Dear Members of Congress,

We write to express our concern about recent reports published in the Guardian and the Washington Post, and acknowledged by the Obama Administration, which reveal secret spying by the National Security Agency (NSA) on phone records and Internet activity of people in the United States.

The Washington Post and the Guardian recently published reports based on information provided by an intelligence contractor showing how the NSA and the FBI are gaining broad access to data collected by nine of the leading U.S. Internet companies and sharing this information with foreign governments. As reported, the U.S. government is extracting audio, video, photographs, e-mails, documents, and connection logs that enable analysts to track a person's movements and contacts over time. As a result, the contents of communications of people both abroad and in the U.S. can be swept in without any suspicion of crime or association with a terrorist organization.

Leaked reports also published by the Guardian and confirmed by the Administration reveal that the NSA is also abusing a controversial section of the PATRIOT Act to collect the call records of millions of Verizon customers. The data collected by the NSA includes every call made, the time of the call, the duration of the call, and other "identifying information" for millions of Verizon customers, including entirely domestic calls, regardless of whether those customers have ever been suspected of a crime. The Wall Street Journal has reported that other major carriers, including AT&T and Sprint, are subject to similar secret orders.

This type of blanket data collection by the government strikes at bedrock American values of freedom and privacy. This dragnet surveillance violates the First and Fourth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution, which protect citizens' right to speak and associate anonymously, guard against unreasonable searches and seizures, and protect their right to privacy.

We are calling on Congress to take immediate action to halt this surveillance and provide a full public accounting of the NSA's and the FBI's data collection programs. We call on Congress to immediately and publicly:

1. Enact reform this Congress to Section 215 of the USA PATRIOT Act, the state secrets privilege, and the FISA Amendments Act to make clear that blanket surveillance of the Internet activity and phone records of any person residing in the U.S. is prohibited by law and that violations can be reviewed in adversarial proceedings before a public court;

Continued on page 2...
PLG Co-Signed Letter to US Congress (continued)

2. Create a special committee to investigate, report, and reveal to the public the extent of this domestic spying. This committee should create specific recommendations for legal and regulatory reform to end unconstitutional surveillance;

3. Hold accountable those public officials who are found to be responsible for this unconstitutional surveillance.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Selected Signatories:

18MillionRising
350.org
Access
American Civil Liberties Union
American Library Association
Americans for Job Security
Applied Research Center
Association for Progressive Communications
Association of Alternative Newsmedia
Bill of Rights Defense Committee
Blog Action Day
Calyx Institute
Campaign for Liberty
Center for Democracy and Technology
Center for Media Justice
Centro de Cultura Luiz Freire
ColorOfChange.org
Competitive Enterprise Institute
Consumer Watchdog
CREDO Action
Daily Kos
Defending Dissent
Demand Progress
Detroit Digital Justice Coalition
Digital Fourth
Electronic Frontier Foundation
Electronic Frontiers Australia
EngageMedia
Entertainment Consumers Association (ECA)
Fight for the Future
Foundation for Innovation and Internet Freedom
Free Press
Free Software Foundation
Freedom of the Press Foundation
Freedom Works
Gandi.net
Generation Justice
GNOME
Green Party of Rhode Island
Green Party of the United States
Greenpeace USA
Guardian Project
HackThisSite.org
Internet Archive
League of Technical Voters
Learning About Multimedia Project
Liberty Coalition
LibrarianShipwreck
Main Street Project
Mansfield North Central Ohio Tea Party Association
Media Alliance
Media Literacy Project
Media Mobilizing Project
MoveOn.org
Mozilla
National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Security Counselors
Occupy Wall Street NYC
Open Technology Institute at New America Foundation
OpenMedia.org
Participatory Politics Foundation
PolitiHacks
Praxis Project
Privacy and Access Council of Canada
Privacy Camp
Progressive Change Campaign Committee
Progressive Librarians Guild
Public Knowledge
R Street Institute
Restore America's Voice
RevolutionTruth
Rights Working Group
Rocky Mountain Civil Liberties Association
RootsAction.org
Tactical Tech
TechFreedom
ten
Tenth Amendment Center
The Other 98%
Tor
Upwell
Urbana Champaign Independent Media Center
Women in Media & News
World Wide Web Foundation
YourAnonNews
PLG Events at ALA Annual

Friday, June 28

Left: PLG members Elaine Harger, Mike Marlin and Vivaldi at Haymarket Martyrs’ Monument

Below: PLG members Katharine Phenix, Mike Marlin and Vivaldi at Haymarket Martyrs’ Monument

These photos were taken following a tour of the Haymarket Memorial organized by the ALA/AFL-CIO Joint Committee on Library Services to Labor Groups. The tour was conducted by Larry Spivack, President of the Illinois Labor History Society.

For information on the Haymarket martyrs and the memorial see:

http://www.illinoislaborhistory.org/haymarket-tour-intro.html

Sunday, June 30
Progressive Librarians Guild Membership Meeting
PLG Events at ALA Annual

PLG Membership Meeting
30 June 2013
Chicago

Wi-fi service in the bowels of the McCormick Place Convention Center in Chicago was unable to connect the meeting for a Skype presentation by Braverman Prize winner Emily Lawrence on her essay “Loud Hands in the Library: Neurodiversity in LIS Theory and Practice.” PLG members must await publication of Progressive Librarian #41 to read Ms. Lawrence’s insightful and provocative work on a topic greatly in need of attention within librarianship.

So, following introductions, Megan Browndorf and Kelly McElroy, co-chairs of the Braverman Memorial Essay Prize contest, spoke briefly about Ms. Lawrence’s essay and then about problems that arose this year regarding contest guidelines. The ensuing conversation provided assistance to Kelly and Megan who will revise the guidelines accordingly. Among suggestions for change were: increasing stipend to $500, arranging for winning essayist to attend ALA conference under the aegis of Progressive Librarian with press credentials (allowing full conference registration at no cost), and clarifying guidelines in regard to student status in order to allow recent LIS graduates to submit essays for the contest.

Next on the agenda was a consideration of a resolution regarding PLG support of the nationwide fossil-fuel divestment campaign launched by the organization 350.org. A similar resolution was discussed the previous day at the ALA membership meeting where it lost by only 2 votes. After discussion and slight amendment, PLG members voted to approve the resolution.

Another resolution being considered by ALA regarded whistleblower Ed Snowden. Because we didn’t have copies of this document at the PLG meeting, it was decided that the resolution should be posted to the PLG listserv for members to read, consider, and vote on.

Next, people in attendance described the basis of their interest in PLG, followed by a brief summary of how PLG came into existence and its affiliation with the Social Responsibilities Round Table of ALA.

People were then invited to attend an exhibit reception at the Alternative Press Center followed by the PLG dinner in the Bucktown neighborhood of Chicago.

Report by Elaine Harger
PLG Events at ALA Annual

PLG Resolution on Divestment of Holdings in Fossil Fuel Companies and Libraries’ Role in a Peaceful Transition to a Fossil-Fuel-Free Economy

Whereas the Progressive Librarians Guild recognizes climate change as a serious problem for humanity and the planet;

Whereas in light of alarming evidence of the extent anthropogenic CO₂ emissions are having on climate change, the organization 350.org has launched a divestment campaign, supported by individuals such as Bishop Desmond Tutu, economist Naomi Klein, and activist Van Jones, prompting municipalities and institutions of higher learning across the country to divest holdings in fossil fuel industries;

Whereas precedence regarding divestment can be found in the 1980s campaign against South African apartheid when divestment and boycotts were used as tools for non-violent political change;

Whereas global climate change and resource depletion is prompting military authorities to prepare for inevitable social instability, which in the U.S. will likely be exacerbated by a culture of violence and racism unless steps are taken to address and mitigate these tendencies;

Whereas libraries and communities have witnessed the impacts of climate change in the form of increasingly powerful floods, hurricanes, tornados, wildfires, agricultural damage, and rising sea-levels;

Whereas organizations representing many institutional investors have called on governments to “develop workable frameworks that will reduce climate risk and support low carbon investment”; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Progressive Librarians Guild

1. encourages PLG members to work within their workplaces and communities to join the fossil fuel divestment movement and

2. to begin community conversations about what will be necessary to ensure a peaceful transition to fossil-fuel-free economy.

Approved by PLG members, 30 June 2013, Chicago

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PLG Events at ALA Annual

Supporting documentation:


PLG Events at ALA Annual

June 30, 2013
Crisis Image Archives opening reception at the Alternative Press Center
PLG Events at ALA Annual

Sunday, June 30
Progressive Librarians Guild Dinner

Have an update you’d like to see included in next month’s bulletin?
Send it to sarahbarriage@gmail.com