



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on May 4, 2011

Julian Assange: Facebook Providing Information to American Intelligence

In an interview with RT (previously known as Russia Today), WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange (left) claims that the information released on his website is just the beginning. He said that soon the flow of formerly secret documents will resume.

When asked by the RT interviewer about the role social media networks such as Twitter and Facebook played in the recent uprisings in the Middle East, Assange responded with vitriol and a warning:

Facebook in particular is the most appalling spying machine that has ever been invented. Here we have the worlds most comprehensive database about people, their relationships, their names, their addresses, their locations and the communications with each other, their relatives, all sitting within the United States, all accessible to US intelligence.

Facebook, Google, Yahoo all these major US organizations have built-in interfaces for US intelligence. Its not a matter of serving a subpoena. They have an interface that they have developed for US intelligence to use.

Now, is it the case that Facebook is actually run by US intelligence? No, its not like that. Its simply that US intelligence is able to bring to bear legal and political pressure on them. And its costly for them to hand out records one by one, so they have automated the process. Everyone should understand that when they add their friends to Facebook, they are doing free work for United States intelligence agencies in building this database for them.

Assanges accusations are difficult to prove. Certainly, as he says, it is unlikely that Facebook was created by the U.S. intelligence apparatus to spy on citizens. However, the notion that the CIA and others in that community might take advantage of the terabytes of personal data collected and stored by Facebook, Twitter, and other similar sites is not far-fetched.

In fact, the *New York Times* ran a [story](#) in September of last year that described the symbiotic relationship between social network media and the government:

Federal law enforcement and national security officials are preparing to seek sweeping new regulations for the Internet, arguing that their ability to wiretap criminal and terrorism suspects is going dark as people increasingly communicate online instead of by telephone.

Essentially, officials want Congress to require all services that enable communications including





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encrypted e-mail transmitters like BlackBerry, social networking Web sites like Facebook and software that allows direct peer to peer messaging like Skype to be technically capable of complying if served with a wiretap order. The mandate would include being able to intercept and unscramble encrypted messages.

In defense of this augmentation of authority (and sidestep of the Constitution), general counsel for the FBI Valerie Caproni said, We're talking about preserving our ability to execute our existing authority in order to protect the public safety and national security.

Once again, new dancers enter the floor, but the song remains the same: give us your liberty and we will give you safety.

The evaluation of that exchange [expressed](#) in 1759 by printer-turned-patriot Benjamin Franklin is well known: Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.

In his assessment of the worrisome cooperative tendency of social media services, Julian Assange has a good point.

What happened to make Assange, a man seemingly without allegiance (other than that pledged to his own aggrandizement) a pariah and a fugitive?

The story, straight from Wikipedia:

On 28 November 2010, WikiLeaks began releasing some of the 251,000 American diplomatic cables in their possession, of which over 53 percent are listed as unclassified, 40 percent are "Confidential" and just over six percent are classified "Secret". The following day, the Attorney-General of Australia, Robert McClelland, told the press that Australia would inquire into Assange's activities and WikiLeaks. He said that "from Australia's point of view, we think there are potentially a number of criminal laws that could have been breached by the release of this information. The Australian Federal Police are looking at that". McClelland would not rule out the possibility that Australian authorities will cancel Assange's passport, and warned him that he might face charges should he return to Australia. The Federal Police inquiry found that Assange had not committed any crime.

Despite the legal quagmire that has its leader stuck, WikiLeaks recently began releasing secret files containing information on every one of the prisoners held at the notorious American prison at Guantanamo Bay. According to the [website](#), the details for every detainee will be released daily over the coming month.

Given that the prison was opened in 2002 by Republican President George W. Bush, but has remained open under current (and Democratic) President Barack Obama in defiance of his campaign promises otherwise, Assange and his group display their non-partisan bona fides. Assange explained to RT the impetus behind the decision to release the Guantanamo documents:

There [are] a number of reasons why we released it now. The primary one is that we are a small organization, although a very committed one. Last year we came under extraordinary attack. All these things continue to go on. And so they've really dampened down our ability to move quickly and publish quickly.

The timing is good. Obama has given up on closing Guantanamo and has decided to re-open the trial process. And we now have a situation where even the Obama administration says that 48 of



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those people still in Guantanamo are completely innocent and they should be sent somewhere, and they are not being sent anywhere. So, completely innocent people are incarcerated for years and years and years with no trial and no hope of relief. No country would agree to house them, including the United States. But the United States has made them its problem.

The United States was involved in rounding up these innocent people, setting up a process that was from the very beginning corrupt. There is a reason why they are in Guantanamo and not on the US mainland and not in an allied country. And that reason was to hide them and to keep them outside of the law. Just like you have Caribbean islands engaged in money laundering, the United States is engaged in people laundering.

That all of this whistleblowing has attracted the attention and the animosity of the U.S. government is without question. The Department of Justice is currently [investigating](#) the release of the embassy cables and is considering charging Assange with various crimes. In fact, in furtherance of its prosecution of Assange specifically and WikiLeaks in general, the DOJ [subpoenaed](#) the social network Twitter and requested that it provide the government with Assanges personal account information.

With such powerful enemies, Assange need not look for trouble. While he is certainly not Americas Most Wanted, there is no doubt that he is considered dangerous and a threat to American security (and we all know what that means).

Whom, however, does Assange consider his enemy? He told RT:

Our No. 1 enemy is ignorance. And I believe that is the No. 1 enemy for everyone its not understanding what actually is going on in the world. It's only when you start to understand that you can make effective decisions and effective plans. Now, the question is, who is promoting ignorance? Well, those organizations that try to keep things secret, and those organizations which distort true information to make it false or misrepresentative. In this latter category, it is bad media.

And:

One of the hopeful things that Ive discovered is that nearly every war that has started in the past 50 years has been a result of media lies. The media could've stopped it if they had searched deep enough; if they hadn't reprinted government propaganda they could've stopped it. But what does that mean? Well, that means that basically populations don't like wars, and populations have to be fooled into wars. Populations don't willingly, with open eyes, go into a war. So if we have a good media environment, then we also have a peaceful environment.

The truth, no matter the provenance, will not only set the captive free, but will keep the free from becoming captive.



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