

March 12, 2014

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to urge you to expedite the declassification of the report by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) on the interrogation and detention practices of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The necessity of disclosing this report is underscored by indications that CIA has interfered with the Committee's work.

On March 11, SSCI Chairman Dianne Feinstein confirmed reports that the CIA conducted surveillance on computers used by SSCI staff and detailed additional agency interference with the Committee's investigation into the CIA's rendition, detention and interrogation (RDI) program. CIA Director John Brennan subsequently denied any impropriety. The conduct Chairman Feinstein described would violate constitutional separation of powers and is deeply troubling.

During a SSCI hearing in January, Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) asked CIA Director John Brennan about whether the CIA was subject to the Federal Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (18 U.S.C. § 1030), which prohibits accessing government computers networks without authorization. Director Brennan later admitted that the statute does apply to the agency. Allegations of unlawful CIA surveillance of the computers used by SSCI staffers to prepare their report on the RDI program require a thorough, independent investigation.

Chairman Feinstein noted that the surveillance "was followed by an allegation which we now have seen repeated anonymously in the press, that the committee staff had somehow obtained the document through unauthorized or criminal means." She described the document as an internal agency review of interrogation practices named for former CIA Director Leon Panetta. Feinstein also noted that the CIA never asked how SSCI obtained this document, which she said that Committee staff had lawfully and appropriately acquired.

Senator Mark Udall (D-CO) and Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM), members of SSCI, also have called for the declassification of the SSCI report on CIA practices at so-called black sites. Senator Heinrich said, "The public must be given a complete and accurate accounting of this dark period in our history by declassifying not only the full Committee study, but the Panetta Review as well. Only then can the American people understand the scope and impact of the CIA's actions and hopefully future generations will learn from these mistakes." We couldn't agree more.

In light of last year's disclosures about domestic surveillance conducted by the National Security Agency, it is clear that there is far too little oversight of the Intelligence Community (IC). Much of the

blame has been placed on Congress, but obviously excessive secrecy and obstruction of oversight by the IC also must be addressed. Your administration's role in creating such an imbalance of power threatens the legitimacy of our constitutional democracy.

We urge you to take three initial steps to help restore public confidence: Declassify the SSCI report; end any obstruction of congressional oversight; and hold the CIA accountable for any criminal violations or other improper conduct.

Sincerely,

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
American Library Association
Bill of Rights Defense Committee
Center for Financial Privacy and Human Rights
Center for International Policy
Center for Media and Democracy
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington
Defending Dissent Foundation
Electronic Frontier Foundation
Electronic Privacy Information Center
Federation of American Scientists
First Amendment Coalition
Freedom of the Press Foundation
Government Accountability Project
Historians Against the War
Human Rights First
Just Foreign Policy
Liberty Coalition
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Religious Campaign Against Torture
National Security Network
No More Guantánamos
OpenTheGovernment.org
Peace Action
Peace Action West
Project On Government Oversight (POGO)
Public Citizen
Society of Professional Journalists
Sunlight Foundation
TechFreedom
The Constitution Project
United for Peace and Justice
Veterans For Peace

Vietnam Veterans Against The War Legacy Trust