

By Debra Sweet

From [World Can't Wait](#) | Original Article

"Cablegate," the huge [leak of U.S. Embassy cables](#) from 1966 to this year, began coming from Wikileaks.org Sunday. This ongoing project, building on the leaks from earlier this year about the U.S. occupations of Iraq & Afghanistan, is huge not only for the amount of information released, but for its import. I suspect we won't know that fully until we have a chance to dig into more. Wikileaks has helpfully organized the search by country, date, and topic.

What does the leak reveal? More than just one administration's practices; more than dirty tricks, individual opinions, "rogue" spies and diplomats, what I've seen already confirms a pattern, a system, of an un-checked superpower conducting "business as usual" behind secrecy. Der Spiegel described it as "a political meltdown for American foreign policy" that leaves "the trust America's partners have in the country ... badly shaken."

[USA Today](#) reports Hillary Clinton "condemned the WikiLeaks release of once-classified diplomatic documents as nothing less than an attack on the United States and its allies."

Private individuals are entitled to privacy, despite the actions of the Bush & Obama administrations, and governments may be entitled to secrecy. But everything from "dirty tricks" ala Dick Nixon to CIA assassinations are crimes by governments, and should be exposed.

Once again, we owe a debt to Wikileaks and the source of the leaks, for providing us the basis to see behind the lies. Bradley Manning is charged with these leaks, and sits in military prison at Quantico VA, awaiting a court martial. It is up to us to

[defend Manning](#), and do good with the revelations, by acting to stop the crimes through visible, vocal, public protest, just what World Can't Wait exists for.

But the pro-war Congress leader Peter King wants Julian Assange tried for espionage as a "terrorist." Harold Koh, the State Department legal counsel who defends targeted assassination as compatible with international law, says

Nancy A. Youssef, in [Officials may be overstating the danger from WikiLeaks](#), challenges that assertion.

"American officials in recent days have warned repeatedly that the release of documents by WikiLeaks could put people's lives in danger. But despite similar warnings ahead of the previous two massive releases of classified U.S. intelligence reports by the website, U.S. officials concede that they have no evidence to date that the documents led to anyone's death.

Glen Greenwald

[wrote earlier today](#)

on damage to civilians, "Many of the same people who supported the invasion of Iraq and/or who support the war in Afghanistan, drone strikes and assassination programs -- on the ground that the massive civilians deaths which result are justifiable "collateral damage" -- are those objecting most vehemently to WikiLeaks' disclosure on the ground that it may lead to the death of innocent people. For them, the moral framework suddenly becomes that if an act causes the deaths of any innocent person, that is proof that it is not only unjustifiable but morally repellent regardless of what it achieves. How glaringly selective is their alleged belief in that moral framework."