INTERVIEW with JOHN E. SMITH
May 23, 1974

McCULLOCH: Now, what I want to ask you, John, is the first question, why did you come to UCI and what were the circumstances around your appointment? I asked John Galbraith if he had anything to do with your appointment, and he said, "No." You were appointed before he was pretty well starting his--He's very much your supporter, by the way.

SMITH: My negotiations were all with Ivan Hinderaker, and they were from my station in Pakistan and went on for about a year. I expressed interest in the job the first I knew of it, but there's a strange earlier history to that. I'd been at UCLA immediately after World War II and at one point was Head of Acquisitions there, where I got to know such people as Ivan Hinderaker and John Galbraith very well and Dean McHenry very well, because they were all library-oriented and were all political scientists and historians and very much interested in the acquisitions program at UCLA, and all were great Library boosters.

McCULLOCH: This was when I first came to know you, John, in 1951. John Galbraith and I acquired this SPG microfilm. I was at Rutgers University.

SMITH: That's right. I remember that. Well, I decided that I was a little weary of academe there toward the first part of the '50s, and I was getting even more weary of it because Larry Powell wouldn't give me the classification I thought I deserved and which my counterpart at Berkeley had. So with Larry's suggestion, "Well, why don't you switch fields? I think you're sort of a public relations type--why don't you get into public library work? And I have this query about filling a job at the Santa Barbara City-County Public System." And I thought, well, maybe I am weary;
maybe it is time to try new things. So I interviewed for that job and was successful in landing it. But then I found out, oddly enough, not only is library administration pretty much the same in the public library field as it is in academia, but also you have to continue, in order to be successful, to have a kind of apple-polishing relationship with human beings, and it's not the faculty as it is in academe, it's the Councilmen and the Mayor in the case of public libraries, and the Board of Supervisors and so forth. Instead of exchanging happy talk about books, you exchange dirty jokes and cigars in City Hall corridors, and I could just see that it wasn't all that much different.

However, it was refreshing to get into a Santa Barbara situation. I always loved Santa Barbara as a place to live. We made more friends there than we have any place we've ever lived. But I got weary of that, and when USC's School of Public Administration asked me if I wanted to go on one of their foreign projects, I thought it would be a neat idea—again a change of pace. And so with the three kids and Lucille we took off for Teheran, Iran, with a leave of absence for one year—the first leave of absence ever granted a city official in Santa Barbara.

McCULLOCH: Is that so?

SMITH: And then we came back to Santa Barbara. But the same group at USC asked me then a couple of years later if I wanted to go to Pakistan for two years. So I thought I would like that, and I thought I was also weary of public libraries, and so I grabbed it.

My essential job in both of those foreign posts was Library Advisor to a group of public administration educators who were charged with AID funding to upgrade the civil service of those respective countries. I think that contemporary events will show that we were not an unmitigated success in so doing, and yet it was interesting. We had university connections and civil
service connections for seminars and workshops. And I built up a kind of
public administration library, not only in Karachi, but in Lahore and then
over in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and Dacca. And I was going around
that subcontinent on a regular basis, and it was very exciting.

McCULLOCH: Very interesting!

SMITH: There's another little bit here. Dean McHenry called me (I
guess he was in Los Angeles at the moment, and I was in Santa Barbara) in
June of 1961 and asked me if I would consider being the first Librarian at
Santa Cruz. He said he wanted the Librarian to be the first academic
appointment, which was very, very interesting.

McCULLOCH: Smart man! Smart man!

SMITH: But I had just signed my contract with USC, and I said, "Can
you wait two years?" And he said, "I cannot, I'm sorry. I want to get
going on this." Well, that was sort of a heartbreak, because Santa Cruz
sounded better than Pakistan at the time. And then when I heard they were
seeking a Librarian at Irvine, I immediately wrote to Ivan Hinderaker, and I
cited such referees as Bob Vosper, Larry Powell, Dean McHenry, and
Clark Kerr--

McCULLOCH: Oh, boy!

SMITH: Whom I'd gotten to know when we were both with the Institute of
Industrial Relations, which was my job at UCLA at one time.

McCULLOCH: Oh, really? Oh!

SMITH: I was the pioneer Librarian of the IA IIR--

McCULLOCH: Oh, really! That's very interesting.

SMITH: --at the very time that Clark Kerr came to the University as
Director of the Berkeley IIR, so I got to know him very well. Well, those
were rather powerful names to be delivering, and I know they had a long list
of applicants for the job, and Ivan told me that they'd narrowed it down to
two—one other person and me. And I kept trying to find out who the other
one was so that I could write an anonymous poison letter or something—I
wanted that job so much! And I got it about three months before the end of
my contract in Pakistan.

McCULLOCH: Well, let's put a date down here.

SMITH: Well, I came July 1, '63, the very day that Ed Steinhaus and
Ralph Gerard arrived.

McCULLOCH: And therefore you got the offer about, say, March?

SMITH: Oh, that would be right. That's correct. And I accepted with
alacrity, and it was all settled before either party had mentioned money. I
got a letter from the Chancellor, saying, "Is there any detail that we
haven't covered?" and it occurred to me, though, that we hadn't set my sal-
ary yet, so I was in touch then with Don Clark to see what the going rate
was for a new campus.

McCULLOCH: Who was Don Clark?

SMITH: Don Clark was the one who was appointed at Santa Cruz.

McCULLOCH: Ah, yes.

SMITH: And he had been Librarian at the Harvard Business School.

McCULLOCH: Did you know the man, Voigl, at San Diego?

SMITH: Oh, I've known Mel Voigl. I've known a lot of the University
of California's setup and personalities and so forth; it was like coming
home. I felt it was a very imaginative thing to set up three new general
campuses. I thought to be on the ground floor of such an enterprise was to
be another pioneering opportunity of the kind I enjoy.

McCULLOCH: Well now, John, in your negotiations did they mention to
you the plan whereby they were going to set aside two copies of every book
they ordered for San Diego and put them in storage at San Diego?
SMITH: Yes. That was understood, that the collection-building had already started, and this was a unique experience in university planning. As soon as it was determined that there would be three new campuses, Melvin Voigt, who was then at UCSD, which would be one of the new campuses and which, of course, had existed for some time through its Scripps Institute and so forth, proposed to President Kerr that for undergraduate purposes essentially the same collections should be put together before the opening of the schools to students.

McCULLOCH: You know, the Harvard undergraduate library has—and what was it called?

SMITH: The Widener—

McCULLOCH: The (something) List, you called it.

SMITH: The Houghton—I can't remember the name of it at this point.

McCULLOCH: Who had thought that one up?

SMITH: Well, of course that was adding on an undergraduate collection to a library centuries old. That was not the same thing as building a new perfect undergraduate library for the 1960s.

McCULLOCH: Right.

SMITH: So Mel Voigt convinced the President that he could save the taxpayers perhaps a half million dollars by doing this three at a blow, simultaneously at one spot, and he did a whale of a job. And that list of 50,000 titles was published by ALA, the American Library Association, as a model for anybody else who was going to attempt to build a new collection. At that point you'll remember campuses were sprouting up all over the country; it was a heyday of new institutions and conversion of community colleges into full undergraduate curricula and so forth.

Well, I mentioned 50,000 titles. Of that, there were really 75,000 volumes, because there were back files of certain journals. I was looking
up that figure here recently. And understand this was all aimed at undergraduates, and the number of serial titles was below a thousand—it was 880 or something of that sort.

And then what did I do from 1963 until school opened? Well, first, I convinced them that, since they were obviously planning to open with ready-made graduate programs, we had a million miles to go in order to build the proper kind of library to support research of excellence and to grant masters' and doctors' degrees in all of these fields. So, early on I was able to wangle some book money which we started to spend specifically for graduate-research-type level rather than a model undergraduate—

McCULLOCH: But let's review this, Johnny. You came on July 1 of '63—

SMITH: We were starting to spend money for books before the end of that year.

McCULLOCH: '63?

SMITH: Before the end of '63.

McCULLOCH: Yes, the reason I can pin it down—this is paying you a compliment, but it's a very honest one, a very honest one—I was delighted—

SMITH: Do blushes show up on the tape?

McCULLOCH: Oh, no. When I came down, I was very much impressed with what had been done in the way of planning and of personnel. And two people that really attracted me were Steinhaus and yourself. Now, I had never met Steinhaus, but I knew you and knew your reputation, and I was so pleased that you were the Librarian.

SMITH: That is flattering, Sam, and I was delighted when you were appointed.

McCULLOCH: I can't get over what an impression Ed made on me. And I remember planning with you—I came down for my interview in October when I first saw you; then I came down for a whole day in December after my
appointment, and we sat down and went through all the journals that we felt we should order in humanities, and, by God, you showed me the list and I could only think of, I think, one or maybe two that weren't there already!

SMITH: You may have the basic collection!

McCULLOCH: And I remember you and I talked about graduate work, and I remember talking about this notion of a bus going up to UCLA. Without that, we never could have started.

SMITH: Well, there are a couple of things I'd like to say here. One of them is that I, too, was warmed to the presence of Ed Steinhaus. He and I had an office side by side for several months, and I got to know the man.

McCULLOCH: I liked him.

SMITH: And, oh yes, he was an inspiration! A great person!

What I want to add there is that, between July, '63, when we were talking about 800 serial titles being on the basic list, we doubled that figure in terms of subscriptions by the time we had opened for students, so we were receiving 1550, something of the sort. Now we have over 9,000 subscriptions.

There's something else to tell you how good the planning was, and I give most of the credit to Mel Voigt on the basic collection, who went through all sorts of machinations to get expert screening on what titles really should be there. One of the things that we did in recruiting faculty was to tell them, "Send ahead your favorite basic list of 100 to 150 books which you would expect to find," and many of them complied with that. And time after time, we were able to report that we had between 80 and 90 percent of that list already on hand, and then we immediately got the others.

McCULLOCH: I remember one incident—it was later, when we were already founded—when I started Classics, and I asked Ted Brunner to check our library and tell me what we needed, he was just thrilled at the number of books that we had already. I think we had almost all of them.
SMITH: Well, when Clark Kerr first saw the collection as it was laid out in the first few months, I said to him, "Let's walk through the As and Bs and Cs and Ds and see what your impression is as an economist, Clark, and as an industrial relations man," and he was amazed at what we'd been able to start with. And so there was general satisfaction.

But here's the bad part. It still was fundamentally an undergraduate collection, a sparkling one, but it was not geared for the kind of sophisticated research which our first dreamers had in mind. And every graduate program which had to be approved by the Graduate Council or its substitute at that time and then OHE and the Universitywide Graduate Council—every one of them—was justified in terms of the library at UCLA and the Huntington and the Clark.

McCULLOCH: I know that, because I helped to write some of those for our own Humanities School.

SMITH: Not on the basis of resources on campus, but there was always the explicit promise that we would be given enough money to develop an adequate local resource. Now, that day has still not arrived. We have 600,000 volumes right now, but it should be more in the neighborhood of one and a half million. We've lied to prospective faculty; we said, "No difficulty in a 24-hour turn-around time to get UCLA books down here." Well, it was a palpable lie.

McCULLOCH: Well, to tell you the truth, I've done pretty well when I've wanted a book.

SMITH: Well, yet we've made promises that were unrealistic. It's more like somewhere between four to 14 days that you'll really get the interlibrary loan working, and that's still true, and it's a perennial problem and one we're always trying to improve on. But if the book's not there, obviously you're not going to grab it and run.
McCULLOCH: No. Now, you were set up, John, as I remember, next to Ed in the little building. Then when I arrived, which was January of 1964, you had moved, I think, over to Astropower or were about to go.

SMITH: That's right. We started building a very small staff. Bob Thomason I brought in first to be the Assistant to the University Librarian, and then I hired Marje Reeves as Acquisitions person--

McCULLOCH: Yes, I knew her very well.

SMITH: And Ed Tomlinson to be the Cataloguer, and we had Jocelyn Edwards as general secretarial help, and a few professionals to assist. There were about 11 of us, and we had to move to Astropower simply to get space to house the things which we were now beginning to pull in on the basis of the new graduate programs. All the emphasis now was to be on building up the research collection rather than the instruction aspect of it.

And you're quite right in having remembered that I was part of the planning sessions that went on. There was library involvement with the faculty in a way which was very pleasing and very efficient. They let me in on things, and they also were good enough to hear me on some of the problems. I can remember the visiting group which sort of served as the Senate, including John Galbraith, who was Chairman.

McCULLOCH: He was Chairman of the advisory group.

SMITH: At one time, Dr. Tom Swedenberg--

McCULLOCH: Yes, he was the replacement for John.

SMITH: Yes, and there was Gleckner from Riverside.

McCULLOCH: Yes, that's right. And Kennedy from Stanford—no, Kennedy was from--

SMITH: Santa Barbara.
McCULLOCH: Yes, Santa Barbara, and from UCLA was a man in Business, and then, of course, there was from San Diego—I forget now—I'll think of his name shortly.

SMITH: You remember Conway Pierce from Riverside helping to put together the planning for the Science Building.

McCULLOCH: Very well, very well. Gillies, Gillies was from UCLA, and Carl Eckart—

SMITH: Carl Eckart, who had been there with SIO for a long time—

McCULLOCH: That's right. That was the Advisory Committee.

SMITH: That's right. Well, they visited often and effectively, and the rest of us were sitting around with all sorts of grand ideas. You mentioned earlier Jim March, who brought along Fred Tonge and—

McCULLOCH: Julian Feldman.

SMITH: Julian Feldman was there, and with Ralph Gerard's leadership there was a tremendous amount of talk about a completely automated kind of program for this campus, not only for instructional purposes, but for management data. Ralph Gerard told me that the traditional library was as dead as a dodo.

McCULLOCH: I'm sure it isn't. I fought with Ralph about these things. I said, "I can't see this happening in my time."

SMITH: (And I'm glad he didn't prevail on that one.) But still a great deal has happened in terms of advanced technological ways for the learning process.

McCULLOCH: But the book is still a book to read.

SMITH: Yes. Well, the key word in those days was innovation—throw away the old ways and think of what should an educated person be in the 21st century. It was blue skies kind of talk, and it was sort of thrilling.
McCULLOCH: Well, let me concentrate first on what you did over there at Astropower—just a little of what you went through—and secondly we'll concentrate on the planning sessions that took place and which resulted in the purple book.

SMITH: Well, we moved to Astropower for the purposes of space. We wanted actively to acquire materials in all of these fields where we could see activity coming up.

Oh, incidentally, we even had a small acting collection which some of the working scientists on the scene were using. This was before the collection had come up from San Diego, of course. As a matter of fact, that's another little story.

But what we were doing was adding serial subscriptions, trying to get back files appropriately. As I remember, Professor Boughey sent a list of 1,000 journals which he said we should have complete; that overwhelmed us, and we could only partially start on that one. But anyway, as professors came on, they came on with their ideas of what the collection should look like, and we had a very healthy kind of rapport with the people on hand. So it wasn't only adding subscriptions and receiving and recording the journals as they were coming in; it was also a careful scrutiny and putting together of the first catalogue of what was actually being collected at San Diego. We had to avoid witless duplication, of course. And we were also in touch with Santa Cruz in terms of planning and so forth.

Oddly enough, the day I arrived, July 1, '63, the first thing I was told by Vice Chancellor Cox and Coulson Tough was, "We hope you don't have any plans for that building because it was put to bed last night with no more changes allowed, and here are the plans. We hope you'll like them." So that was kind of a heartbreak. I thought I'd have something to say about what kind of a building it would be, but actually as it turned out it was a
fairly well-put-together thing, and the same people who had planned and constructed the Research Library at UCLA were the ones who had planned this one, and in many ways it had many of the same very desirable features. I objected to some of the things, such as the size of the faculty cubicles, which were too big for one and not big enough for two and took up too much space. I didn't like the ornamental staircase in the middle of the lobby, which produced inflexibility.


SMITH: The staircase was beautiful, but it also means that you can't do certain things with that space forever and forever.

McCULLOCH: Now, of course, you have had a complete study on the reconversion right now.

SMITH: Oh, well, you'll remember in three years' time we doubled the building.

McCULLOCH: That's right, and I talked to you of some of my ideas.

SMITH: And we were able to correct a lot of things. And that was another problem—we didn't have enough experience in Unit I to be sure of what we wanted in Unit II, and yet we had to come up with a planning guide almost immediately upon entry into Unit I.

McCULLOCH: You're right.

SMITH: That three-year lead time is not enough. Well, what I mean by that is, they should build for five to 10 years ahead; they shouldn't build for just three years ahead, an old California custom which I think is wasteful and inefficient.

McCULLOCH: That's right. You're right.

SMITH: Well, all right, at Astropower, with this group of about 10 or 11 people, we were culling through bibliographies, checking to see what we should have. We were involved with talks with the faculty. Some of the
faculty were also housed in Astropower. Julian Feldman had an office there; Crawford had an office there.

McCulloch: Arthur Marder was there; Melden was there.

Smith: That's right, that's right.

McCulloch: Danny Rogers was there.

Smith: That's right. I'd forgotten Danny Rogers, our first basketball coach. So there was quite a little activity at Astropower and a lot of commuting back to the Interim Building for these planning sessions.

So what went on in the planning sessions was any number of things—the first efforts to map and fill in all the blanks of an academic plan. I can remember the Hinderaker and Peltason efforts to get really detailed planning. Of course, at those very early stages, they were out recruiting Deans, and then the Deans were out recruiting faculty, and this was a constant coming and going of new faces and prospects and so forth.

McCulloch: As you say, you asked people what they wanted, and I can remember sending over my card file of the books I wanted and Marje Reeves going through them all and saying what we had and what we would need to order.

Smith: All academia is divided into two groups: those who have library-shaped heads and those who do not have library-shaped heads. And those who do not were also amongst us. A person like Ken Ford, for example, a perfectly marvelous teacher, researcher, administrator, and a grand human being, saw the Library as what a physicist needs and to hell with anything else. Sherry Rowland was much the same way. He said that, when they closed up the chemistry branch at Kansas and he had to take an elevator nine floors to get what he wanted, he never went to the Library again. I said, "I can't understand that—how can you?" And he said, "Well, actually in my field there are only about nine journals which are appropriate to my research, and I take them."
McCULLOCH: Takes them personally?

SMITH: Yes, he subscribed personally. And some scientists have that kind of approach to libraries and, appropriately, that's all they need. I'll tell you this: Dan Aldrich asked me how big did I see the Library becoming, what rate of growth, and I mentioned, I think, a million and a half to two million volumes. He said, "You're out of your mind. There won't be enough eyes on the Irvine campus to read that much." That's not what a library is for, constant reading of each book by the number of eyes present! You have to make choices. You have to know what's in print. A humanist, a social scientist, a person in fine arts needs a big research library in order to operate. The fact that we're going to have a thousand students (I think that's what we were talking about at the moment) is not the point; it's the number of MA and PhD programs which mean you have to have research facilities.

McCULLOCH: What you're saying is that you have to do an educational job on scientists!

SMITH: Well, Dan said that he had gotten along in his studies all his life with a little departmental library run by the secretary. In other words, for an agronomist perhaps the 10 leading journals and a little reference shelf is all you need, and then you need the great outdoors. And so he, too, didn't understand libraries. Much later, several years later, I said to the Chancellor, "You did become educated about libraries, and you have given me strong administrative support in my efforts to get together a proper budget, and I've often wondered if it was your competitive spirit at work when you saw how the other Chancellors held the libraries in such high esteem you jolly well wanted to get into the act," and he laughed, he thought that was very funny. He said, "You'd be amazed about the number of things that happened at Irvine because of that competitive spirit and what I learned from the other Chancellors." And that's a fact of life.
McCULLOCH: Well, John Galbraith took a lot of the overhead science money and just simply made the scientists give it up and put it into the library, and that's why there are about 1,200,000 now--

SMITH: In San Diego.

McCULLOCH: In San Diego.

SMITH: That's right. You remember John Galbraith's inauguration ceremony, when he got heavenly assistance!

McCULLOCH: The Catholic bishop of San Diego prayed for John's Library.

SMITH: "And, oh, God, give the Chancellor his Library," he said. That was a great moment! At which point Dan Aldrich stuck his head out and looked at me, and I gave him a victory sign.

McCULLOCH: Wonderful!

SMITH: That was a great historical moment for libraries!

McCULLOCH: Yes, you're right. It was. Well, going on with your Astropower work.

SMITH: Well, there's not much more to tell. We were waiting for our building to be ready to be occupied, and it finally was, in the summer of 1965, giving us about two months to ship the books up from Mount Soledad, where they'd all been boxed for us in no particular order. We had to do a mounting process to get them sorted by call number down on the first floor, and then with careful calculations we'd get them to where they would stand in the stacks of Unit I, and this was quite a logistical exercise.

McCULLOCH: Yes, this was all in the summer of '65, I remember. I can recall Pam Balch worked on it as one of those helpers. My son was moving furniture around.

SMITH: Yes, yes. It was a hot summer, and the air-conditioning wasn't in shape yet, and the elevators were quixotic, and it was quite a job. I remember one little fat boy who was a prospective student, who was helping
And one hot afternoon he was really sweating, and I said, "It's a tough job, isn't it?" And he dropped his little wheelbarrow, and he said, "I want to tell you something, Mr. Smith. It's a tough job, but I like it. It's not only putting together something very important, but it also happens to be the very first job I've ever been paid for; all my life my mother has volunteered me." I thought that was a classic example.

McCULLOCH: It surely was!

SMITH: In any case, we were busting ourselves to get that thing in order for the opening day, and it was. I had good support, good people to work with. Herb Hoffman did an awful lot of the planning, and we were given enough support money to hire a big enough crew of students so that we weren't lost, and it was a successful move.

McCULLOCH: What is Herb Hoffman doing now? I see him all the time at church.

SMITH: I think he has a teaching job at Santa Ana College in their paraprofessional library training program there. That's the last I've heard of him. We were awfully sorry to lose him, but then, of course, we gained Evelyn Huston in his place, and that was a great--

McCULLOCH: That was a coup.

SMITH: Coup for us.

McCULLOCH: Yes. Well, let's go back now, then, to the planning sessions and your memory of any anecdotes. Certainly you have memories of them, because I can recall very vividly your being on everything. And it was always a startling thing to me and interesting that the Librarian should be in attendance, but not the Chancellor.

SMITH: Well, the Chancellor was on the road a lot, of course, and--

McCULLOCH: We all were on the road, though.
SMITH: But I remember his chairing general sessions at least once a week, and the little planning committees of at least a number of us.

McCULLOCH: No, I'm thinking of the actual committees where we sat down and worked out the Irvine plan, that purple book.

SMITH: Yes.

McCULLOCH: The reason I ask you these things, John, is that Peltason was Chairman of them, Dan very seldom came, and Florence Arnold was supposed to take the minutes, but she never did, and so all I have now is the recollections of people of those meetings.

SMITH: Well, we talked about graduate programs, and we talked about, you remember, the original plan of having Dean Peltason in charge of the several divisions before they were changed to schools.

McCULLOCH: Right.

SMITH: And the March plan of having a totally nondepartmental division completely interdisciplinary. It was controversial, and there was a lot of talk about it, and Jim was a very strong man.

McCULLOCH: Very strong.

SMITH: And he had little use for Senate types of activity, if you remember.

McCULLOCH: I well remember.

SMITH: He talked collegiality, but he was an absolutist in wanting to run his own show.

McCULLOCH: Yes.

SMITH: I remember a quarrel or two between him and Abe Melden when Abe was representing this campus in terms of Senate deliberations Universitywide, and there was a little bit of emotional charge there.

McCULLOCH: Oh, yes, no question about that. But I'm thinking back to the days when we actually set up the program, and we sort of had a spectrum
of positions where you had, say, Bernie Gelbaum mostly over on the conservative side; I was in the middle, and Jim March was way out on the left.

SMITH: Yes.

McCULLOCH: He was, as you say, nondepartmental.

SMITH: Well, Clay Garrison was, more or less, a March man.

McCULLOCH: Yes.

SMITH: He didn't want overdepartmentalization either, and his model of what a School of Fine Arts should be was certainly not the traditional one. And these are the kinds of things discussed. And, of course, Ralph Gerard's voice was in there a great deal about graduate programs and funding and so forth and, of course, always the beat on the computer.

McCULLOCH: Yes!

SMITH: And library impact on this kind of discussion would just come up from time to time. I was in a position to forewarn them, if they were over-planning, you know: Watch out here, you won't have the resources. You will not have a complete chemistry library for the next several years. How are you going to do your literature research? And so forth. So I was a kind of visible warning about unrealistic plans.

McCULLOCH: I remember that.

SMITH: Yes. At the same time, I was instrumental, I think, in working out all kinds of cooperative efforts with other campuses in order to assure that we could get things as quickly as possible--UCLA principally, but the other campuses, too. We did set up the bus system almost immediately to transport requests and people back and forth on a daily basis to the UCLA resource.

McCULLOCH: Right.
SMITH: Then I was also involved, you see, immediately with the Library Council, which is the President's advisory body on library planning. Clark Kerr had worked out this plan for the '60s.

McCULLOCH: Tell us about this. I don't know--

SMITH: The library plan for the '60s for the University of California set growth goals for all nine campuses to be achieved by 1971, and Santa Cruz and Irvine were set at 250,000. By 1965, I was convinced that that was not a large enough figure for a decade and made representations to Vice President Wellman, and in about six months they upgraded all nine-campus figures, setting Irvine's goal up from 250,000 to 400,000, which incidentally we came within 20,000 volumes of meeting on target.

McCULLOCH: That's interesting.

SMITH: They upgraded Santa Cruz to only 300,000, which broke Dean McHenry's heart.

McCULLOCH: Too bad.

SMITH: But that was on the basis of graduate programs.

McCULLOCH: Which he didn't have.

SMITH: He didn't want to move as fast as Irvine wanted to move. And I've always thought it was greatly to the credit of Irvine to have been able to carry off this number of graduate programs successfully. The product, that is to say the student who graduates with his doctorate from Irvine, is a person of prestige and excellence in the academic world. And so the kind of Irvine planning as distinguished from the Santa Cruz planning, I think, came off fine. I'm not criticizing Santa Cruz. That style certainly had its reasons, too. Of course, when we were all cut off at the pass there in the late '60s for a long check with The Regents, Irvine was so far out ahead at the time that almost no new programs were going to be allowed that you could just feel the difference between the two campuses. Santa Cruz might
have caught up with us, but it never will until we have a different environment.

McCULLOCH: Well, that covers fairly well the planning sessions where we had the purple book. Now, the last questions I have are, what are your comments on the first year of our operation, say '65-'66, and a final question which is, if you had everything to do over again, what would you do differently? The first question is--

SMITH: About the first year of operation, well, I think that the planning which had gone on in getting together that initial collection, credit for which does not belong to me, but belongs to Mel Voight, made it a pretty easy first year.

McCULLOCH: But you had already purchased approximately 25,000 volumes.

SMITH: Well, that's true, in addition to what we got from San Diego. We were in the business of acquiring books, so we opened with virtually 100,000 volumes on the first day of instruction, and then we started acquiring at the rate of something like 50,000 volumes a year and have done so ever since. The staff has grown as the population has grown. We've had some good people, and we've lost some good people here, too, in the Library. We have some distinguished alumni.

McCULLOCH: Yes, you do, yes.

SMITH: But I think that we also have a pretty good crew. Now, with respect to your second question, what would I do--

McCULLOCH: What would you do, if you had to do it over again?

SMITH: I'll give you the same answer I gave Vice President Taylor when he asked me the same question in front of the APPRB about a year ago. There was very little that I would do differently, and this is the reason: If you're going to be building toward a great research library, as we all still aspire to do, the first 500,000 volumes you buy are going to be the same on
the basis of the bread-and-butter needs of the ongoing academic program, and I don't think, if we'd set our sights lower or higher, those first 500,000 volumes would be any different. There is this about it—every book in that Library today has been added for academic or program relevance, whether it was purchased or a gift or whatever, since 1961, and so it's 600,000 good volumes, and, if you compare it with 600,000 volumes at, say, Williams College, which has been built up over 150 years, it's a different collection. We're not counting that 19th-century theology gathering dust in the basement. We don't have it; we have a relevant collection.

McCULLOCH: That's a good point.

SMITH: And therefore just numbers is not the real game. It's user satisfaction, it's usefulness, and the usefulness of the collection that should determine its worth. And we get some pretty good feedback on its usefulness.

McCULLOCH: Well, now, there's one other question. Could you tell me a little about how you started the Friends of the Library?

SMITH: That, Sam, is something I'm glad you asked. It was handed me on a silver platter! Chancellor Aldrich said that he had been approached by some very nice people in the Corona del Mar and Laguna communities, asking if it would be appropriate to organize a Friends of the Library, and he said, "It sounded good to me." Community support was what we were after, and so I told him, "Yes, Was I right?" He said, "Yes, sir, you were right." And really the fairy godmother of that group is Muriel Reynolds, Mrs. Lawrence Reynolds. She had been an activist in organizing the cultural life of the Orange Coast for a long time. She had been raising money for hospitals, she'd been in other cultural activities, such as the Symphony Society and the--

McCULLOCH: Where does she live?
SMITH: She lives now just between Corona del Mar and Laguna Beach, but at that time she was in Laguna Beach. Other people instrumental there, of course, were Bud Desenberg, at that time Editor of the Laguna Post--was it?

McCULLOCH: Yes.

SMITH: Yes, he was the first President. And then a strong financial backer was Adolph Kroch, the retired--

McCULLOCH: That man really interests me.

SMITH: Well, he was the retired Founding Director of Kroch's Bookstore in Chicago, which became the great Kroch's and Brentano's chain which still operates all through Illinois, run by his son. And his intense interest in the Library and his innate bookishness were a great support.

And this was the first support group from the community which was organized and attracted over 1,000 people in the first year, which was evidence that Orange County was not monolithically hostile to the University.

McCULLOCH: Yes.

SMITH: There were a lot of people who wanted to be associated, wanted to be in on it.

McCULLOCH: That's interesting.

SMITH: We lost some of the thousand as other support groups began to come into being; some people found that they were really more interested in athletics, really more interested in fine arts, and so forth. But the Friends group was a self-starter and has continued not to be a great drain on my time and energy as so often Friends groups can be. If they have to be run out of the Librarian's office, it's not really cost-effective.

McCULLOCH: Yes. I know as Dean of Humanities, I was very grateful to them. They gave money for several collections we found.

SMITH: Well, they gave $20,000 the first year; they gave me another gift, which I was able to use to capture Opportunity Funds from the
President's Office; we got the complete files of the London *Times* and the New York *Times*, and so forth.

McCULLOCH: That's right.

SMITH: Basic resources, which we probably couldn't have afforded properly for some time to come.

Is that recollection enough for you, sir?

McCULLOCH: That's very good, Johnny. I want to thank you very much, indeed. If you have any further thoughts or anything, just drop me a note and I'll put it with the transcript.

SMITH: All right.