

# In A Corporatist System Of Government, Corporate Censorship Is State Censorship

In a corporatist system of government, wherein there is no meaningful separation between corporate power and state power, corporate censorship is state censorship, argues Caitlin Johnstone in this commentary.

By **Caitlin Johnstone**

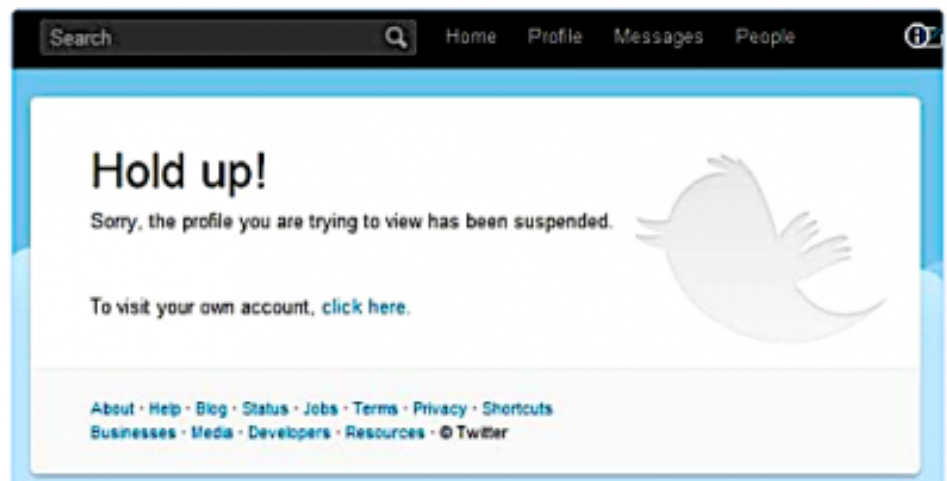


Last year, representatives of Facebook, Twitter, and Google were instructed on the US Senate floor that it is their responsibility to “quell information rebellions” and adopt a “mission statement” expressing their commitment to “prevent the fomenting of discord.”

“Civil wars don’t start with gunshots, they start with words,” the representatives were told. “America’s war with itself has already begun. We all must act now on the social media battlefield to quell information rebellions that can quickly lead to violent confrontations and easily transform us into the Divided States of America.”

Yes, [this really happened.](#)

Today Twitter has silenced three important anti-war voices on its platform: it has [suspended](#) Daniel McAdams, the executive director of the Ron Paul Institute, suspended Scott Horton of the *Scott Horton Show*, and [completely removed](#) the account of prominent Antiwar.com writer Peter Van Buren.



I’m about to talk about the censorship of Alex Jones and Infowars now, so let me get the “blah blah I don’t like Alex Jones” thing out of the way so that my social media notifications aren’t inundated with people saying “Caitlin didn’t say the ‘blah blah I don’t like Alex Jones’ thing!” I shouldn’t have to, because

this isn't actually about Alex Jones, but here it is:

I don't like Alex Jones. He's made millions saying the things disgruntled right-wingers want to hear instead of telling the truth; he throws in disinfo with his info, which is the same as lying all the time. He's made countless false predictions and his sudden sycophantic support for a US president has helped lull the populist right into complacency when they should be holding Trump to his non-interventionist campaign pledges, making him even more worthless than he was prior to 2016.

But this isn't about defending Alex Jones. He just happens to be the thinnest edge of the wedge.

Infowars has been censored from Facebook, Youtube (which is part of Google), Apple, Spotify, and now even Pinterest, all within hours of each other. This happens to have occurred at the same time Infowars was circulating a petition with tens of thousands of signatures calling on President Trump to pardon WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange, who poses a much greater threat to establishment narratives than Alex Jones ever has. Assange's mother also reports that this mass removal of Infowars' audience occurred less than 48 hours after she was approached to do an interview by an Infowars producer.

In a corporatist system of government, wherein there is no meaningful separation between corporate power and state power, corporate censorship is state censorship. Because legalized bribery in the form of corporate lobbying and campaign donations has given wealthy Americans the ability to control the U.S. government's policy and behavior while ordinary Americans have no effective influence whatsoever, the U.S. unquestionably has a corporatist system of government. Large, influential corporations are inseparable from the state, so their use of censorship is inseparable from state censorship.

This is especially true of the vast mega-corporations of Silicon Valley, whose extensive ties to U.S. intelligence agencies are well-documented. Once you're assisting with the construction of the US military's drone program, receiving grants from the CIA and NSA for mass surveillance, or having your site's content regulated by NATO's propaganda arm, you don't get to pretend you're a private, independent corporation that is separate from government power. It is possible in the current system to have a normal business worth a few million dollars, but if you want to get to billions of dollars in wealth control in a system where money translates directly to political power, you need to work with existing power structures like the CIA and the Pentagon, or else they'll work with your competitors instead of you

## **Censorship Through Private Proxy**

And yet every time I point to the dangers of a few Silicon Valley plutocrats controlling all new media political discourse with an iron fist, Democratic Party loyalists all turn into a bunch of hardline free market Ayn Rands. “It’s not censorship!” they exclaim. “It’s a private company and can do whatever it wants with its property!”

They do this because they know their mainstream, plutocrat-friendly “centrist” views will never be censored. Everyone else is on the chopping block, however. Leftist sites have already had their views slashed by a manipulation of Google’s algorithms, and it won’t be long before movements like BDS and Antifa and skeptics of the establishment Syria and Russia narratives can be made to face mass de-platforming on the same exact pretext as Infowars.

This is a setup. Hit the soft target so your oligarch-friendly censorship doesn’t look like what it is, then once you’ve manufactured consent, go on to shut down the rest of dissenting media bit by bit.

Don’t believe that’s the plan? Let’s ask sitting US Senator Chris Murphy: “Infowars is the tip of a giant iceberg of hate and lies that uses sites like Facebook and YouTube to tear our nation apart,” Murphy tweeted in response to the news. “These companies must do more than take down one website. The survival of our democracy depends on it.”



That sure sounds an awful lot like the warnings issued to the Silicon Valley representatives on the Senate floor at the beginning of this article, no? This is headed somewhere dark.

We’re going to have to find a way to keep the oligarchs from having their cake and eating it too. Either (A) corporations are indeed private organizations separate from the government, in which case the people need to get money out of politics and government agencies out of Silicon Valley so they can start acting like it, and insist that their owners can’t be dragged out on to the Senate floor and instructed on what they can and can’t do with their business, or (B)

these new media platforms get treated like the government agencies they function as, and the people get all the First Amendment protection that comes with it. Right now the social engineers are double-dipping in a way that will eventually give the alliance of corporate plutocrats and secretive government agencies the ability to fully control the public's access to ideas and information.

If they accomplish that, it's game over for humanity. Any hope of the public empowering itself over the will of a few sociopathic, ecocidal, omnicidal oligarchs will have been successfully quashed. We are playing for all the chips right now. We have to fight this. We have no choice.

*This commentary was originally published on [CaitlinJohnstone.com](http://CaitlinJohnstone.com) .*

**Caitlin Johnstone is a rogue journalist, poet, and utopia prepper who publishes regularly at [Medium](https://medium.com). Follow her work on [Facebook](https://facebook.com), [Twitter](https://twitter.com), or her [website](http://caitlinjohnstone.com). She has a [podcast](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8) and a new book [Woke: A Field Guide for Utopia Preppers](https://www.amazon.com/Woke-A-Field-Guide-for-Utopia-Preppers). This article was re-published with permission.**

---

## Consortium News Radio— Episode 1: Peter Van Buren

**INTRODUCING** Consortium News Radio, an ongoing series of radio interviews with newsmakers and Consortium News writers intended to delve deeper into stories published on Consortium News.

On the premiere edition of Consortium News Radio we speak with Peter Van Buren, a former State Department official, whistleblower and victim of Twitter censorship. Van Buren speaks about his experiences in Iraq, the critical book he wrote about those experiences and how the Obama State Department eventually attempted to have him tried under the Espionage Act. This week Van Buren had his Twitter account permanently shut down and seven years of his Tweets wiped from the record. Why? Because he challenged mainstream journalists who contested a Tweet from journalist Glenn Greenwald that mainstream reporters support America's wars and help bring them about. One corporate journalist decided to silence Van Buren by complaining to Twitter, which, within two days, and with no due process, obliged. Joe Lauria, editor-in-chief of Consortium News, interviewed Van Buren on Wednesday, August 8 for 40 minutes.

Here is the first episode of Consortium News Radio:

*If you enjoyed this original interview please consider [making a donation to](#)*

*Consortium News so we can bring you more like this.*

---

## VIPS Asks Twitter to Restore Van Buren's Account

The Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity in a memo to the Twitter board of directors questions its decision to suspend the account of one of its members without due process.

August 8, 2018

**TO:** Twitter Board of Directors

**FROM:** Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS)

**SUBJECT:** Suspension of VIPS Associate Peter Van Buren's Twitter Account

We at Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS) are greatly disturbed by the recent decision of your management to permanently suspend the Twitter account @WeMeantWell of our colleague Peter Van Buren. Peter is a highly respected former Foreign Service Officer possessing impeccable credentials for critiquing current developments that might lead to a new war in Eastern Europe or Asia, something which we Americans presumably all would like to avoid.

In 2011 our colleague Peter published a book, *We Meant Well: How I Helped Lose the Battle for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People*, about the poor decision-making by both civilians and military that led to the disastrous occupation and faux-democracy development in Iraq. It is Peter's concern that our country may well be proceeding down that same path again – possibly with Iran, Syria and other countries in the Middle East region.

It is our understanding that Peter became involved in an acrimonious Twitter exchange with several mainstream journalists over the theme of government lying. One of the parties to the exchange, reported to be Jonathan Katz of @KatzOnEarth – possibly joined by some of his associates – complained. Subsequently, and without any serious investigation or chance for rebuttal regarding the charges, Peter was suspended by you for “harass[ing], intimidate[ing], or us[ing] fear to silence someone else’s voice.” Peter absolutely denies that anything like that took place.

We have also learned that Daniel McAdams, Executive Director of the Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity and a highly respected former Congressional staffer, weighed in to defend Peter and was also suspended by you. And Scott Horton, editorial director of Antiwar.com Radio, was suspended for use of “improper language” against Katz. Horton and McAdams cannot add new tweets while under suspension, but Peter’s “permanent” suspension included deletion of all of his seven years’ archive of tweets, so the actual exchanges leading up to his punishment cannot currently be examined.

Your action suggests three possibilities – all of which are quite plausible given that your system for punishing users is far from transparent. First, you may be engaged in systematic manipulation if some of your users are able to complain and have their friends do likewise in order to sully the reputation of a Twitter user who is doing little more than engaging in heated debate over issues that concern all of us.

Second, there is a distinct possibility that you are responding to either deep pocketed or particularly strident advocacy groups that may themselves have agendas to silence opposition voices. We note that Google is currently working with some powerful foundations to censor content they object to which comes up in search engine results.

Finally – third – we also suspect a possible government hand in that companies like yours, to include Facebook, have become very sensitive to alleged “subversive” content, deleting accounts and blocking users. Kowtowing to government suggestions to silence critics of administration policies may well be considered a desirable proactive step by your management as well as by other social media companies, but censorship is censorship, no matter how you dress it up.

We Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity believe that systematic and/or institutionalized censorship of tweets and account users is fundamentally the wrong way to go unless there are very explicit and sustained threats of violence or other criminal behavior. The internet should be free, to include most particularly the ability to post commentary that is not mainstream or acceptable

to the Establishment. That is what Peter has been doing and we applaud him for it. We respectfully request that you examine the facts in the case with the objective of reconsidering and possibly restoring the suspension of Peter Van Buren's twitter account. Thank you.

*For the Steering Group, Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity:*

**William Binney**, former Technical Director, World Geopolitical & Military Analysis, NSA; co-founder, SIGINT Automation Research Center (ret.)

**Richard H. Black**, Senator of Virginia, 13<sup>th</sup> District; Colonel US Army (ret); former chief, Criminal Law Division, Office of the Judge Advocate General, the Pentagon (associate VIPS) (@SenRichardBlack)

**Marshall Carter-Tripp**, Foreign Service Officer (ret.) and Division Director, State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research

**Bogdan Dzakovic**, former team leader of Federal Air Marshals and Red Team, FAA Security (ret.) (associate VIPS)

**Philip Giraldi**, CIA, Operations Officer (ret.) (@infangenetheof)

**Larry C. Johnson**, former CIA and State Department Counterterrorism Officer (ret.)

**Michael S. Kearns**, Captain, USAF (ret.); Wing Commander, RAAF (ret.); former intelligence officer and master SERE instructor (@msk6793)

**John Kiriakou**, former CIA Counterterrorism Officer and former senior investigator, Senate Foreign Relations Committee (@johnkiriakou)

**Karen Kwiatkowski**, former Lt. Col., US Air Force (ret.), at Office of Secretary of Defense watching the manufacture of lies on Iraq, 2001-2003

**Linda Lewis**, WMD preparedness policy analyst, USDA (ret.) (associate VIPS) (@usalinda)

**Edward Loomis**, NSA, cryptologic computer scientist (ret.)

**David MacMichael**, National Intelligence Council (ret.)

**Ray McGovern**, former US Army infantry/intelligence officer & CIA analyst (ret.) (@raymcgovern)

**Annie Machon**, former intelligence officer in the UK's MI5 domestic security

service (affiliate VIPS) (@anniemachon)

**Elizabeth Murray**, Deputy National Intelligence Officer for the Near East, CIA and National Intelligence Council (ret.) (@elizabethmurra)

**Todd E. Pierce**, Maj, US Army Judge Advocate (ret.) (@ToddEPierce)

**Scott Ritter**, former Maj., USMC; former UN weapons inspector, Iraq (@RealScottRitter)

**Coleen Rowley**, FBI Special Agent and former Minneapolis Division Legal Counsel (ret.) (@coleenrowley)

**J. Kirk Wiebe**, former Senior Analyst, SIGINT Automation Research Center, NSA (ret.) (@kirkwiebe)

**Sarah Wilton**, Commander, US Naval Reserve (ret.) and Defense Intelligence Agency (ret.)

**Robert Wing**, former Foreign Service Officer (associate VIPS)

**Ann Wright**, US Army Reserve Colonel (Ret) and former US Diplomat

**Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS)** is made up of former intelligence officers, diplomats, military officers and congressional staffers. The organization, founded in 2002, was among the first critics of Washington's justifications for launching a war against Iraq. VIPS advocates a US foreign and national security policy based on genuine national interests rather than contrived threats promoted for largely political reasons. An archive of VIPS memoranda is available at [Consortiumnews.com](http://Consortiumnews.com).

---

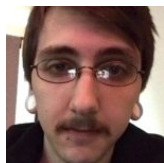
## At War With Ourselves: The Domestic Consequences of Foreign Policies

There is a direct connection between gun violence and suicide rates in the United States and America's aggressive foreign policy, argues Will Porter.

### How America's Gun Violence Epidemic May Have Roots in Overseas War Zones

By Will Porter





In recent months a string of school shootings in the United States has rekindled the debate over gun violence, its causes and what can be done to stop it. But amid endless talk of school shootings and AR-15s, a large piece of the puzzle has been left conspicuously absent from the debate.

Contrary to the notion that mass murderers are at the heart of America's gun violence problem, data from recent years reveals that the majority of gun deaths are self-inflicted.

In 2015, suicides accounted for over 60 percent of gun deaths in the U.S., while homicides made up around 36 percent of that year's total. Guns are consistently the most common method by which people take their own lives.

While the causes of America's suicide-driven gun epidemic are complex and myriad, it's clear that one group contributes to the statistics above all others: military veterans.

### **Beyond the Physical**

According to a 2016 study conducted by the Department of Veterans Affairs, on average some 20 veterans commit suicide every single day, making them among the most prone to take their own lives compared to people working in other professions. Though they comprise under 9 percent of the American population, veterans accounted for 18 percent of suicides in the U.S. in 2014.

When veterans return home from chaotic war zones, resuming normal civilian life can present major difficulties. The stresses of wartime create a long-term, sustained "fight-or-flight" response, not only producing physical symptoms such as sweating, shaking or a racing heart rate, but inflicting a mental and moral toll as well.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) accounts for some of the physiological effects of trauma, the "fight-or-flight" response, but the distinct mental, moral and spiritual anguish experienced by many veterans and other victims of trauma has been termed "moral injury."

A better understanding of that concept and the self-harm it motivates could go a long way toward explaining, and ultimately solving, America's suicide epidemic.

"Moral injury looks beyond the physical and asks who we are as people," Peter Van Buren, a former State Department Foreign Service officer, said in an interview. "It says that we know right from wrong, and that when we violate

right and wrong, we injure ourselves. We leave a scar on ourselves, the same as if we poked ourselves with a knife.”

While not a veteran himself, during his tenure with the Foreign Service Van Buren served for one year alongside American soldiers at a forward operating base in Iraq. His experiences there would stick with him for life.

“Over the course of the year I was there, the units I was embedded with lost three men, and all of them were lost to suicide, not to enemy action,” Van Buren said. “This left an extraordinary impression on me, and triggered in me some of the things that I write about.”

After retiring from the Foreign Service, Van Buren began research for his novel “Hooper’s War,” a fictional account set in WWII Japan. The book centers on American veteran, Nate Hooper, and explores the psychological costs paid by those who survive a war. Van Buren said if he set the book in the past, he thought he could better explore the subject matter without the baggage of current-day politics.

In his research, Van Buren interviewed Japanese civilians who were children at the time of the conflict and found surprising parallels with the soldiers he served with in Iraq. Post-war guilt, he found, does not only afflict the combatants who fight and carry out grisly acts of violence, but civilians caught in the crossfire as well.

For many, merely living through a conflict when others did not is cause for significant distress, a condition known as “survivor’s guilt.”

“In talking with them I heard so many echoes of what I’d heard from the soldiers in Iraq, and so many echoes of what I felt myself, this profound sense of guilt,” Van Buren said.

### **‘We Killed Them’**

Whether it was something a soldier did, saw or failed to prevent, feelings of guilt can leave a permanent mark on veterans after they come home.

Brian Ellison, a combat veteran who served under the National Guard in Iraq in 2004, said he’s still troubled by his wartime experiences.

Stationed at a small, under protected maintenance garage in the town of ad-Diwaniyah in a southeastern province of Iraq, Ellison said his unit was attacked on a daily basis.

“From the day we got there, we would get attacked every night like clockwork—mortars, RPGs,” Ellison said. “We had no protection; we had no weapons

systems on the base.”

On one night in April of 2004, after a successful mission to obtain ammunition for the base’s few heavy weapons, Ellison’s unit was ready to hit back.

“So we got some rounds for the Mark 19 [a belt-fed automatic grenade launcher] and we basically used it as field artillery, shot it up in the air and lobbed it in,” Ellison said. “Finally on the last night we were able to get them to stop shooting, but that was because we killed 5 of them. At the time this was something I was proud of. We were like ‘We got them, we got our revenge.’”

“In retrospect, it’s like here’s this foreign army, and we’re in their neighborhood,” Ellison said. “They’re defending their neighborhood, but they’re the bad guys and we’re the good guys, and we killed them. I think about stuff like that a lot.”

Despite his guilt, Ellison said he was able to sort through the negative feelings by speaking openly and honestly about his experiences and actions. Some veterans have a harder time, however, including one of Ellison’s closest friends.

“He ended up going overseas like five times,” Ellison said. “Now he’s retired and he can’t even deal with people. He *can’t* deal with people, it’s sad. He was this funny guy, everybody’s friend, easy to get along with, now he’s a recluse. It’s really weird to see somebody like that. He had three young kids and a happy personality, now he’s broken.”

In addition to the problems created in their personal relationships, the morally injured also often turn to self-destructive habits to cope with their despair.

“In the process of trying to shut this sound off in your head—this voice of conscience—many people turn to drugs and alcohol as a way of shutting that voice up, at least temporarily,” Van Buren said. “You hope at some point it shuts up permanently . . . Unfortunately, I think that many people do look for the permanent silence of suicide as a way of escaping these feelings.”

### **A Hero’s Welcome?**

By now most are familiar with the practice of celebrating veterans as heroes upon their return from war, but few realize what psychological consequences such apparently benevolent gestures can have.

“I think the healthiest thing a vet can do is to come to terms with reality,” Ellison said. “It’s so easy to get swept up—when we came home off the plane, there was a crowd of people cheering for us. I just remember feeling dirty. I

felt like 'I don't want you to cheer for us,' but at the same time it's comforting. It's a weird dynamic. Like, I could just put this horror out of my mind and pretend we were heroes."

"But the terrible part is that, behind that there's reality," Ellison said. "Behind that, we know what we were doing; we know that we weren't fighting for freedom. So when somebody clings onto this 'we were heroes' thing, I think that's bad for them. They have to be struggling with it internally. I really believe that's one of the biggest things that contributes to people committing suicide. They're not able to talk about it, not able to bring it to the forefront and come to terms with it."

### **Unclear Solution**

According to the 2016 VA study, 70 percent of veterans who commit suicide are not regular users of VA services.

The Department of Veteran Affairs was set up in 1930 to handle medical care, benefits and burials for veterans, but some 87 years later, the department is plagued by scandal and mismanagement. Long wait times, common to many government-managed healthcare systems, discourage veterans from seeking the department's assistance, especially those with urgent psychiatric needs.

An independent review was carried out in 2014 by the VA's Inspector General, Richard Griffin, which found that at one Arizona VA facility, 1,700 veterans were on wait lists, waiting an average of 115 days before getting an initial appointment.

"People don't generally seek medical help because the [VA] system is so inefficient and ineffective; everyone feels like it's a waste of time," said a retired senior non-commissioned officer in the Special Operations Forces (SOF) who wished to remain anonymous.

"The system is so bad, even within the SOF world where I work, that I avoid going at all costs," the retired officer said. "I try to get my guys to civilian hospitals so that they can get quality healthcare instead of military healthcare."

Beyond institutions, however, both Ellison and Van Buren agreed that speaking openly about their experiences has been a major step on their road back to normalcy. Open dialogue, then, is not only one way for veterans and other victims of trauma to heal, it may ultimately be the key to solving America's epidemic of gun violence.

The factors contributing to mass murders, school shootings and private crime

are, no doubt, important to study, but so long as suicide is left out of the public discourse on guns, genuine solutions may always be just out of reach.

**Will Porter is a journalist who specializes in U.S. foreign policy and Middle East affairs. He writes for the Libertarian Institute and tweets at @WKPancap.**

*If you enjoyed this original article please consider [making a donation to Consortium News](#) so we can bring you more stories like this one.*

---

## US Denies Entry to Ex-UK Ambassador

As the New Cold War heats up, the U.S. government is sliding back into old Cold War practices, like blocking entry of people critical of U.S. policies, a fate befalling ex-British ambassador Craig Murray, as Peter Van Buren explains.

By Peter Van Buren

The United States over the weekend denied travel to a former British ambassador, [Craig Murray](#), who was also a British diplomat for some 30 years, is the author of several books, and has stood twice for election to the House of Commons.

Murray was “honored” by being thrown out of Uzbekistan by its repressive government after risking his life to expose appalling [human rights abuses](#) there. He is not a terrorist and is not a social media jihadi. He has no criminal record, no connection to drug smuggling, and does have a return ticket, a hotel reservation and ample funds to cover his expenses. He is however seen as a threat to the United States.

Ambassador Murray was headed to the U.S. this week to be Master of Ceremonies at an award ceremony honoring [John Kiriakou](#), the CIA torture whistleblower. Kiriakou was the only U.S. government official to go to jail in connection with the torture program, and all he did was help expose it to the media. The event is sponsored by Sam Adams Associates for Integrity in Intelligence (of which I am a member.)

Murray has also spoken in support of Wikileaks’ Julian Assange. Hmm. Might have something to do with this visa problem.

No one has told Murray why he cannot travel to the U.S., though he has been here numerous times over the past 38 years. Murray learned of his travel bar when applying for the online [clearance](#) the U.S. requires of all “visa free”

travelers. Murray was electronically informed to contact the State Department to see if he might qualify otherwise.

Ambassador Murray was stopped by what the State Department and Homeland Security calls "a hit." What happens is dozens of American intelligence agencies pour names into a vast database, which includes everyone from Osama bin Laden (his name has allegedly never been removed in some sort of reverse tribute) to the latest ISIS thug to all sorts of others who have little or no actual reason to be there, such as Murray.

The likely salient part of the database in Murray's case is called CLASS, part of the Consular Consolidated Database. It is the largest known data warehouse in the world. As of December 2009, the last time information was available, it contained over 100 million cases and 75 million photographs, and has a current growth rate of approximately 35,000 records per day.

When one of those persons labeled a "bad guy" applies for entry or a visa to the U.S., the computer generates a hit. A hit is enough to deny anyone a visa-free trip to the U.S. with no further questions asked and no information given. Technically, the traveler never even officially knows he was "a hit." Bang, you're dead.

If Murray chooses to follow the process through and formally applies for a visa to the United States, the State Department in London will only then examine the hit. In 99.9999 percent of the cases, all the State Department official will see in their computer is a code that says "Contact Washington," officially a Security Advisory Opinion, or SAO.

### **Lost in Secret Bureaucracy**

The State people abroad will most often have no idea why they are refusing to issue a visa, just that they can't. They sign their name to a blank check of a refusal. They make a potentially life-altering decision about someone with no idea what the evidence against him or her, if any, is. The traveler, of course, has no chance to rebut or clarify because they too have no idea what is being held against them. There is no substantive appeal process and, of course, everything in the files is likely classified.

The "contact Washington" message triggers a name-check process in D.C. that rumbles around the intelligence community looking for someone who knows why the U.S. government wants to keep Murray out of the United States next week. That process can take anywhere from weeks to forever, and taking forever is one strategy the U.S. uses when it just wants some troublesome person to go away. For politically motivated cases such as Murray's, that is what is most likely to

happen: not much. Murray may thus never learn why he cannot travel to the United States.

That is what free speech (and free speech covers not only what people say, but what people, Americans in this case, in America may choose to listen to) is about in 2016. America is now afraid of people like Ambassador Craig Murray. BONUS: Murray has only been denied travel to one other country, Uzbekistan. Such is the company America now keeps. Those who think this is the first time the U.S. has used a visa denial to stop free speech, please see the case of scholar Tariq Ramadan, denied the opportunity to teach at Notre Dame. There have been many more such cases, albeit less mediagenic. This is now policy for America, not an exception.

[For more on Craig Murray, see Consortiumnews.com's "How a Torture Protest Killed a Career" and "The Invasion of Bahrain."]

**Peter Van Buren, a retired U.S. diplomat, blew the whistle on State Department waste during Iraqi reconstruction in his first book, *We Meant Well: How I Helped Lose the Battle for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People*. His second book is *Ghosts of Tom Joad: A Story of the #99Percent*. Next up is a novel about WWII Japan, Hooper's War. He writes about current events at [www.wemeantwell.com](http://www.wemeantwell.com) and on Twitter @wemeantwell. [This article first appeared at <http://wemeantwell.com/blog/2016/09/05/u-s-blocks-former-british-ambassador-from-entering-america-to-honor-cia-whistleblower/>]**

---

## Did Clinton's Emails Expose CIA Agents?

Even as Hillary Clinton closes in on the Democratic nomination, facts continue to emerge indicating that her sloppy email practices may have endangered secrets, including the identities of covert operatives, writes Peter Van Buren.

By Peter Van Buren

These are facts. You can look at the source documents yourself. This is not opinion, conjecture, or rumor. Hillary Clinton transmitted the names of American intelligence officials via her unclassified email.

From a series of Clinton emails, numerous names were redacted in the State Department releases with the classification code "B3 CIA PERS/ORG," a highly specialized classification that means the information, if released, would violate the Central Intelligence Act of 1949 by exposing the names of CIA officials.

The Freedom of information Act (FOIA) requires the government to release all, or all parts of a document, that do not fall under a specific set of allowed exemptions. If information cannot be excluded, it must be released. If some part of a document can be redacted to allow the rest of the document to be released, then that is what must be done. Each redaction must be justified by citing a specific reason for exclusion.

But don't believe me. Instead, look at page two of this [State Department document](#) which lists the exemptions.

Note specifically the different types of "(b)(3)" redactions, including "CIA PERS/ORG." As common sense would dictate, the government will not release the names of CIA employees via the FOIA process. It would – literally – be against the law. What law? Depending on the nature of the individual's job at CIA, National Security Act of 1947, the CIA Act of 1949, various laws that govern undercover/ clandestine CIA officers and, potentially, the Espionage Act of 1917.

Yet Hillary's emails contain at least three separate, specific instances where she mentioned in an unclassified email transmitted across the open Internet and wirelessly to her Blackberry the names of CIA personnel. Here they are. Look for the term "(b)(3) CIA PERS/ORG" Click on the links and see for yourself: [CIA One](#); [CIA Two](#); [CIA Three](#)

There are also numerous instances of exposure of the names and/or email addresses of NSA employees ("B3 NSA"); see page 23 inside this longer [PDF document](#).

### **Why It Matters**

- These redactions point directly to violations of specific laws. It is not a "mistake" or minor rule-breaking.
- These redactions strongly suggest that the Espionage Act's standard of mishandling national defense information through "gross negligence" may have been met by Clinton.
- There is no ambiguity in this information, no possible claims to faux-retroactive classification, not knowing, information not being labeled, etc. Clinton and her staff know that one cannot mention CIA names in open communications. It is one of the most basic tenets taught and exercised inside the government. One protects one's colleagues.
- Exposing these names can directly endanger the lives of the officials. It can endanger the lives of the foreigners they interacted with after a foreign government learns one of their citizens was talking with the CIA. It can blow



covers and ruin sensitive clandestine operations. It can reveal to anyone listening in on this unclassified communication sources and methods. Here is a specific example of how Clinton likely compromised security.

– These redactions show complete contempt on Clinton's part for the security process.

**BONUS:** There is clear precedent for others going to jail for exposing CIA names. Read the story of John Kiriakou. **A Personal Aside:** I just remain incredulous about these revelations seeming to mean nothing to the world. They're treated in the media as almost gossip.

**Peter Van Buren** blew the whistle on State Department waste during Iraqi reconstruction in his first book, *We Meant Well: How I Helped Lose the Battle for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People*. His second book is *Ghosts of Tom Joad: A Story of the #99Percent*. Next up is a novel about WWII Japan, Hooper's War. He writes about current events at [www.wemeantwell.com](http://www.wemeantwell.com) and on Twitter @wemeantwell. [This article previously appeared at <http://latest.com/2016/06/hillary-clinton-emailed-names-of-u-s-intelligence-officials-unclassified/>]

---