

January 22, 2014

The Honorable James Clapper
Office of the Director of National Intelligence
Washington, DC 20511

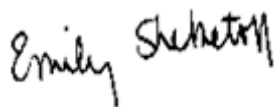
Dear General Clapper:

The American Library Association (ALA) respectfully requests that you reconsider the decision to discontinue distribution of the Open Source Center's translations of foreign news media. The National Technical Information Office's (NTIS) redistribution of the *World News Connection* database has been a staple for researchers of all types since its inception in the 1940s.

As you have already heard from the National Coalition for History and the other sixteen organizations which cosigned the December 18th letter (<http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2013/12/dni-wnc.pdf>) *World News Connection* plays a vital role in the work of many – historians, public policy experts, students, researchers, archivists, political scientists, journalists, government officials, and the average citizen interested in knowing more about the world around her.

As a product of a U.S. government agency – the Open Source Center – these translations have already been paid for by the citizens of this country. Making them publically available via NTIS is just the sort of open government initiative envisioned by the Second Open Government National Action Plan released on December 6 (http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/us_national_action_plan_6p.pdf). While not specifically a “foreign surveillance activity” distribution of the *World News Connection* translations falls well within the stated goal to “make public as much information as possible about certain sensitive intelligence collection programs.” Discontinuing *WNC* when the Obama administration is calling for increased declassification and transparency in foreign surveillance activities is counterintuitive at best.

We stand firmly with our colleagues in asking that this restrictive “closed government” decision be reversed and the *WNC* translations again be made available to the public via NTIS. Thank you for your consideration.



Emily Sheketoff, Executive Director
American Library Association Washington Office