



Written by [James Murphy](#) on October 11, 2019

Sources: Yovanovitch Ordered Monitoring of Reporters Investigating Biden's Ukraine Dealings

In the very first amendment to the U.S. Constitution, our Founders guaranteed our freedom of speech and specifically pointed out that the press may not be infringed upon in their role as overseers of our government. But on Wednesday, former House Intelligence Committee chairman Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) reported on Fox's Hannity program that he was aware of requests made by the former U.S. ambassador to the Ukraine that certain reporters be "monitored" while they were on the ground in the country.



Does such "monitoring" equal infringement?

Nunes suggested that former Ambassador to the Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch (shown), an Obama appointee, may have made the abnormal requests of the State Department. Today, Yovanovitch is testifying to Congress in a secret closed-door deposition in defiance of Trump's order not to cooperate with the Democrat's so-called impeachment inquiry. Yovanovitch is still an employee of the State Department and is, reportedly, very unhappy that she was removed from her ambassadorship.

"What I've heard — and I want to be clear — there's a difference. What I've heard is that there were strange requests, irregular requests, to monitor not just one journalist, but multiple journalists," Nunes told Sean Hannity. "Now perhaps that was ok. Perhaps there was some reason for that — that it can be explained away. But that's what we know and that's what we're going to be looking into."

While Nunes stressed that there might be some good reason for the State Department to, in effect, spy on journalists, it's hard to understand, given the First Amendment, exactly what that good reason might be.

Among the reporters who were allegedly surveilled under Yovanovitch's orders was John Solomon, a Fox News contributor. Solomon is claiming that he has received information from the intelligence community that his communications were inappropriately monitored while he was investigating Joe and Hunter Biden's relationship with Ukrainian energy company Burisma Holdings. The company paid Hunter Biden an exorbitant salary in the wake of his father's involvement in the Ukraine.

"About ten days ago," Solomon said, "I received multiple contacts from the intelligence community suggesting that there may have been some inappropriate monitoring of my communications. It is not yet clear what that consisted of, whether it was just monitoring my social media using government resources ... people raise the possibility that there were Privacy Act violations. But to date, my lawyers have not yet been able to get a full accounting of what happened," Solomon said.

"As a journalist, it's chilling to hear the possibility that my communications in Ukraine might have been monitored," Solomon concluded.



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So, a journalist who was investigating Joe Biden's Ukrainian shakedown may have been "monitored," using State Department resources on the orders of an Obama appointed ambassador? Frankly, if true, such a story makes Watergate look like jaywalking.

Biden has already admitted his use of strongarm tactics to get a prosecutor in the Ukraine fired, [as this ad points out](#). "If the prosecutor is not fired, you're not getting the money," Biden bragged to his friends at the Council on Foreign Relations. "Well, son of a b***h, he got fired."

It would stand to reason that Biden and the Obama administration would not want Biden's admission investigated any further. It would also stand to reason that a corrupt administration — or an ambassador appointed by a corrupt administration — might want to keep tabs on any journalist who might report on said corruption.

After all, as the *Washington Examiner* [points out](#), the Obama administration was well known for going after members of the press whom they saw as hostile to them.

Anita Dunn, the White House communications director at the time, said of such journalists, "We're going to treat them the way we would treat an opponent. As they are undertaking a war against Barack Obama and the White House, we don't need to pretend that this is the way that legitimate news organizations behave."

I guess "legitimate" is in the eye of the beholder.

In 2013, the Obama Justice Department labeled James Rosen — a reporter for Fox News at the time — as a "criminal co-conspirator" under the Espionage Act of 1917. This allegation was signed off on by-then Attorney General Eric Holder and then used to obtain warrants to trace his phone, review all of his emails back to 2010, and even seize the phone records of his parents.

In the end, the reason that Holder acted so vigorously against Rosen, was that he used a State Department contractor as a source for a story. As if that is somehow criminal.

So, when you hear fawning media stories today about Marie Yovanovitch's "brave" decision to stand up against Trump's orders against members of his administration cooperating with the House's shady impeachment inquiry, remember that, although she still works for the State Department, she's an Obama-era leftover.

And when you hear stories about how Trump's divisive language against the media is somehow dividing the country, remember that it was his predecessor who used government resources to track and intimidate media members long before Trump ever took office.

Photo of Marie Yovanovitch: AP Images



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