

# WikiLeaks Shocks the Country

Jee-In Hur, Staff Writer

On November 28, 2010, WikiLeaks began publishing 251,287 U.S. embassy cables, including many confidential documents. The impact of revealing such classified media has been enormous so far. The resulting scandal has stimulated revolution in Tunisia and civil resistance in Egypt and Libya, once the extent of corruption by the dictatorial regimes was revealed. While civil movement has been spreading over the world, the disclosure of key diplomatic secrets could potentially create drawbacks in the future for U.S. relations with other nations.

WikiLeaks is a non-profit organization which has been publishing confidential secrets since it was launched in 2007. It operates in cyberspace, accepting information online and keeping sources anonymous. The extent of disclosure is wide, including changes in the Guantanamo Bay manual in 2003; more than 6,500 Congressional Research Reports; articles from The Independent about toxic dumping in the Ivory Coast, resulting in injuries for thousands in Abidjan, which were censored by the BBC, The Guardian, and other major news agencies; \$3 billion corruption by the family of former Kenyan leader Daniel Moi; drafts of the Copenhagen climate change agreement; the Yahoo account belonging to Sarah Palin during the 2008 U.S. presidential election campaign; and information on the insider trading program at JP Morgan. Some of the publications were more than a billion dollars of US tax-funded research.

The WikiLeaks scandal reached a new phase as the treatment of prisoner Bradley Manning has been questioned. Manning was an army intelligence analyst until he disclosed a critical video of an Iraq War military helicopter attack on civilians. He has been imprisoned in Virginia since he revealed his disclosure to a person who recognized his ID in an Internet messenger. The ethics of Manning's treatment while imprisoned have been questioned. Manning was to be naked while he was censured in front of other prisoners, supposedly to prevent him from committing suicide. In a visit for a lecture at MIT, State

Department spokesperson J.P. Crowley called such treatment "counter-productive" and "stupid" (Crowley resigned on March 13.) It seems that the State government is on its way and has not figured a good solution to punish WikiLeaks because the disclosure is under the scope of protection of freedom of speech. However those in opposition to the spokesperson like Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. commented that "To that extent there are gaps in our law."

On its website, WikiLeaks states that its mission is to support the rights of all people "to create new history by having the access of critical information." At the center of WikiLeaks' mission and the surrounding controversy is the injustice of the actions of many institutions, including the U.S. government. Although globally, security and peace have at times been achieved, keeping some secrets was considered essential to make true progress in diplomacy. The U.S. government spends \$7 billion annually on intelligence activity, but WikiLeaks has nevertheless penetrated U.S. diplomacy. Carlos Pascual, U.S. ambassador to Mexico, resigned following demands by Mexico's president after a cable was made public which stated that "the Mexican government does not have the capability to resolve drug crimes" and that the "Mexican army is inefficient."

The most significant aspect of WikiLeaks is that all the information it gathers is disclosed by insiders within institutions and agencies. One issue raised is that such disclosure of information might have been less about the truth and more about the interests of those providing information. Some see WikiLeaks, as merely a group of hackers who do not make credible analyses about their publications. Yet intelligence is power, and attaining critical information is key to diplomacy. But most want justice for refugees whose only hope of outlasting starvation is crossing borders, only to be caught up in complex jurisdictional debates. Though there is much debate, WikiLeaks may be a stimulus for an increased focus on justice and accountability as a means of revealing the truth.

## Two invitations from the Board of Trustees concerning Meredith's next President:

My Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Meredith College Board of Trustees, it is my distinct honor and pleasure to invite you to join us as we introduce the College's next president on Monday, April 18 at 1 p.m. in Jones Auditorium.

In the 120-year history of Meredith College, only seven individuals have served as her president. Working together with faculty, staff and alumnae, each president has helped build Meredith into one of America's most esteemed institutions. In less than two weeks, our eighth leader will join that illustrious group.

As we conclude a successful national search, conducted by representatives of the faculty, Alumnae Association, staff, student body and Board of Trustees, my fellow trustees and I look forward to celebrating the introduction of the newest leader of the Meredith family.

I hope to see you at this historic event.

Warmest regards,  
Sam E. Ewell, Jr.  
Chair, Board of Trustees

A Historic Day  
Monday, April 18  
Jones Auditorium  
1-1:45 p.m.  
(doors open at noon)

Dear Meredith Students,

On behalf of the Meredith College Board of Trustees, it is my distinct honor and pleasure to invite you to greet Meredith's next president as she informally visits with students in *Belk Dining Hall* on Monday, April 18, from 5:15 to 6:15pm. Please plan to join us for this special opportunity to welcome our new leader to campus.

Warmest regards,  
Sam E. Ewell, Jr.  
Chair, Board of Trustees

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