

Resolution on "National Policy on Protection of Sensitive,
But Unclassified Information in Federal Government Telecommunications
and Automated Information Systems" (NTISSP No. 2, 29 October 1986)

WHEREAS, On October 29, 1986, the President's National Security Adviser issued an extremely broad new designation "sensitive but unclassified information" and directed federal government agencies to implement it; and

WHEREAS, On November 11, 1986, a senior Department of Defense official stated that privately owned unclassified electronic data bases would be reviewed for "sensitive but unclassified information" and that access to these data bases may be restricted or systems installed to monitor who uses them; and

WHEREAS, Over the last few months, representatives from the Department of Defense, Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation have been visiting private information companies to ask questions about who is using their information and for what purposes; and

WHEREAS, The institution of this new policy will restrict access to unclassified government and private sector information that has been easily and legally obtained by the public through libraries; and

WHEREAS, This Executive Branch Policy conflicts with American Library Association policy #53.4, Governmental Intimidation, and interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights:

"The American Library Association opposes any use of government prerogatives which leads to the intimidation of the individual or the citizenry from the exercise of free expression;" and

WHEREAS, This Executive Branch Policy conflicts with American Library Association Policies regarding ready and equal access to government information, specifically:

Priority Area A. Access to information, in the American Library Association Priorities and Goals: "1) All individuals have equal access to libraries and information services," and "3) Government information in widely and easily available;" and

WHEREAS, The American Library Association policy #53.1, Library Bill of Rights states:

"3) Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment," and

"5) A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views;" now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association

1. Seek to have the "National Policy on Protection of Sensitive, But Unclassified Information In Federal Government Telecommunications and Automated Information Systems" repealed or rescinded;
2. Cooperate with other organizations to challenge the implementation of this policy, and;
3. Request the Freedom to Read Foundation to be alert to an appropriate opportunity to challenge the legality of this Policy.

Adopted by the Council of the
American Library Association
Chicago, Illinois
January 21, 1987
(Council Document #28)