of the select group of ALA members are Thomas Alford, Yen Tsai Feng, Jane Flener, Henry Shearhouse, and W. Carl Jackson, Chairman. The Staff Committee on Mediation, Arbitration and Inquiry members are Robert Case, Mrs. Ruth Frame, Mrs. Judith F. Krug, Mrs. Beverly Lynch, and Robert Wedgeworth, Chairman.