

STUDY: MASS GOVERNMENT SPYING CRUSHING FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Whistleblowers also now less likely to come forward

by STEVE WATSON | INFOWARS.COM | JULY 28, 2014



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http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=bloPC_BHCD

QA new report compiled by rights groups reveals that government domestic spying programs are significantly changing the way journalists and lawyers operate, thus undermining Constitutional rights.

The ACLU and Human Rights Watch have compiled [the report](#) based on interviews with scores of high profile reporters and attorneys. The survey serves as proof that the protection of private information and sources is “increasingly scarce and difficult to ensure” due to government espionage.

“As a result, journalists and their sources, as well as lawyers and their clients, are changing their behavior in ways that undermine basic rights and corrode democratic processes,” the report notes.

Whistleblowers and reporters are now increasingly censoring themselves, meaning that important information regarding government corruption or mismanagement remains hidden from the public. The rights groups argue that this is clear evidence of the restriction of freedom of speech.

“Journalists told us that officials are substantially less willing to be in contact with the press, even with regard to unclassified matters or personal opinions, than they were even a few years ago,” the report states.

“In turn, journalists increasingly feel the need to adopt elaborate steps to protect sources and information, and eliminate any digital trail of their investigations,” the survey found, indicating that reporters are increasingly using encryption methods for electronic communications, or avoiding them altogether, as well as employing disposable cell phones.

Some reporters have given up altogether on pursuing leads because “If the government wants to get you, they will,” as Washington Post reporter Adam Goldman notes.

Washington Post reporter Barton Gellman, also notes that in the past the government wasn’t able to effectively undermine investigative journalism, but all that has now changed. “It used to be that leak

investigations didn't get far because it was too hard to uncover the source, but with digital tools it's just much easier, and sources know that." Gellman states.

New Yorker staff writer Jane Mayer adds that sources are now "afraid of the entire weight of the federal government coming down on them."

"The added layer of fear makes it so much harder. I can't count the number of people afraid of the legal implications [of speaking to me]." Mayer notes.

Other reporters expressed concern that secrecy and corruption will thrive in such conditions.

The rights groups also argue that the right to counsel, protected under the Sixth-Amendment, is also being undermined as lawyers are being impeded from communicating confidentially with clients due to government spying.

"Given the now publicly admitted revelations that there is no privacy in communications, including those between attorneys and their clients, I feel ethically obligated to tell all clients that I can't guarantee anything [they] say is privileged ... or will remain confidential," urges Linda Moreno, a defense attorney specializing in national security and terrorism cases.

"If the US fails to address these concerns promptly and effectively," report author G. Alex Sinha writes, "it could do serious, long-term damage to the fabric of democracy in the country."

The survey was compiled from interviews with 46 journalists, including reports currently with the New York Times, Associated Press and Reuters, in addition to 42 lawyers.

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