

On Wikileaks and the Library of Congress: A Statement by the Progressive Librarians Guild

The Progressive Librarians Guild (PLG) condemns in the strongest possible terms the blocking of Wikileaks by the Library of Congress and rejects on all grounds their arguments in defense of this move.

The action is a violation of American librarianship's historic commitments to the public's right to know, to freedom of the press and to the very essence of the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. It is also in violation of the American Library Association's most fundamental commitments to intellectual freedom as embodied in the Library Bill of Rights.

We call on the American Library Association (ALA) to condemn unequivocally this move by the Library of Congress to actively conspire in preventing access to information in the public interest. Blocking access to this published information is censorship, plain and simple, and supporting sanctions against reading is endorsing abridgment of intellectual freedom. The documentation's open publication by an agency of the free press, Wikileaks, renders its government classification status irrelevant.

For the Library of Congress, blocking access and rationalizing censorship is an unacceptable acquiescence to the government's abusive attempt to put the genie back in the bottle with regards to leaked documents which, among other things, expose the government's own malfeasance, malevolence and even criminality in the conduct of the people's affairs. In matters of vital public concern, citizens' fullest knowledge and discussion are in the interest of democracy, freedom, peace, rule of law and good governance here and around the world.

We also call on ALA to oppose the government's directives barring individuals in other Federal agencies, the armed forces and working for government contractors from viewing published material discomfiting to the authorities.

We call on ALA as well to join us in condemning the ongoing and escalating US government-led witch-hunt against Wikileaks and its founder Julian Assange.



Wikileaks logo

PLG Coordinating Committee , December 4, 2010