

Criminalizing Privacy? U.S. Government Forces Snowden's Encrypted Email Service to Shut Down

By [Global Research News](#)

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NSA Whistleblower Edward Snowden famously used an encrypted email account to communicate privately with Glenn Greenwald and other reporters.

Shortly after it was revealed that Snowden [used Lavabit](#), the U.S. government pressured them to close down after ten years of service.

Lavabit's owner, Ladar Levison, received a court order to turn over all users' private email data. He refused, and said he would not "become complicit in crimes against the American people."

Levison claims he was given two choices: cooperate with authorities or be shut down. He bravely said goodbye to his business and livelihood in protest of the digital police state.

Here is the [full letter](#) to users regarding the shutdown:

My Fellow Users,

I have been forced to make a difficult decision: to become complicit in crimes against the American people or walk away from nearly ten years of hard work by shutting down Lavabit. After significant soul searching, I have decided to suspend operations. I wish that I could legally share with you the events that led to my decision. I cannot. I feel you deserve to know what's going on—the first amendment is supposed to guarantee me the freedom to speak out in situations like this. Unfortunately, Congress has passed laws that say otherwise. As things currently stand, I cannot share my experiences over the last six weeks, even though I have twice made the appropriate requests.

What's going to happen now? We've already started preparing the paperwork needed to continue to fight for the Constitution in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. A favorable decision would allow me resurrect Lavabit as an American company.

This experience has taught me one very important lesson: without congressional action or a strong judicial precedent, I would strongly recommend against anyone trusting their private data to a company with physical ties to the United States.

Sincerely,

Ladar Levison
Owner and Operator, Lavabit LLC

Defending the constitution is expensive! Help us by donating to the Lavabit Legal Defense

Fund [here](#).

It's as if privacy has been criminalized without anyone knowing it, and the government is doing its very best to snuff it out.

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