

DOCUMENTS

RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THE ACTIONS OF PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH & CALLING FOR IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS

WHEREAS, democracy is a core value that defines, informs, and guides our professional practice;

WHEREAS, the American Library Association affirms the responsibility of the political leaders of the United States to protect and preserve the freedoms that are the foundation of our democracy (ALA Resolution on the USA Patriot Act and Related Measures that Infringe on the Rights of Public Library Users); and

WHEREAS, the actions of the current President, George W. Bush, have violated that responsibility in unprecedented ways and threaten the very foundations of a democratic government; those actions, arguably involving the commission of “high crimes and misdemeanors,” are as follows:

Entering into an illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq, based upon fabricated and erroneous information;

Crafting of policies adopted since September 11, 2001, including provisions in the USA PATRIOT Act (Public Law 107-56) and PATRIOT ACT II and related executive orders, regulations and actions, which threaten fundamental rights and liberties by:

- a) expanding the authority of federal agents to conduct so-called “sneak and peek” or “black bag” searches, in which the subject of the search warrant is unaware that his property has been searched, thereby increasing the likelihood that the activities of library users, including their use of computers to browse the Web or access e-mail, may be under government surveillance without their knowledge or consent;
- b) granting law enforcement and intelligence agencies broad access to personal medical, financial, library and education records with little if any judicial oversight;
- c) permitting the FBI to conduct surveillance of religious services, internet chat rooms, political demonstrations, and other public

- meetings of any kind without having any evidence that a crime has been or may be committed;
- d) diminishing personal privacy by removing important checks on government surveillance authority;
 - e) reducing the accountability of government to the public by increasing government secrecy;
 - f) granting expansive new immigration powers to the Attorney General which are subject to abuse, particularly with regard to immigrants from Arab, Muslim and South Asian countries; and
 - g) expanding the definition of “terrorism” in a manner that threatens the constitutionally protected rights of Americans.

Approval of the use of torture (including practices such as hooding, shackling, drugging, sleep deprivation, etc.) in the interrogation of suspected terrorists or their suspected accomplices in his “war on terror.”

Illegal detainment of so called “enemy combatants” and others who are jailed on the merest suspicion, refusing them legal counsel and either holding them indefinitely or secretly deporting them.

Authorization of warrantless electronic surveillance of people within the United States, including U.S. citizens, by the National Security Agency (NSA).

Promoting policies that erode the division of Church and State.

Openly asserting executive power in attempts to override the U.S. Constitution, U.S. Congress, and the U.S. Judicial system, thus ignoring the system of checks and balances fundamental to democratic government.

WHEREAS, librarians are among the preeminent defenders of intellectual freedom and government openness in the US; and

WHEREAS, intellectual freedom, our primary value as librarians, is seriously violated by the current political climate which allows for suppression, attack and even criminalization of dissent; and

WHEREAS, the Library Bill of Rights states that libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas; and

WHEREAS, the broad social responsibilities of the American Library

Association are, in part, defined in terms of the contribution that librarianship can make in ameliorating or solving the critical problems of society, and the willingness of the ALA to take a position on current critical issues with the relationship to libraries and library service set forth in the position statement (ALA Policy Manual, 1.1); therefore it is

RESOLVED, that the Progressive Librarians Guild join with others demanding that President George W. Bush, as the head of the administration that is leading the U.S. in its current political direction, be presented with articles of impeachment as stipulated by the Constitution with a view to removing him from office; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that PLG calls on its members and all others in the library community to urge their elected representatives to support HR635 of the 109th Congress calling for an investigation into possible impeachment proceedings; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to the President of the United States, to the Attorney General of the United States, to Members of both Houses of Congress, to the library community, and to others as appropriate.

Approved by the Coordinating Committee of the Progressive Librarians Guild on March 15, 2006, and based on a resolution written by Seattle Public Library AFSCME members.