

WIKILEAKS AND THE INFORMATION WAR

Introduction

Focus

WikiLeaks is a Web site that publishes “secret” government or corporate information. In this *News in Review* story we examine the controversy over the release by WikiLeaks of hundreds of classified U.S. documents, as well as the role of its founder and editor-in-chief, Julian Assange.

Further Research

The Web address of WikiLeaks has changed frequently. At the time this guide went to press the WikiLeaks URL was <http://wikileaks.ch>.

WikiLeaks is a name that strikes terror in the hearts of governments around the world. In the three years in which it has been in existence, WikiLeaks has changed the world’s access to classified information.

WikiLeaks was designed to be a place where individuals with access to secret information, both government and private, could post that information while retaining their anonymity. It was to be a refuge for whistle-blowers—those who had damaging information embarrassing to their organizations—whose careers and even lives could be destroyed if they were identified as responsible for the leak.

While WikiLeaks attained some notoriety from the very beginning, it was a series of postings in 2010 that brought it to worldwide public attention, when three massive groups of classified U.S. documents were released. The first group dealt with the Afghan war, detailing the many obstacles to a successful conclusion for the U.S. and its allies, including Canada. The second provided an intimate picture of U.S. military operations in Iraq from 2003 through 2009.

The third group consisted of diplomatic cables relaying private communications between the U.S. government and its representatives abroad. Many of these included candid assessments of foreign governments and political figures that were less than flattering.

The U.S. government was outraged by the release of the documents and is committed to taking steps to neutralize WikiLeaks and bring down its founder and spokesperson, Julian Assange.

Assange is currently in England awaiting an extradition hearing to Sweden on unrelated charges. The U.S. government is rumoured to be trying to find a way to bring him to trial on charges of espionage.

The nature and value of the WikiLeaks revelations are a matter of some dispute. Many people feel that while the leaked information is valuable in confirming suspicions, it doesn’t actually reveal anything explosively new. Others feel that WikiLeaks documents have the potential to destabilize the security of countries like the United States.

What is significant, however, is the role that WikiLeaks is already playing in making this kind of information available to both the traditional media and the general public. In many countries—even in representative democracies like Canada and the United States—public access to information can be severely restricted. Thanks to WikiLeaks, this may be about to change. As Margaret Wente wrote when the Afghan war materials were released: “The treasure trove of information released on Sunday was obtained not by investigative reporters working for the old-line mainstream media but by a formerly obscure Web site called WikiLeaks. Its raison d’être is whistle-blowing on a worldwide scale. WikiLeaks must now be counted among the most influential news outlets in the world. And the untouchable way in which it operates marks a seismic shift in the age-old struggle between the authorities and the whistle-blowers” (*The Globe and Mail*, July 20, 2010).

To Consider

Based on what you know about WikiLeaks, what side of the argument do you find yourself on? Do you feel access to confidential documents helps to keep government and corporations more honest, or do you think the release of such documents puts governments and countries in danger? Join with a couple of other students to discuss.

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Video Review

Pre-viewing Discussion

1. Governments try to keep all kinds of information secret, and the media devote a great deal of time and effort trying to uncover those secrets. What kinds of information would governments most likely try to keep out of the hands of the media?

2. Large corporations as well as governments are targeted by WikiLeaks. What kinds of corporate secrets would WikiLeaks be most interested in?

3. If governments and corporations are operating honestly and legally, why should they be concerned about internal information being released to the public?

Video Questions

Respond to the questions in the spaces provided.

1. Where does WikiLeaks get the information it publishes?

2. What was the content of the video that first brought WikiLeaks to prominence?

3. What did WikiLeaks's first dump of classified military documents reveal about the fate of a Canadian helicopter in Afghanistan?

4. How many U.S. diplomatic cables were released by WikiLeaks?

5. What did these cables highlight as a major problem in dealing with Afghan authorities?

6. Reporter Ioanna Roumeliotis describes WikiLeaks as “a virtual parking lot.” What does she mean by that?

7. WikiLeaks argues that the traditional news organizations need the Web site. Why does it believe this?

8. How does Julian Assange describe WikiLeaks’s commitment to its sources?

9. Why did Julian Assange end up in a British prison?

10. What is “Operation Payback”?

11. What does Julian Assange say happened at WikiLeaks while he was in prison?

Post-viewing Discussion

1. Do the WikiLeaks revelations described in the video match those that were anticipated in your pre-viewing discussion? Were there some that you and your classmates did not anticipate, or others that were not revealed?

2. Some commentators have argued that without Julian Assange WikiLeaks would become much less significant as a source for journalists. Based on your viewing of the video, do you agree with this assessment? Why or why not?

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What is WikiLeaks?

Did you know . . .

WikiLeaks has no formal connection with Wikipedia, but chose to use the prefix “wiki” to emphasize the openness of its information sources.

Reading Prompt

As you read the following information think about whether or not WikiLeaks is really “just” a news organization.

“WikiLeaks is a non-profit media organization dedicated to bringing important news and information to the public. We provide an innovative, secure, and anonymous way for independent sources around the world to leak information to our journalists. We publish material of ethical, political, and historical significance while keeping the identity of our sources anonymous, thus providing a universal way for the revealing of suppressed and censored injustices” (<http://wikileaks.ch>).

Founded in 2007, WikiLeaks from its beginnings aimed to be a Web site where whistle-blowers could deposit documentary evidence of wrongdoing by both governments and private corporations. Uncensored versions of the documents would be made available to media outlets around the world. The identity of the individuals submitting them would be protected.

Initially, the organization described its focus as follows: “Our primary interests are oppressive regimes in Asia, the former Soviet bloc, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East, but we also expect to be of assistance to those in the West who wish to reveal unethical behaviour in their own governments and corporations” (CBC News, January 11, 2007).

To protect the identity of contributors, WikiLeaks provides sophisticated encryption technology to those who wish to upload documents to the organization. Once it has received the documents, a team of journalists and lawyers reviews them to verify them and the information

they contain. Once they pass this test, they are published on the Web with the hope that they will call public attention to the issues they document.

Before releasing its most controversial recent material, WikiLeaks gave it to three international news giants—*The New York Times*, Germany’s *Der Spiegel*, and Britain’s *The Guardian*—who did much of the fact-checking for the organization and revised some of the more sensitive documents before releasing them.

WikiLeaks’ main founder and spokesperson is Julian Assange, an Australian by birth and computer programmer by training. (You can read more about Assange on page 15 of this guide.) He is one member of the nine-member board that directs the organization.

Growth

By early 2008, WikiLeaks’s significance was already being noted by the mainstream media. The influential British periodical *The Economist* drew readers’ attention to WikiLeaks’s early accomplishments: “Big recent scoops have included an operating manual for guards at the American internment camp at Guantanamo, a document relating to the British government’s expensive rescue of Northern Rock, a troubled bank, and material relating to official corruption in Kenya” (March 8, 2008). Ivor Tossell, in *The Globe and Mail* on May 30, 2008, described it as “one of the first truly post-national institutions that the Internet has produced. It wants

to skip above the sheriffs' heads, doing good as it perceives it. And it's willing to leverage every advantage the Internet provides to get there."

Originally set up as a Web site from a house in Melbourne, Australia, WikiLeaks has few full-time workers—perhaps as few as six—but claims as many as 800 part-time volunteers and another 10 000 "supporters" (*Toronto Star*, July 27, 2010). It posts its information on multiple servers in several different countries to avoid being shut down by authorities.

Impact

Recent 2010 publications by WikiLeaks of information from the U.S. military and diplomatic service have generated tremendous international interest. These have included:

- A video of a U.S. helicopter attack in Iraq that killed civilians, including two reporters for the Reuters news agency
- About 92 000 U.S. military documents dealing with the Afghan war
- Nearly 400 000 U.S. military documents detailing actions in the Iraq war

For Discussion

1. How much of WikiLeaks's success can be attributed to its having access to so much classified information from the U.S.?
2. Are there lessons for other countries in the way WikiLeaks has released the U.S. documents? If so, what are some of those lessons?

- Around 250 000 U.S. diplomatic "cables" (dispatches and reports) discussing relationships with foreign countries, including Canada

All of these have embarrassed U.S. officials and have resulted in threats to both WikiLeaks and Julian Assange. The leaks have been described as threats to international security and international diplomacy.

The U.S. government has been actively seeking ways to arrest Assange and charge him with criminal espionage. Attempts to shut down the Web site have been equally futile. PayPal, Visa, and MasterCard have all refused to accept donations to WikiLeaks, but the organization has made other arrangements (see <http://wikileaks.ch/Support.html> for further information). All three financial organizations have been subjected to Internet attacks by WikiLeaks supporters.

Largely because of its recent U.S. postings, WikiLeaks has a backlog of millions of unposted documents from countries around the world. Assange has said that the next round of postings will be documents from a major U.S. bank.

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Freedom of Information

Quote

“History shows that censorship requires censors who define what is and who is ‘good.’ . . . Such power is quickly corrupted. Knowledge is not a good. It is unique, in a class of its own, and as creator of all law, it must be placed beyond law.”
— Jay Lim, WikiLeaks spokesperson (*The Christian Science Monitor*, March 17, 2008)

Freedom of information is a doctrine that democratic governments claim is fundamental to the way they function. Information needs to be free so that citizens and their representatives can make the best decision possible on any given question.

In real life, however, freedom of information rarely means universal freedom. Governments, corporations, and private individuals all have secrets they would prefer not to share. This kind of information becomes classified—only certain people are allowed to see it. And some of that information, usually—but not always—dealing with national security is deemed especially secret and given a special classification.

To prevent governments from being able to keep information that might embarrass them, but that poses no threat to the country should it become public, we have freedom of information laws. Citizens have the right to request access to public documents, and governments are expected to release them unless the documents contain privileged information dealing with national security or personal privacy.

Unfortunately, this is not always the case. A recent Canadian controversy underlines what happens when governments decide they are going to suppress potentially embarrassing information.

The Afghan Detainee Hearings

In 2010, a House of Commons committee was looking into serious accusations. It was attempting to determine whether or not the Canadian military and Canadian government were aware that Afghan detainees who were turned over to the Afghan

government were subject to torture by their interrogators. Despite a demand by the House that the government release all related documents, and a declaration by the Speaker that the House had that authority, the government refused. Only a compromise prevented a motion of censure that would have forced an election.

If the House of Commons—the supreme lawmaking body in Canada—found it impossible to obtain classified material, how difficult must it be for the media or the average citizen? If one can believe repeated news stories, the process of obtaining any information under Canada’s freedom of information legislation has become both expensive and time consuming.

A New Order?

But, as journalism expert Jay Rosen has said, the times are changing. “In media history up to now, the press is free to report on what the powerful wish to keep secret because the laws of a given nation protect it. But WikiLeaks is able to report on what the powerful wish to keep secret because the logic of the Internet permits it. This is new” (*The Globe and Mail*, July 27, 2010).

The possibilities fascinate journalists, even if they are not fans of the new order. Canada’s Margaret Wente followed WikiLeaks’s activities for months. In a column titled “The dark side of the Web” she summed up the new state of affairs:

“The digital genie is out of the bottle. Any ultra-smart young hacker can steal top-secret information—and anyone can publish it. Not all of them are as discriminating as the editors of *The New York Times*, who only spill the secrets

Quote

“Re: WikiLeaks – In a free society, we are supposed to know the truth. In a society where truth becomes treason, we are in big trouble.” — Ron Paul, Republican congressman (*Toronto Star*, December 11, 2010)

they deem to be of public interest. The information gatekeepers are gone. This is a liberating thing, we’ve been told. It’s also a terrifying thing.

“Some of the secrets that WikiLeaks has spilled deserved to be revealed. But the bigger story here is the new ability of thousands of unaccountable, independent actors to expose state (and corporate) secrets on a vast scale. This development is the digital equivalent of the IED. Their data bombs are cheap, plentiful, and indiscriminately deadly” (*The Globe and Mail*, December 7, 2010).

Another noted Canadian commentator, Richard Gwynn, also recognized the significant change ushered in by WikiLeaks:

“Basically, it’s all about freedom of speech in that term’s fullest sense, namely the belief that everyone should possess the kind of information that until now has been limited to politicians and officials and, every bit as important although far less often discussed, by corporate executives.

“The Internet’s contribution, because it’s so hard to control, has been to even the field between individuals and institutions” (*Toronto Star*, December 17, 2010).

For Discussion

Consider the following quotation from E.D. Kain of Ordinary-Gentlemen.Com, quoted in the *Toronto Star*, December 11, 2010: “If the publisher of a small Web site dedicated to the dissemination of the state secrets of the Chinese government were operating their publishing outfit out of the United States and published a bunch of leaked Chinese state secrets (both on their Web site and through various larger media organizations) and the Chinese government declared that a violation of Chinese law, should the U.S. government arrest and detain and possibly extradite that person to China?”

How would you answer that question? In turn, how would you respond to a U.S. request to extradite Julian Assange on espionage charges? Does the concept of freedom of information play a major role in either of your responses?

Finally, writer Doug Saunders argues that free access to previously classified information may have a huge impact on the way governments behave. His article compared the approaches to information of WikiLeaks and Facebook, and concluded that they were very similar:

“Both WikiLeaks and Facebook recognize that the individual leaks or postings aren’t important—it doesn’t matter whether profound secrets or ordinary banalities are revealed. Rather, it’s the change in human behaviour produced by the possibility of exposure.

“Mr. Assange, in his essays and manifestos, argues that the very existence of a ubiquitous leak-inducing mechanism may cause governments to act accountably. He also hopes they will topple, but there he is misunderstanding his own philosophy. In truth, he is much closer to Mr. Zuckerberg. They both want to create an all-encompassing sense that we are always seated in the living room, with someone peering over his newspaper from the opposite couch” (*The Globe and Mail*, December 18, 2010).

In other words, perhaps real freedom of information will help us all become far more aware of how our world really works.

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A Threat to National Security?

Before Reading

The recent WikiLeaks revelations were certainly an embarrassment to the U.S. and several other governments, but were they actually a threat to national security?

The Afghan Files

When the Afghan war documents were released, General James Jones, a national security adviser to the White House, quickly shared his opinion with the media. He described the publication as “the disclosure of classified information by individuals and organizations which could put the lives of Americans and our partners at risk, and threaten our national security” (*Toronto Star*, July 26, 2010).

The next day, however, the government was telling a different story. Robert Gibbs, a White House spokesperson, said: “There’s no broad new revelations in this. What is known about our relationship and our efforts in both Afghanistan and Pakistan are not markedly changed” (*Toronto Star*, July 27, 2008).

One of the biggest concerns for U.S. President Obama was that the documents might jeopardize the lives of Afghan informants and operatives who had worked with the U.S. military against the Taliban or Al Qaeda. WikiLeaks argued that it had acted responsibly, withholding about 15 000 records that did identify both Pakistani and Afghan informants who helped U.S. troops.

The Iraq Military Field Reports

The release of 400 000 military field reports from 2004-2009 made it official—the U.S. had suffered the largest military security breach in its history.

“We deplore WikiLeaks for inducing individuals to break the law, leak classified documents, and then cavalierly share that secret information with the

world,” said Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell (*The Globe and Mail*, October 23, 2010).

What exactly was being shared, however, was a matter of some dispute. Once again many observers noted that the documents had little or no really surprising revelations and that they were at the lowest U.S. classification level. Mostly what they provided was first-hand observations on the conduct of the war.

Before the documents were released, they were given ahead of time to media outlets who agreed not to release them until WikiLeaks was prepared to do so. Meanwhile, these outlets were able to research and prepare stories based on the documents.

The one significant new item to emerge was a civilian casualty figure—109 000 people killed, including 66 000 civilians. Both the U.S. and Britain had insisted that they did not keep a record of civilians killed in the war. Otherwise, most media coverage emphasized that there were few surprises to be found in the release, just more detail on how the war had progressed.

The Diplomatic Cables

Probably the greatest concern to the U.S. was the release of the diplomatic files obtained by WikiLeaks. The U.S. began alerting allied governments beforehand, revealing the likely content of some of the documents.

P.J. Crowley, a U.S. State Department spokesperson, said: “These revelations are harmful to the United States and our interests. They are going to create tension

Quote

"This is information-dumping. It's not whistle-blowing. Whistle-blowing has to do with exposing wrongdoing. There's not much of that in this." — Daryl Copeland, a Canadian foreign service officer and author (*Toronto Star*, December 11, 2010)

in relationships between our diplomats and our friends around the world" (*Toronto Star*, November 25, 2010).

The concern of the State Department, which turned out to be justified, was that some of the leaked documents would include candid, unfavourable assessments of foreign governments and officials by senior U.S. diplomats.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton angrily described the release as "an attack on the international community, the alliances and partnerships, the conversations and negotiations that safeguard global security and advance economic prosperity. There is nothing laudable about endangering innocent people, and there is nothing brave about sabotaging peaceful relations between nations on which our common security depends" (*The Globe and Mail*, November 30, 2010).

How damaging were the leaks?

Luiza Ch. Savage wrote in *Macleans*' (December 27, 2010): "Personal relationships have been strained; relations with the leaders of countries such as Russia and Turkey have become more difficult (some released documents were heavily critical of Vladimir Putin's regime in Moscow, while others were critical of the Turkish government). Public opinion in some countries may nurse insults long into the future: witness the angry British reaction after the release of cables with U.S. officials criticizing the effectiveness of British troops in Afghanistan. There is also the cost of time and effort as diplomats scramble to do damage control rather than proceed with their work."

The leaks also raised an important

question: How do countries obtain honest opinion from their diplomatic representatives if it cannot be kept secret? Perhaps surprisingly, the leaks may actually lead to greater secrecy by governments. Representatives may no longer use written communication to contact their governments, trusting only secure telephone lines or personal contact. On the other hand, they likely already use these means for top-secret communications.

Lessons from the Leaks?

In an article titled "WikiLeaks more like vile gossip" (*Toronto Star*, December 2, 2010), James Travers summed up what many observers feel is the real meaning for governments and citizens of the document leaks.

"To assume the privacy of any message dispatched into the ether of an information age is patently foolish. Shooting the messenger is no less silly for those now desperately dragging attention away from the awkward publication of their antics by trying to ratchet minor revelations into a global threat.

"Most of all, the leaks are an urgent reminder that democracy is about more than eavesdropping. It downloads on citizens a responsibility to set aside titillation and voyeurism long enough to recognize that sometimes national interests are best protected by confidential conversations."

While some commentators and politicians continue to call for the arrest (and even assassination) of Julian Assange, most realize that WikiLeaks and the further dissemination of previously "secret" information have become a permanent fixture of 21st-century life.

For Discussion

Do you agree with James Travers that privacy needs to be redefined in our information age? Is his solution—a citizenry that understands the need for "confidential conversations"—a realistic expectation when material like the diplomatic cables is available for the taking?

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Julian Assange

Further Research

One of the best articles about Julian Assange, "A man of many secrets" by Luiza Ch. Savage, appeared in the December 27, 2010, issue of *Maclean's*.

Reading Prompt

As you read the following information about the WikiLeaks founder ask yourself if you think he is a brilliant man who will be remembered as someone who changed the world or a troublemaker looking to make a name for himself.

The man who has changed the way in which the world receives some of its most controversial secret information is himself something of a secret. He tries to keep his background and personal life as mysterious as possible.

We do know that Julian Assange is an Australian by birth, and he is believed to have been born in 1971 (he refuses to give his age to interviewers). His parents were divorced shortly after his birth, and his mother remarried soon thereafter. Mother and stepfather were both artists who travelled around Australia putting on theatrical productions. As a child, Assange was rarely in the same school for any length of time, as the family was always on the move.

This nomadic lifestyle continued after the couple divorced when Julian was nine and his mother took up with a man whom Assange has described as "a manipulative and violent psychopath" (*Maclean's*, December 27, 2010). Assange says that the man was a member of a cult called "The Family," and after his mother broke off the relationship he continued to track them and monitor their lives. Julian and his mother and younger brother spent much of Julian's early teens on the run around Australia to avoid this man. During these years he attended as many as 36 different schools.

The family finally settled in a small town near Melbourne. Here, at the age of 17, Assange met and married a 16-year-old woman; the following year she gave birth to their only child, a son. The marriage soon fell apart, and Assange

became involved in a years-long custody battle. The dispute was finally resolved in 1999.

The Hacker

Assange's main interest, in which he was largely self-taught, was computers. This interest began in his teens and eventually turned into a passion for hacking.

Assange was one of a trio of hackers who called themselves the International Subversives. Their targets were worldwide, mostly associated with the U.S. military-industrial complex. They committed themselves to not damaging the computers they hacked into and not profiting from anything they learned—a policy that turned out to be extremely significant when they were caught by police hacking into Nortel's network. In 1996 Assange pled guilty to 31 charges, was fined \$2 300, and was required to agree to a three-year bond for good behaviour—a remarkably lenient sentence.

During the 1990s Assange began laying the foundation for what would become WikiLeaks. As early as 1993 he started an Australian free-speech Internet service provider. Later in the decade he was co-developer of an encryption system used by human rights workers to protect their data. In 1999 he registered the Web site that ultimately became WikiLeaks.

The Celebrity

The success of WikiLeaks has made a celebrity of Julian Assange. His peculiar

Quote

"I enjoy creating systems on a grand scale, and I enjoy helping people who are vulnerable. And I enjoy crushing bastards. So it is enjoyable work."
— Julian Assange (*The Globe and Mail*, April 10, 2010)

lifestyle has contributed to his celebrity. He has no permanent address and spends a great deal of time travelling. He stays with friends and in hotels in obscure locations working on the material for WikiLeaks releases. He often travels under assumed names or in disguise and uses cash rather than credit cards. He uses encrypted phones and e-mail to communicate with associates. The most important of his few possessions is his laptop.

Assange has said that his recent celebrity was an unintended but necessary side effect of the success of WikiLeaks. The original mandate of WikiLeaks was to "make the news, not be the news." But, as the site became notorious, people became curious because of its secrecy—some thinking that the site itself must have something to hide. As a result, Assange has emerged as the front man: "I am the one who takes that risk, but, as a consequence, I also get a lot of undue credit. I also get all the criticism" (*The Globe and Mail*, July 31, 2010).

Assange has been accused of not giving enough credit to others who have

worked on WikiLeaks and is known to have recently lost several friends and associates—some of whom are more than willing to discuss his supposed egotism.

The Criminal?

Assange's notoriety has become even greater now that he is one of Interpol's most wanted fugitives—but this has nothing to do with WikiLeaks.

Assange is wanted for questioning in Sweden on accusations that he had non-consensual sex with two women. His British lawyer has suggested that the Swedish charges are unjustified, noting that one Swedish prosecutor even refused to bring them. His supporters see the situation as an attempt by the Swedish government, likely at the request of the U.S., to put Assange and WikiLeaks out of business.

Assange is currently on bail in Britain under conditions amounting to house arrest; he is fighting an extradition request by Sweden. He has vowed to continue to release classified documents through WikiLeaks while the courts decide his fate.

Follow-up Activity

In an editorial, the *Toronto Star* (December 12, 2010) asked the question: "A Hero or a Villain?" They were unable to come up with a conclusive answer one way or the other.

Write a one-half- to one-page response to that question. Is Julian Assange a hero, a villain, or perhaps a bit of both?

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Activity: The Great Debate

Should there be limits to freedom of information?

Julian Assange and his supporters argue that WikiLeaks is only doing what all the media should be doing—ensuring that people are fully informed about what their governments and private organizations are really up to. Those who oppose WikiLeaks insist that there have to be limits; that some information has to be kept from those enemies who would use it against them. This activity will use a formal debate to allow you to make your views known.

The resolution: Be it resolved that WikiLeaks is performing a necessary public service by releasing classified documents.

Each side may have a maximum of four members. Each side is allowed one four-minute opening statement, a four-minute rebuttal, and a two-minute conclusion. The order of debate is affirmative-negative opening, affirmative-negative opening, and negative-affirmative conclusion.

Feel free to use any of the material in the video, guide, or your own independent research to support your case, remembering to reference your sources.

Some of the following “expert” opinion may help you to formulate your arguments.

Steven Aftergood, head of the Project on Government Secrecy based in the District of Columbia: “It’s one thing to defy communist elites in China. It’s something else to defy legally enacted information controls in a democratic country. If you value privacy or copyright or proprietary business information, then you understand that there is a place for nondisclosure” (*The Christian Science Monitor*, March 17, 2008).

An anonymous retired British diplomat, in a question to Julian Assange: “In publishing this massive volume of correspondence, WikiLeaks is not highlighting specific cases of wrongdoing but undermining the entire process . . . My question to you is: why should we not hold you personally responsible when next an international crisis goes unresolved because diplomats cannot function?” (*The Globe and Mail*, December 7, 2010).

James Travers, columnist with the *Toronto Star*: “WikiLeaks have modest merit. A few unfiltered streams of light gleam through the jungle of trivia. There’s no great harm to the state, and perhaps some positive effect to behaviour, in publicly parading all-too-human foibles. But there are also dangers. To paraphrase Winston Churchill, diplomacy is the jaw-jaw before war-war and there are risks in trivializing it merely to embarrass the powerful” (December 2, 2010).

An editorial in *The Globe and Mail* stated: “The public has a legitimate interest in knowing the lengths to which the U.S. government went to relocate its Guantanamo Bay detainees, and perhaps a salacious interest in the news that Moammar Gadhafi keeps company with a blonde from Ukraine. U.S. Secretary

of State Hillary Rodham Clinton is overreacting when she says that the latest WikiLeaks revelations are an 'attack on America's foreign policy interests and . . . the international community'" (November 30, 2010).

And finally, Adam Serwer, a blogger with *The American Prospect* said that "If WikiLeaks is prosecuted under the Espionage Act as it currently exists, then no journalistic institution or entity is safe. The idea that any time that a journalist obtains a document that has 'information related to the national defence' that could be used 'to the injury of the United States' they could be subject to prosecution would destroy national security journalism as it currently exists" (*Toronto Star*, December 11, 2010).