

September's terrorist attack on New York and Washington, D.C., and the ensuing bombing campaign the US has been waging against Afghanistan has had repercussions in every professional sector, librarianship not excluded.

Very shortly after the bombing campaign was first announced, an online petition went out over the SRRT listserv: "Emergency Declaration for a Halt to Preparations for Bombing Afghanistan: Libraries Speak Out!" Pointing out that the "war that is about to be unleashed will likely have unmanageable 'collateral damage', human and moral", the petition called for the "lawful ... humane and peaceful resolution of conflicts" and urged cultural workers, teachers, librarians, and artists to "unite against vengeance for vengeance's sake, unite against terror bombing as an answer to terrorism."

Signatures were taken until the day the attacks commenced (9/23) and 280 library workers signed. Signers hailed from across the globe, including Canada, Australia, Venezuela, Mexico, Hong Kong, Denmark, Argentina, Belgium, and the UK, as well as spanning the United States, from Puerto Rico to Hawaii.

Mark Rosenzweig, the main writer of the petition, says, "we are obviously poised at the beginning of a new and very all-defining experience and that petition is one of the first manifestations, within the profession, of concern, (pre-'war' at that) about the implications of what's going on and is *going to be* going on."

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Africana Library librarian, Al Kagan, was a

co-writer of the petition and the second signer. He points to three main concerns that sparked and drove the petition: a repression of civil liberties, recent discriminatory actions and hate crimes against Muslims, Arabs, and others who merely look like Arabs or Muslims, and, more controversially, the feeling that the US is attempting to solve a political problem by military means.

"We need," says Kagan, "to speak out, as professionals who understand the world situation, against killing innocent people and making more enemies."

Kagan points to times in the past when the library profession took a stand in political events: during the Vietnamese war era, for instance, ALA came out against the war (albeit at a late stage). Likewise, letters to President Clinton protesting the bombings of Iraq and Sudan and the "Peace Telegram" sent to President Roosevelt (1940) by the Progressive Librarians Council can be viewed on Rory Litwin's "Librarians Against War" web page (www.libr.org/peace). Stressing that there is no contradiction between taking a stand on a political issue and providing free and equal access to information to patrons, Kagan points out that if librarians claim to be neutral we are "just abandoning our responsibilities. Our role is to educate the American public that [war] is not an appropriate response."

To view the petition, visit http://libr.org/peace/emergency_declaration.html.
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(3) deplores the censorship of the mass media which the military is enforcing in coverage of the war, depriving citizens of the right to know (ALA policy 50.3); and

(4) denounces the threat of the use of tactical nuclear weapons by the US led forces in pursuit of its goals (ALA policy 50.11)

submitted by Mark C. Rosenzweig, 11/28/01

Whereas ALA is among the preminent defenders of intellectual freedom and government openness in the US.

Whereas intellectual freedom, our primary value as librarians, cannot be more seriously violated than by forcing speech through systematic violence by government against detained individuals.

Whereas the US government has announced its readiness to use torture in the interrogation of suspected terrorists or their suspected accomplices

Whereas the use or possible use of torture is the ultimate deterrent to the cultivation of a democratic atmosphere of free speech, free thought, free assembly, free belief to which we, as an Association and as a profession, are committed.

Whereas the secrecy which will undoubtedly attend the use of torture will also violate our commitment, entailed by our intellectual freedom principles to open government and the necessity of true and accurate information of our government's actions

and

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'suspects' of what crimes they are being accused of, employs the use of racial 'profiling' in the determination of suspects, justifies the denial of due process to suspects, illegal detention, the mistreatment and unequal treatment of prisoners who are suspects and claims the right to the use of torture to obtain information

and

Whereas, more specifically, libraries have been enlisted to assist in and enable the use of racial/ethnic profiling in identification of 'suspects'; the surveillance of individuals based on arbitrary criteria, the turning over of confidential library records on the presentation of a mere search

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acting), a violation of the Bill of Rights of the US Constitution and countless other protocols to which the USA is party, and, for the librarians in whose name SRRT/ALA speaks, a violation of intellectual freedom and the public's right to know, both of which are derived from elements of the Constitution which are compromised by this practice.

submitted by Mark C. Rosenzweig
SRRT Action Council member and ALA Councilor at large
11/30/01

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Whereas the secrecy which will undoubtedly attend the use of torture will also violate our commitment, entailed by our intellectual freedom principles to open government and the necessity of true and accurate information of our government's actions

and

Whereas the threat of torture of the use of torture and similar practices of coercing testimony, confessions, information is, universally condemned under international law [e.g the Geneva Convention, Articles 3 and 31 and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, Article 5] and (a)the Fourth Amendment's right to be free of unreasonable search or seizure (which encompasses the right not be abused by the police) (b)the Fifth Amendment's right against self-incrimination (which encompasses the right to remain silent during interrogations), (c)the Fifth and the Fourteenth Amendments' guarantees of due process (ensuring fundamental fairness in criminal justice system), and (d)the Eighth Amendment's right to be free of cruel or unusual punishment],

Be it resolved that the SRRT/ALA condemns the use or threat of torture by the US government as a barbarous violation of human rights, intellectual freedom, and the rule of law. The ALA , decries --along with condemnation of the practice of torture anywhere-- the suggestion by the US government that under a 'state of emergency' in this country torture is an acceptable tool in pursuit of its goals.

submitted by Mark C. Rosenzweig
SRRT Action Council member & ALA Councilor at large
11/30/01

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Since the World Trade Towers were attacked, I have been in a state of emotional shock not so much shock that it happened (I ponder that it hadn't occurred sooner quite frankly), but shock by our nation's seeming inability to "connect the dots". Why are so few asking "why" and why are so few asking for evidence and proper procedure by international law (see Francis Boyle, UIUC GSLIS bulletin boards ;also <http://www.themodernreligion.com/terrorism.tn#list>). And why does no one question the logic of a "War on Terrorism" (an empty rhetorical statement) and the very real consequences of our war on the already decimated peoples of Afghanistan.

For years I have been listening to my feminist sisters crying in pain at the treatment of women under the Taliban. And again and again I have seen the same petition circulating around the internet, pleading for the U.S. to do something to stop the slow torturous debilitation of a nation's women under the hands of a regime which shows

ALA Policies, Statements, and Web Resources on Privacy and Confidentiality

Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks	http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/electacc.html
Questions and Answers: Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks	http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/oif_q&a.html
Code of Ethics	http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/ethics.html
Freedom to Read Statement	http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/freeread.html
Freedom to View Statement	http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/freedomtoview.html
Library Bill of Rights	http://www.ala.org/work/freedom/lbr.html
Policy concerning Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information about Library Users	http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/pol_user.html
Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records	http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/pol_conf.html
Privacy and Confidentiality	http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/privacy.html
Privacy Resources for Librarians, Library Users, and Families	http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/privacyresources.html
Suggested Procedures for Implementing Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records	http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/sugpolcn.html
USA Patriot Act	http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/alertusapatriotact.html
Library Community Statement on Freedom of Speech and Access to Information	http://www.ala.org/washoff/FreedomofSpeech9.pdf

Alternative Resources on the U.S. "War Against Terrorism"

<http://www.pitt.edu/~ttwiss/irtf/Alternative.html>

Encouraging Dialogue through Cultural Programming

<http://www.ala.org/publicprograms/dialogue/>

Library's Responsibility to Provide Information on the Current Crisis

<http://www.inglewoodlibrary.org/newsref.html>

ACLU's Know Your Rights Pamphlet

http://www.aclu.org/library/know_your_rights.pdf

REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL

This is my second annual report to SRRT on the annual IFLA conferences. The recent meeting took place in Boston in August 2001. This was the largest IFLA meeting on record with 5330 attendees from 150 countries. And this was the first IFLA meeting to be held in the United States since the 1985 Chicago meeting. (The Chicago meeting passed the historic resolution excluding apartheid institutions from membership. Unfortunately, and in disregard to significant efforts, the IFLA Executive refused to act on that resolution. But

LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITU-

GUESTS

It is always good news when we have the opportunity to add to our ranks. Please welcome these new SRRT Members. If you work or live near by them, drop them a line and welcome them to SRRT. If their areas of interest are related to yours, again thank them for joining SRRT and ask if they need any assistance.

Task Force Chairs, please note the Task Force(s) in which they have indicated an interest. If you live or work nearby, drop them a line to give a friendly, "Hello! and Welcome to SRRT." Be sure to add them to your Task Force eMail discussion lists.

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The nomination process for the 2002 Eubanks Award will begin with the AIP Business meeting at the ALA Midwinter Meeting. Following that meeting, all business regarding nominees or procedures will be carried on by email or other means as necessary. Nominations must be received by the Jury Chair by February 15th.

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