

The Criminalization of Independent Journalism: Truth in Media Categorized as Terrorism

By [Washington's Blog](#)

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Only Tyrants Treat Journalists As Terrorists U.S. Points Out that ... While Doing the Exact Same Thing

The U.S. government is targeting whistleblowers in order to keep its hypocrisy secret ... so that it can [keep on doing the opposite of what it tells other countries to do](#).

As part of this effort to suppress information which would reveal the government's hypocrisy, the American government - [like the British government](#) - is [treating journalists as terrorists](#).

Journalism is not only [being criminalized](#) in America, but investigative reporting is [actually treated like terrorism](#).

The government *admits* that journalists could be [targeted with counter-terrorism laws](#) (and [here](#)). For example, after Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Chris Hedges, journalist Naomi Wolf, Pentagon Papers whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg and others sued the government to enjoin the NDAA's allowance of the indefinite detention of Americans - the judge asked the government attorneys *5 times* whether journalists like Hedges could be indefinitely detained simply for interviewing and then *writing about* bad guys. The government [refused to promise](#) that journalists like Hedges won't be thrown in a dungeon for the rest of their lives without any right to talk to a judge

After the government's spying on the Associated Press made it clear to everyone that [the government is trying to put a chill journalism](#), the senior national-security correspondent for Newsweek [tweeted](#):

Serious idea. Instead of calling it Obama's war on whistleblowers, let's just call it what it is: Obama's war on journalism.

Moreover:

- The Pentagon recently smeared USA Today reporters because they [investigated illegal Pentagon propaganda](#)
- Reporters covering the Occupy protests were [targeted for arrest](#)
- The Bush White House worked hard to smear [CIA officers](#), [bloggers](#) and anyone

else who criticized the Iraq war

- In an effort to protect Bank of America from the threatened Wikileaks expose of the bank's wrongdoing, [the Department of Justice told Bank of America](#) to hire a specific hardball-playing law firm to assemble a team to take down WikiLeaks (and see [this](#))

And the American government has been instrumental in locking up journalists in [America](#) (and [here](#)), [Yemen](#) and elsewhere for the crime of embarrassing the U.S. government.

It's Only Tyrannical When Others Do It

The U.S. State Department [correctly noted](#) in April:

Some governments are too weak or unwilling to protect journalists and media outlets. Many others exploit or create criminal libel or defamation or blasphemy laws in their favor. They **misuse terrorism laws to prosecute and imprison journalists**. They pressure media outlets to shut down by causing crippling financial damage. They buy or nationalize media outlets to suppress different viewpoints. They filter or shut down access to the Internet. They detain and harass - and worse.

And the State Department rightly [announced](#) last year:

We are deeply concerned about the Ethiopian government's conviction of a number of journalists and opposition members under the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation. This practice raises serious questions and concerns about the intent of the law, and about the sanctity of Ethiopians' constitutionally guaranteed rights to freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

The arrest of journalists has a chilling effect on the media and on the right to freedom of expression. We have made clear in our ongoing human rights dialogue with the Ethiopian government that freedom of expression and freedom of the media are fundamental elements of a democratic society.

As Secretary Clinton has said, "When a free media is under attack anywhere, all human rights are under attack everywhere. That is why the United States joins its global partners in calling for the release of all imprisoned journalists in every country across the globe and for the end to intimidation."

Sounds great ... maybe we should start with the U.S. and UK?

The ACLU's Ben Wizner [sums up](#) the American and British governments' attitude towards journalists:

Relax, everyone. You're not terrorists unless you try "to influence a government." Just type what you're told.

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