

## "STORM CENTER"

The motion picture, *Storm Center*, will be seen in North Carolina theatres soon. It stars Bette Davis, was written and directed by Dan Taradash, and produced by Julian Blaustein for Columbia Pictures.

The film story tells what happens in a small town when the librarian, Alicia Hull (Bette Davis), refuses to withdraw from the shelves a book criticized by a small, but powerful group of people. It is a controversial film about censorship, a subject to which most librarians react violently.

*Storm Center* was filmed in the Santa Rosa (California) Public Library chosen because its ivy covered exterior, and crowded interior were typical of an American public library. Two "very ugly palm trees" in front of the library were the only unmistakably Southern California landmarks. When Columbia Pictures tactfully asked if the trees were the object of special civic pride they discovered that the only reason the Library Board had not taken the trees down was the cost. Everyone was happy when the movie company bore the expense of removing the palms.

Ruth Hall, librarian at Santa Rosa, writing in the *California Librarian* said,

Only about two-thirds of the floor space of the Main Library was used, with a glimpse into the stack-room. This made the library appear much smaller than its actual size. The librarian's office was cleverly transferred from one side of the building to the other, and the Newspaper Reading Room was changed into a 'Treasure Room,' marked in large letters on the glass above the installed door. These, with a most amazing collection of old type pictures in ornate frames, and other antiquated decorations, completely changed the original interior appearance of the library. In order to make these alterations in the rooms, measurements were made, and the color of the redwood finish was carefully matched by the movie workmen on their first visit here. When the company moved to Santa Rosa, the complete framework was brought with them, ready to set up, with only a nail or two necessary to hold it in place. The result was that of having always been a part of the building.

Miss Hall, who served as a technical advisor during the filming of *Storm Center*, states that she believes that "librarians everywhere will be pleased with the skillful and sympathetic interpretations of librarians by Bette Davis and other members of the cast. *Storm Center* should be a profound influence in creating greater public understanding of public library policies."

Besides Miss Davis the cast includes Kim Hunter, Brian Keith, Paul Kelly, Burt Mustin and nine-year old Kevin Coughlin. The film may be released during the Annual meeting of ALA at Miami Beach.