



ALA Washington Newsletter

Contents:

January 30, 1987, Volume 39, Number 2

NTIS Privatization	p. 1	Sensitive Information	p. 1
ACTION NEEDED	p. 1	Government Information	p. 1

Attachments:

- 1) Resolution Concerning OMB's Proposed Privatization of NTIS
- 2) 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)
- 3) "Less Access to Less Information By and About the US Government: 2"

NTIS Privatization

The Office of Management and Budget revealed its decision on the future of the National Technical and Information Service in the Appendix to the FY 1988 Budget of the United States Government with the sentence: "In 1988, the private sector will be offered the opportunity to operate NTIS on contract, with the government retaining overall policy direction." ALA is concerned that such contracting out or privatization of NTIS would adversely affect equal and ready access to scientific and technical information. (The resolution passed by ALA's Council at Midwinter is attached to this newsletter.)

ACTION NEEDED: Write to your Representative and Senators urging hearings about the future of NTIS and OMB's proposal to contract it out. Send copies of your letters to Rep. Doug Walgren (D-PA), chair of the House Subcommittee on Science, Research and Technology, and to Sen. Donald Riegle (D-MI), chair of the Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Science, Technology and Space.

Sensitive Information

See the December 19, 1986, newsletter for background on ALA's resolution.

Government Information

Diminishing public access to federal information has become not only a pressing but a bulky matter; hence, we are issuing this brief newsletter with the compilation of "Less Access to Less Information By and About the U. S. Government: 2." This booklet for 1985-86 contains 110 entries in 33 pages. The first one, attached to the December 31, 1984, newsletter, covered the period 1981-84, ran to 18 pages and included 71 entries. Additional copies are available, with discounts for bulk orders. Individual copies are priced: Volume 1, \$2.00; Volume 2, \$3.00; Volumes 1 and 2, \$5.00. Orders must be prepaid and a mailing label included.

An irregular publication of the American Library Association Washington Office, 110 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C., 20002 (202-547-4440). ISSN 0001-1746. Editors: Eileen D. Cooke, Carol C. Henderson. All or part of the ALA Washington Newsletter may be reprinted for distribution, with appropriate credits.

Resolution Concerning OMB's Proposed Privatization of NTIS

- WHEREAS, The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) proposes to contract out or privatize the National Technical Information Service (NTIS); and
- WHEREAS, Strong objections have been submitted to NTIS and OMB by the American Library Association, other professional library and information science associations, the academic and research community, individuals, and private sector organizations requiring rapid, economical access to scientific and technical information collected or generated with U. S. tax dollars; and
- WHEREAS, ALA has expressed its concerns regarding the maintenance of the vital functions currently performed by NTIS, namely:
- a) provision of a centralized source and permanent repository for a broad range of federal, international, state, local, and other unclassified scientific and technical reports;
 - b) provision of bibliographic access to the material through tools such as NTIS' Government Reports Announcements and Index;
 - c) dissemination of bibliographic information products of such a repository, i.e., catalogs, indexes, abstracts, and newsletters, through the Government Printing Office's Depository Library Program;
 - d) operation of a timely, "on demand" sales program for this scientific and technical information at prices affordable for not-for-profit libraries, educational institutions, students, small business entrepreneurs, and other similar groups; and
- WHEREAS, Such contracting out or privatization of NTIS would adversely affect equal and ready access to scientific and technical information crucial to the competitive position of the U. S. in the world economy, and to the security of the nation; and
- WHEREAS, The Office of Management and Budget has not responded publicly to these concerns; now, therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That the American Library Association calls upon the Congress of the United States to hold hearings on OMB's proposal and, if necessary, draft and pass legislation designed to assure that the interests of the American public and the functions identified above will not be vitiated should OMB proceed with its plan to contract out or privatize NTIS; and, be it further
- RESOLVED, That copies of the Resolution be transmitted to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, appropriate committees of Congress, the Secretary of Commerce, the Director of the National Technical Information Service, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Adopted by the Council of the
American Library Association
Chicago, Illinois
January 21, 1987
(Council Document #26.6)

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

(over)

"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)