

American Library Association statements re: the “War on Terror”

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States government has implemented policies, practices and legislation that have compromised the democratic ideals of our country. These include activities that violate the constitutional rights of American citizens, promote a war based on a campaign of disinformation, and continue to bring about widespread destruction and loss of life abroad. The American Library Association has passed numerous resolutions addressing these concerns, excerpts of which appear below.

*Brought to your attention by the Social Responsibilities Round Table of ALA
Washington DC, June 26, 2007*

2003 – ON CIVIL LIBERTIES & USA PATRIOT Act

Resolution on the USA PATRIOT Act and Related Measures that Infringe on the Rights of Library Users

“RESOLVED, that the American Library Association considers sections of the USA PATRIOT Act are a present danger to the constitutional rights and privacy rights of library users...”

Adopted by the Council of ALA, January 29, 2003

2003 – ON DESTRUCTION OF CULTURAL RESOURCES IN IRAQ

Resolution on Libraries and Cultural Resources in Iraq

“RESOLVED, that the American Library Association (ALA) deplores the inaction of the U.S. and British authorities to secure cultural institutions to prevent the loss of precious cultural resources in Iraq; and be it further...

RESOLVED, that ALA urges the U.S. government to provide funding for the reconstruction and rebuilding of libraries and other cultural institutions in Iraq and to collaborate with UNESCO and other international and national bodies working to remedy this loss to the cultural record of humanity....”

Adopted by the Council of ALA, June 25, 2003

2004 – ON TORTURE

Resolution Against the Use of Torture as a Violation of the American Library Association’s Basic Values

“RESOLVED, that ALA condemns the use or threat of use of torture by the U.S. government as a barbarous violation of human rights, intellectual freedom and the rule of law.”

Adopted by the Council of ALA, June 30, 2004

2005 – ON GOVERNMENT DISTORTION & DESTRUCTION OF INFORMATION

Resolution on Disinformation, Media Manipulation & the Destruction of Public Information

“RESOLVED, that the American Library Association goes on record as being opposed to the use by government of disinformation, media manipulation, the destruction and excision of public information, and other such tactics;...”

Adopted by the Council of ALA, June 29, 2005

2005 – ON U.S. TROOP WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ

Resolution on the Connection Between the Iraq War and Libraries

“RESOLVED, that the American Library Association calls for the withdrawal from Iraq of all U.S. military forces, and the return of full sovereignty to the people of Iraq....”

Adopted by the Council of ALA on June 29, 2005

2006 – ON GENOCIDE

Resolution on the Darfur Genocide

“WHEREAS, over the past three years between 180,000 and 400,000 civilians have been killed in the Darfur region of Sudan, 2,000,000 people have been displaced, 2,000 villages have been burned and their wells poisoned, and women of all ages have been raped by government-supported Janjaweed militias;...

RESOLVED, that the American Library Association Council urges all the relevant ALA units and the profession-at-large to highlight and explain the Darfur genocide through collections, programs, displays, resource guides, and other suitable means....”

Adopted by the Council of ALA on June 27, 2006