

Public sphere and New media

Case study: WikiLeaks

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Abstract: *From the day WikiLeaks documents were published on the Internet, the subject has held the front page of the newspapers all over the world. My hypothesis is that the propagation of the new media led to an extension of the public sphere, as we knew by the time being. This paper has references to concepts like public sphere (and its transformation in years), mass movements, and new media. I would like to summarize the concepts and to show the relations between them and the topic of the research paper, in order to create a background for the methodology section. This paper studies WikiLeaks as an instrument for more evolved forms of public sphere, and the reasons for this claim are explained in the article. In addition, in this research paper I would like to analyze worldwide politicians' reactions to WikiLeaks disclosures in the public sphere. The methods used will be qualitative, by analyzing a discourse of Hillary Clinton and I will also conduct an analysis on other worldwide officials' reactions to these disclosures, based on interviews from different newspapers.*

Keywords: *WikiLeaks, new media, discourse analysis, frame analysis, public sphere.*

Introduction

The main theme of this paper is the public sphere and its current form. As the new literature underlines, in the past years the public sphere has moved from a tangible form to a virtual one, via new media, meaning that, for example, blogs and Internet forums have taken the place of coffeehouses and other physical locations where people gathered for discussions.

I consider this phenomenon to be one of the most interesting in the communication arena, and particularly the case of WikiLeaks, especially that the studies regarding the influence of WikiLeaks are at the beginning. A phenomenon like this one, that is capable to change the way we see the sociology and political science, appears extremely rarely, and even now, two years distance from the day WikiLeaks was aired on the Internet, we cannot measure the real impact it has on our system.

My main hypothesis is that the propagation of the new media led to an extension of the public sphere, as we knew by the time being. The second hypothesis is that WikiLeaks is an instrument of creating a worldwide public sphere.

I consider this topic to be of great importance not only because of the impact it has on political worldwide scene, but also because new media is a major factor of transformation of the public sphere as we knew it until now. Another objective of the paper is to analyze the reactions of worldwide politicians to WikiLeaks disclosures in the public sphere. I will focus my study on the reactions of the politicians to these disclosures; because it is very interesting to see the manner they handled an issue like this. The reactions vary from politician to politician and even from the same politician's speech to another speech.

Literature review

Public sphere

The concept of public sphere has made a long way from the first time it was presented to the public by the German philosopher Junger Habermas, and it still changes with the development of technology and politics and human relations. A short definition of the classic public sphere is that it is a space "where free and equal citizens come together to share information, to debate, to discuss, or to deliberate on common concerns."¹ Starting with the invention of the printing press, citizens came together in a particular space, for instance in a coffeehouse, where they discussed with other people issues of the day that concerned them. This gatherings are spontaneous and by no means controlled by state authorities. The growth of mass media has itself changed the way public sphere functions, and Habermas rewrote his theories according to these facts: *Communication via the mass media plays an important role in the normative vision I advocate. A dispersed public interconnected almost exclusively through the electronic media can keep up to date on all kinds of issues and contributions in the mass media with a minimum of attention, even in fleeting moments during the day, in small private circles. People can take affirmative or negative positions on issues, and they do this implicitly all the time. In this way, they contribute to evaluating competing public opinions, if not their articulation. Public communication acts as a hinge between informal opinion-formation and the institutionalized processes of will formation – a general election*

1 Odugbemi, S. (2008), *Public opinion, the public sphere, and quality of governance: An exploration.* (The World Bank: 2008), p. 15

or a cabinet meeting, for example. For this reason the discursive constitution of the public sphere is important. (Habermas, 2006: 9)

Over the past years, the development of mass communication has changed the nature of the public sphere from a physical space to a communication structure.² Today, people can get in touch through the telephone or the Internet, and they can find out about what other people think by reading a newspaper editorial or by watching local television news. Therefore, today's public sphere goes beyond space and includes all channels of communications through which citizens can send and receive information. This two-way-flow of communication is essential: a public sphere does not exist if, for instance, a government publishes information but does not listen to the people; therefore a working democratic system is mandatory.

Public sphere and new media

New media refers to innovative forms of interaction between people and technology, the relationship between people and communication tools used creatively to meet basic needs for information, communication and networking.³ At the same time, new media is one of the most popular topics in nowadays sociological and political research, and their implications in society have grown over the years.

A new discussion is related to new media as a new and evolved form of public sphere, but the discussion is very long on this subject, so I will limit myself to outlining some obvious trends. Linked to the new public sphere are the online communities that have existed before the emergence of World Wide Web phenomenon. The first online community was born in the late '70s when the BBC could be accessed by dial-up. This kind of community is included in Anderson's form of "imagined community"⁴, meaning that the community members probably will never know one another face to face; however, they may have similar interests or identify as part of the same nation. The media also creates imagined communities, through targeting a mass audience or generalizing and addressing citizens as the public. Social media platforms like Facebook or blogs are studied nowadays as public spheres (Barlow: 2008). In my opinion, New media is more developed, because the persons targeted by an online platform for example have a higher rate of auto selection.

One of the consequences of the powerful involvement of mass media and new media in the public sphere is that it became an instrument for public relations and more. Therefore, in the past, the political public sphere represented a critical voice that analyzed and often opposed government action, and prevented domination by the powerful state. Public sphere meant places where people meet to discuss current

2 Habermas, J. (1992), *Further reflections on the public sphere*, (MIT Press: 1992), p.6

3 Guțu-Tudor, D. (2008), *New Media*, (Tritonic: 2008), p. 20

4 Anderson, B. (1983), *Imagined communities. Reflections on the origin and spread of the nations* (Verso: 1983), p. 13

issues of the society – from schools to coffee shops. In its modern form, however, the public sphere is no more than a manipulative form of publicity, as politicians, advertising agents and public relations experts try to create and manipulate a false public, argues Habermas.⁵

Counter public sphere and WikiLeaks

One of the benefits of new media is that it is easy to access, as a reader, due to the low price, and as a creator of content, due to price as well, but also of its lack of ethical interdiction (of course, countries like North Korea where Google and YouTube are banned are specific objects of study). The politics are a specific domain that uses such instruments as sites, blogs, forums etc. in order to propagate certain ideas. The politic formations of extreme Right or extreme Left are the one that use this type of media mostly.⁶ The question is how we measure the impact WikiLeaks has on the public sphere, knowing that we cannot exactly find a political inclination. The information aired on the website was against Left and Right politicians with no significant bias, and also the disclosures targeted a wide range of countries.

The role of new media, and even the one of the mass media, in the public sphere is yet to be explored. Habermas himself has revised his public sphere thesis in the last ten years to take account of such phenomena, and new media is still forming as a field of study.

The growth of the mass media, together with the increasing complexity and rationalization of societies over the course of the 20th century, has led to a decrease in the importance of the public sphere's debate function. Habermas argues – '*the public sphere becomes the court before which public prestige can be displayed – rather than in which critical debate is carried on*'.⁷ Because of the lack of immediate interactivity between "players" (mass/media and its audience), the argument of Habermas stand by my point of view. But when we talk about new media, the conditions change, and are more similar to the one of the initial public sphere described by Habermas. The interaction is more vivid and appears a phenomenon of self-selecting within the audience.

Alternative media are usually lacking audience, because of its radical message, limited resources and amateur providers of content. As pointed out by specialists, 'alternative media have had a spectacular lack of success in reaching out beyond the radical ghetto'⁸.

5 Habermas, J. (1992), *Further reflections on the public sphere*, (MIT Press: 1992), p. 20

6 Wimmer, J. (2005), *Counter-public spheres and the revival of the European public sphere*, European inst communication culture, Volume: 12, Issue: 2, Pages: 93-109, Jun 2005

7 Habermas, J. (1989) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, (Polity: 1989), p. 201

8 Myungjin Park, James Curran, *De-Westernizing Media Studies*, (Routledge: 2000), p. 193

A case where this type of media was a success is WikiLeaks. As an entirely incoherent concept, the idea of the public sphere seems similar to many others, from the freedom of speech to Internet, only when the idea is surrounded by particular movements and people, it obtains a level of concreteness. In the light of recent events, the public sphere has taken its most solid form in the organization that is WikiLeaks. The main figure is its founder, Julian Assange, who has become well known to the public worldwide since the first disclosures of WikiLeaks and is now part of the popular culture.

The public sphere, as construed by German philosopher Jurgen Habermas, is a key site for the production of meaning. Assange's WikiLeaks, in publishing government secrets, is redefining for the world a number of concepts. Foremost amongst them is the concept of journalism itself but it is closely followed by diplomacy. It is also forcing conversations about freedom, including the types of freedom we want, the types of freedom we need and the types of freedom we should have. These are all positive developments in the public discourse. The vaunted public sphere, after all, is there to facilitate discussion in order to make it possible to reach a common agreement.

However, as noted by Holmes (Holmes: 2010) and others, some media organizations are choosing to use WikiLeaks in a way that continues to stifle the freedom of information. Far from being a perfect and honest form of public sphere, WikiLeaks has flaws. It set the precedent by controlling the flow of the information, acting as common media gatekeepers, to meet their own agenda. There are arguments in favor of this approach – namely technological limiters and the opportunity to give each new piece of information its own worthy consideration, because any other approach would not do justice to the material. However, traditional media organizations have taken this approach as a signal that they themselves are able to further restrict the information.

Such control is opposed to the ideal public sphere, whether it is by WikiLeaks itself or another media organization. As such, while the ongoing leaks should be welcomed by freedom advocates, the organization and Assange himself cannot yet be called a true public sphere.

Methodology

Discrete research allows the researcher to study the social life from distance without interfering and alternating it in the process. The main method I am using in order to accomplish the theme is content analysis of the text. The major purpose of the content analysis is to identify patterns in the text, text that can be defined as books, book chapters, interviews, discussions, article in a newspaper, speech, theater, advertising⁹ and I will use these mainly for analyzing the speech of Hillary

9 Chania Crete Greece, *Understaing the Qualitative and Quantative methods in the context of the content analysis*, Naorem Binita Devi, International Conference, 26-29 May 2009

Clinton. Content analysis consist in analyzing the meanings and relationships of words and concepts, then in making inferences about the messages within the texts, the writer(s), the audience, and even the culture and time of which these are a part, and this are the aspects followed in the analysis.

The second part of the research section contains a frame analysis – research method used to analyze how people understand situations and activities – of the worldwide reactions of politicians. “Framing is the process by which a communication source, such as a news organization, defines and constructs a political issue or public controversy”¹⁰, in this case the public and politic controversy is created by the WikiLeaks disclosures.

Data analysis

Content analysis

The first source I used in order to analyze the present topic is a discourse given by the secretary of state, Hillary Clinton in 29 November 2010 (Appendix 1) as an official response to WikiLeaks disclosures. She was the first official senior member of Barack Obama’s cabinet that officially commented on the WikiLeaks release.

The unit of analysis is the paragraph and the level of analysis is the word. Code 1 – WikiLeaks, is formed by such words as “cables”, “disclosures”, “information”, “classified” etc., that is every reference to WikiLeaks found in Clinton s speech. Code 2 – US Government replaces all the remarks about it. Code 3 – Counterparts, is used for words like “Partners”, “Other countries”, “Friends”. The fourth code, World, is used for all the words similar to global or world, use by Hillary Clinton in this speech in order to present the problem facing USA as a problem of everybody. I coded separately US Government by USA, because in the text their connotations are distinct. The next codes are constructed in the same way, except code 9 – risk – is for every negative word that Clinton uses in her speech, from risk to weapons or terrorism, that describe the risky situation in which USA was put by the classified documents publication. All the codes and their distribution within the paragraphs are shown in the next table.

Regarding the use of positive words versus negative one, we could say that the speech has a medium equilibrium. If in one paragraph the message is slightly negative, Hillary Clinton ends it by using positive words like “productive”, “trust”, “confidence” etc. On the other hand, if we look at the themes within the paragraphs, the negative ones are significantly exceeding the positive ones (risk vs. confidence).

The speech is written at first person singular and plural – *I will*, *We consider* or even *Obama and I* etc., which makes the communication process more personal; I is used for 15 times, and We is used for 11 times.

10 Nelson, Thomas E., Oxley, Zoe, and Clawson, Rosalee A. 1997. "Toward a Psychology of Framing Effects." *Political Behavior* 19(3): 221-46.

Table 1. Codes used in the content analysis

	Code 1	Code 2	Code 3	Code 4	Code 5	Code 6	Code 7	Code 8	Code 9	Code 10	Code 11
Paragraph 1	WikiLeaks	US Government	Counterparts	World							
Paragraph 2	WikiLeaks	US Government	Counterparts		USA	People	National interest	Foreing policy	Risk		
Paragraph 3	WikiLeaks		Counterparts		USA		National interest	Foreing policy	Risk	Confidence	
Paragraph 4	WikiLeaks	US Government	Counterparts							Confidence	Work
Paragraph 5	WikiLeaks	US Government	Counterparts		USA			Foreing policy			
Paragraph 6	WikiLeaks		Counterparts		USA	People	National interest	Foreing policy	Risk		
Paragraph 7	WikiLeaks	US Government			USA	People			Risk	Confidence	
Paragraph 8	WikiLeaks					People			Risk	Confidence	
Paragraph 9	WikiLeaks		Counterparts			People	National interest		Risk		
Paragraph 10	WikiLeaks		Counterparts		USA	People		Foreing policy	Risk		Work
Paragraph 11	WikiLeaks	US Government		World	USA						Work
Paragraph 12	WikiLeaks		Counterparts	World	USA	People	National interest	Foreing policy		Confidence	
Paragraph 13	WikiLeaks	US Government	Counterparts	World	USA		National interest		Risk		

Next, I would like to see the frequency of the words used in the speech, and if there is a pattern in associating a word with another.

As we can see from Table 1, the most frequently used word in Hillary Clinton’s discourse is *world*, and it is used for 8 times only in this form. *Global* is again used by 4 times, and other words that have the same connotation – like *countries* or *governments* are also frequent in this speech. The message transmitted is that the issue of the documents is not only one of the United State, but it’s a global one, and by this approach, Hillary Clinton tries, and I would say that she achieves, to transfer the blame from American diplomats to diplomats all over the world. It is a global issue, and the public must remember this at the end of the speech. As we learned in communication classes, a word must be spoken three times to stick with the audience, and eight occurrences of the same word in a speech makes the job even easier.

Table 2. Frequency of the top 10 word use in the discourse of Hillary Clinton

Word	Occurrences	Frequency
world	8	1.4%
these	7	1.3%
people	7	1.3%
every	7	1.3%
public	6	1.1%
policy	5	0.9%
around	5	0.9%
united	5	0.9%
diplomats	5	0.9%
states	5	0.9%

The second word that is used with a high frequency in this speech is *people*. It is a word that is highly correlated to *world* and it shows that the people are as important as the global matter. *United States* and *diplomats* are also a word that are frequently used by Hillary Clinton, and by this a humanization of the problem is created, and also an appeal to nationalism. *We are all people, and what we do is not always based on the right judgment* is another conclusion of the speech.

When we deliver a speech, it is very important to know our audience. First, the words used must be fitted to the education level of the audience, to the context in

which the speech is held, and it must have a length adjusted to the importance of the topic discussed and the communication channel used to transmit the message.

The next table shows the syllable situation of the words used in the speech. The speech is clearly constructed; from words easy to pronounce and so easy to be understood by the audience. The relation between the number of syllable of the words and the frequency of those words in the speech is indirect: as the number of syllables grows, the frequency of the words gets smaller.

Table 3. Syllable per words amount in the speech

Syllable count	Word count	Frequency
1	515	50.3%
2	272	26.6%
3	153	14.9%
4	72	7.00%
5	11	1.1%
6	1	0.1%

If we look at the frequency of the ideas and concepts within the paragraph, the one that wins by distance is "WikiLeaks disclosures", which is the code for all the expressions use by Hillary Clinton in her speech, referring to WikiLeaks disclosures. There are no references to WikiLeaks in the entire speech; Hillary Clinton is using instead constructions like *the documents, the leaks, classified documents, classified information, the materials etc.* Very important are the words correlated to the documents.

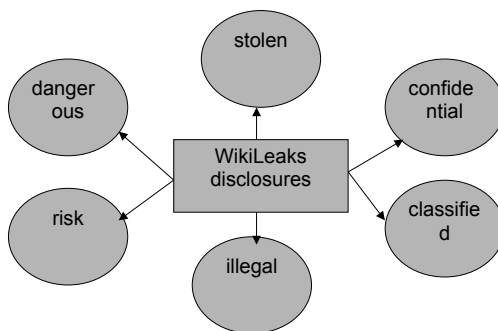


Diagram 1. WikiLeaks disclosures

Another way to see if the speech is fitted for the audience is by using readability measures. For example, the *Gunning fog index*, developed by the American businessman Robert Gunning in 1952¹¹, measures the readability of English writing. The index estimates the years of formal education needed to understand the text

11 Gunning R., (1969), *The Fog Index After Twenty Years* *Journal of Business Communication* January 1969 vol. 6 no. 2 3-13 doi: 10.1177/002194366900600202







on a first reading. A fog index of 12 requires the reading level of a U.S. High school senior (around 18 years old). The Gunning fog index is calculated with the following algorithm:

1. Select a passage (such as one or more full paragraphs) of around 100 words. Do not omit any sentences;
2. Determine the average sentence length. (Divide the number of words by the number of sentences.);
3. Count the “complex” words—those with three or more syllables. Do not include proper nouns, familiar jargon, or compound words. Do not include common suffixes as a syllable;
4. Add the average sentence length and the percentage of complex words; and
5. Multiply the result by 0.4.

The complete formula is: $0.4((\text{words/sentence}) + 100(\text{complex words/words}))$

The discourse I am analyzing in this paper has a fog index of 15.5 (where 6 means easy and 20 means hard) and readability beta of 32.7 (where 100 is easy, 20-hard and optimal for scores between 60 and 70).

Other reading and readability test:¹²

Flesch reading ease score:		50.9
Automated readability index:		13.1
Flesch-Kincaid grade level:		11.5
Coleman-Liau index:		12.5
Gunning fog index:		15.5
SMOG index:		13.6

As we can see, the speech has a score above average when it comes to readability, but given the context (press conference) and the social status of the person that delivered the speech (an American politician), we can say it is appropriate even the audience contains mainly regular citizens of USA. Despite the facts that Hillary Clinton has is a major at Yale Law University and now is the 67th State Secretary of USA, the difficulty of her speech is suited to a wide large of people, and this is a plus to her speech, overall.

Frame analysis

I have chosen these four countries (India, Pakistan, Italy and Iran) for conducting a frame analysis because of the different manner of handling WikiLeaks situation, by different frames. Unlike the first part of the data analysis, where I conducted a

¹² Oakland, T., Lane, H., (2009), *Language, Reading, and Readability Formulas: Implications for Developing and Adapting Tests* DOI: 10.1207/s15327574ijt0403_3, pages 239-252, 13 nov 2009

content analysis on an entire speech, for the frame analysis I used small but significant parts of interviews or official statements, because I only wanted to capture the main frames used to influence the population.

India:

“The Indian government is not really concerned, but we are definitely very interested in finding out what WikiLeaks is all about. Because they said that they were going to put on the web 4 million documents. So we are watching with interest” Somanahalli Mallaiah Krishna said.

India reaction to WikiLeaks is for me by far the most interesting and appropriate in dealing with an issue as important and unusual like this one. Somanahalli Mallaiah Krishna uses the word WikiLeaks, uses numbers (and this makes him look self-confident), and in this manner the fact that classified documents were published became a less shocking problem to deal with. And because confidential classified dangerous illegal stealing WikiLeaks documents framing has the ability to alter the public’s perception, this politician is handling the way this issues is framed.

Pakistan:

The classified documents that mentioned Pakistan were extremely sensitive, and the relation between USA and Pakistan had an obstacle to pass; but the most interesting part in the both countries official responses is the similarity. It is used even the same verb - condemn, in order to show the disapproval of both sides in the WikiLeaks problems. “We condemn this irresponsible leak of the secret documents” Pakistani Foreign Minister Spokesman Abdul Basit as saying. (referring to cables covering Pakistani nuclear program.) He also use the term “unauthorized leaks”. “We obviously condemn this irresponsible, I would say, disclosure of sensitive documents,” said Basit.

“We are still in the process of examining them and I do not think that these documents in any manner would have negatively impact Pakistan-U.S. Relations.” If we go back to the content analysis we can see that the this are one of the main themes of Hillary Clunton/s speech.

Italy:

Berlusconi, who was personally attacked by the leaks, adopted a more distant and arrogant attitude, and he said he didn’t care to read what the diplomat had to report, because “I don’t look at what third-rate or fourth-rate officials say.” This position is interesting in competition with USA for example, because not only that the importance and further influence of this disclosures is underestimated, but also it’s the only one that doesn’t support its diplomats. In Clinton s discourse the diplomats were illustrated as a people who take care of the national security and interests, in no way as fourth-rate officials.

Iran:

“We don’t give any value to these documents,” Ahmadinejad told on a news conference. “It’s without legal value. Iran and regional states are friends. Such acts of mischief have no impact on relations between nations.” The terms (frames) of the response are the following: invaluable documents and strong partnerships, making the position to look alike Italy’s, but no so arrogant.

Conclusions and discussions

By applying content analysis to Hillary Clinton’s speech I noticed that the principles of a good speech were considered by the speech author. The language is fit for the audience, the terms are fair repeated and the message that is delivered is clear and easy to follow.

Frames provide people a quick and easy way to process information and they will use the previously mentioned mental filters to make sense of incoming messages. If American President Barack Obama says that WikiLeaks is a terrorist organization, the chance of us believing it the next time some news about this matter gets in the way significantly grows. If Berlusconi says that the information isn’t important because the people who provided them are worthless, again, the chance to believe it ourselves grows because the idea is already implanted in our mind. So as we can see by these examples, the sender and framer of the information have enormous power to use these schemas to influence how the receivers will interpret the message, and the political scene it maybe the most in need for tricks like this.

The official positions of the countries I have used for this study are similar in the way the next diagram shows.

If we include Romanian politicians’ reactions to WikiLeaks disclosure I would say that we can find slight similarities with Italy and Iran.

For a future study on this topic I would find interesting to analyze the public opinion perspective above the classified documents, and the opinions about politicians’ reactions, but I believe that this cannot be made by qualitative analysis

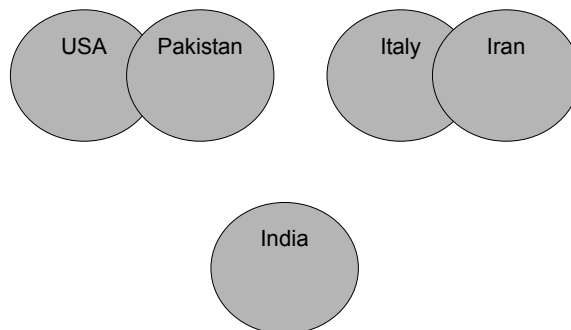


Diagram 2. Countries’ similarity

only, but using quantitative methods too (to be able to see the impact of WikiLeaks on a large number of people from different countries). A correlation between these data and the data obtained by interviewing citizens about WikiLeaks could tell us if the sides a politician takes when it comes to dealing with WikiLeaks issue have a real influence on the audience or between the cross national relations.

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Appendix 1

Hillary Clinton:

I want to take a moment to discuss the recent news reports of classified documents that were illegally provided from United States Government computers. In my conversations with counterparts from around the world over the past few days, and in my meeting earlier today with Foreign Minister Davutoglu of Turkey, I have had very productive discussions on this issue.

The United States strongly condemns the illegal disclosure of classified information. It puts people's lives in danger, threatens our national security, and undermines our efforts to work with other countries to solve shared problems. This Administration is advancing a robust foreign policy that is focused on advancing America's national interests and leading the world in solving the most complex challenges of our time, from fixing the global economy, to thwarting international terrorism, to stopping the spread of catastrophic weapons, to advancing human rights and universal values. In every country and in every region of the world, we are working with partners to pursue these aims.

So let's be clear: this disclosure is not just an attack on America's foreign policy interests. It is an attack on the international community – the alliances and partnerships, the conversations and negotiations, that safeguard global security and advance economic prosperity.

I am confident that the partnerships that the Obama Administration has worked so hard to build will withstand this challenge. The President and I have made these partnerships a priority – and we are proud of the progress that they have helped achieve – and they will remain at the center of our efforts.

I will not comment on or confirm what are alleged to be stolen State Department cables. But I can say that the United States deeply regrets the disclosure of any information that was intended to be confidential, including private discussions between counterparts or our diplomats' personal assessments and observations. I want to make clear that our official foreign policy is not set through these messages, but here in Washington. Our policy is a matter of public record, as reflected in our statements and our actions around the world.

I would also add that to the American people and to our friends and partners, I want you to know that we are taking aggressive steps to hold responsible those who stole this information. I have directed that specific actions be taken at the State Department, in addition to new security safeguards at the Department of Defense and elsewhere to protect State Department information so that this kind of breach cannot and does not ever happen again.

Relations between governments aren't the only concern created by the publication of this material. U.S. diplomats meet with local human rights workers, journalists, religious leaders, and others outside of governments who offer their own candid insights. These conversations also depend on trust and confidence. For example, if

an anti-corruption activist shares information about official misconduct, or a social worker passes along documentation of sexual violence, revealing that person's identity could have serious repercussions: imprisonment, torture, even death.

So whatever are the motives in disseminating these documents, it is clear that releasing them poses real risks to real people, and often to the very people who have dedicated their own lives to protecting others.

Now, I am aware that some may mistakenly applaud those responsible, so I want to set the record straight: There is nothing laudable about endangering innocent people, and there is nothing brave about sabotaging the peaceful relations between nations on which our common security depends.

There have been examples in history in which official conduct has been made public in the name of exposing wrongdoings or misdeeds. This is not one of those cases. In contrast, what is being put on display in this cache of documents is the fact that American diplomats are doing the work we expect them to do. They are helping identify and prevent conflicts before they start. They are working hard every day to solve serious practical problems – to secure dangerous materials, to fight international crime, to assist human rights defenders, to restore our alliances, to ensure global economic stability. This is the role that America plays in the world. This is the role our diplomats play in serving America. And it should make every one of us proud.

The work of our diplomats doesn't just benefit Americans, but also billions of others around the globe. In addition to endangering particular individuals, disclosures like these tear at the fabric of the proper function of responsible government.

People of good faith understand the need for sensitive diplomatic communications, both to protect the national interest and the global common interest. Every country, including the United States, must be able to have candid conversations about the people and nations with whom they deal. And every country, including the United States, must be able to have honest, private dialogue with other countries about issues of common concern. I know that diplomats around the world share this view – but this is not unique to diplomacy. In almost every profession – whether it's law or journalism, finance or medicine or academia or running a small business – people rely on confidential communications to do their jobs. We count on the space of trust that confidentiality provides. When someone breaches that trust, we are all worse off for it. And so despite some of the rhetoric we've heard these past few days, confidential communications do not run counter to the public interest. They are fundamental to our ability to serve the public interest.

In America, we welcome genuine debates about pressing questions of public policy. We have elections about them. That is one of the greatest strengths of our democracy. It is part of who we are and it is a priority for this Administration. But stealing confidential documents and then releasing them without regard for the consequences does not serve the public good, and it is not the way to engage in a healthy debate.

In the past few days, I have spoken with many of my counterparts around the world, and we have all agreed that we will continue to focus on the issues and tasks at hand. In that spirit, President Obama and I remain committed to productive cooperation with our partners as we seek to build a better, more prosperous world for all.

Appendix 2

The following are the formulae (in the Java programming language) used to generate the various reading scores:

```
//          Flesch          reading          ease          score
double fres = 206.835 - (1.015 * wordCount) / sentenceCount - (84.6 * syllableCount) / wordCount;
```

```
//          Automated          readability          index
double ari = (4.71 * letterNumberCount) / wordCount + (0.5 * wordCount) / sentenceCount - 21.43;
```

```
//          Flesch-Kincaid          grade          level
double fkgi = (0.39 * wordCount) / sentenceCount + (11.8 * syllableCount) / wordCount - 15.59;
```

```
//          Coleman-Liau          index
double cl = (5.89 * letterNumberCount) / wordCount - (30.0 * sentenceCount) / wordCount - 15.8;
```

```
//          Gunning          fog          index
double fog = 0.4 * ((double)wordCount / sentenceCount + (100.0 * complexCount) / wordCount);
```

```
//          SMOG          index
double smog = Math.sqrt(complexCount * 30.0 / sentenceCount) + 3.0;
```

wordCount is the number of words in the text.

sentenceCount is the number of sentences in the text.

syllableCount is the number of syllables in the text.

letterNumberCount is the number of letters and numbers in the text.

complexCount is the number of words of three or more syllables in the text.

ents.