

Propaganda for a Price: The NED, Reporters Without Borders and the 2016 Press Freedom Index

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The annual Press Freedom Index produced by Reporters without Borders (RSF) is due out on April 20th according to their official website <https://rsf.org/en>. The question is what countries will the international Non-Government Organization (NGO) declare the worst for press freedoms? No question Syria would be on top the list as one of the worst due to the civil war along with Washington's traditional enemies including Cuba, Russia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Venezuela etc. Granted they are problems within every country in the world when it comes to freedom of the press.

However, the U.S. ranked 49th in the 2015 Press Freedom Index by Reporters without Borders (RWB) also known as Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) due to its pursuit of Wiki leaks founder Julian Assange and the persecution of New York Times reporter Jim Risen in connection with Jeffrey Sterling, a former CIA officer and whistleblower who was on trial and convicted of charges under the Espionage Act for giving Mr. Risen classified government information.

Since then, there have been a number of new cases of government censorship that deserves international attention. For example, the censorship of the documentary film 'Vaxxed: from Cover-Up to Catastrophe' that was supposed to air in the Tribeca Film Festival in New York City by the Medical establishment who is influential in Washington is an issue Reporters without Borders should consider. Mike Adams, publisher and editor of Natural News wrote an article on the censorship committed by the medical establishment and said

"The censorship of medical truth has reached a fever pitch as books, films and documentaries are now being maliciously attacked and censored in a desperate ploy to prevent the public from learning the truth about cancer, vaccines, antidepressant drugs and more."

The documentary film is based on the research done by Dr. Andrew Wakefield who discovered a link between the controversial MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine and the rise of autism in children. Another case was in the U.S. state of Arizona which has banned reporters from the floor who refuse background checks is now required by law. According to the 'Arizona Capital Times,' the state house has "banned reporters from the floor who would not consent to extensive background checks." The report confirmed the move by State House leaders who claim the new law is to keep politicians "safe": Several media organizations who routinely cover the Legislature, including the Associated Press, the Arizona Republic, the Capitol Times and Capitol Media Services were denied the traditional access after refusing to sign documents allowing House staff to check not just criminal history records but all civil records, driving records and other public records. Arizona's new law bans journalists for the safety of politicians are an excuse to limit free

speech and reporting on corrupt politicians. The *Arizona Capital Times* went on to say the new law is extreme *"but the policy went beyond the checks, listing specific criminal offenses that would automatically disqualify a reporter from having floor privileges, including misdemeanor offenses like trespass."* Does the state of Arizona have corrupt politicians that travel at the expense of Arizona taxpayers? The report mentioned the speaker of the house Republican David Gowan *"Speaker David Gowan, R-Sierra Vista, said it was not targeting the media but about keeping lawmakers safe. He cited a disturbance last week, not at the press tables in the secure area of the House but in the public gallery."* Hank Stephenson's report on state paid travel expenses paints a different story altogether:


Rep. Reginald Bolding, D-Laveen, suggested that the new regulations have less to do with security than with the discomfort of some lawmakers with what reporters have been writing. And that, he said, includes reports on state-paid travel. That is a reference to an extensive story earlier this year by Hank Stephenson of the Arizona Capitol Times about Gowan's travels at state expense, much of it in the congressional district where he wants to get elected.

Gowan eventually had to repay the House more than \$12,000. Ginger Lamb, the paper's publisher, noted the list of disqualifying crimes like rape and assault also included trespass. And Stephenson has a 2014 conviction for trespass, the result of a fight in Wickenburg. Lamb called the timing of the speaker's action "peculiar."

"This new protocol would have an adverse effect on a member of our reporting team that has written several stories that are critical of the speaker's leadership," she said in a prepared statement. "I would hope this is coincidence, but past experience leads me to believe otherwise"

Obviously, Mr. Gowan is upset that he had to repay \$12,000 out of his own pocket, now he wants to ban reporters from the House floor as payback. *The State Press*, a local news organization in Arizona published a report titled *'House measure limits free press, free speech, free thought'* which stated *"The legislation on its own teeters on the line between a safety measure and censorship. But when you consider that for 34 years, journalists have been granted access to the House floor without a hiccup, it leans closer toward suppression than security."*

The First Amendment in the Bill of Rights has been deemed non-existent in Arizona by restricting journalists in the House floor should allow the U.S. to slip even further down the list in the 2016 Press Freedom Index if RWB is serious about the freedom of the press.

RWB is usually biased towards nations who Washington and Europe deem uncooperative. It is a red flag for an organization that is supposed to  be neutral since it's an international NGO, but geopolitics play an important part when a nation's freedom of the press is criticized by the West for propaganda purposes. Global Research contributor F. William Endghal wrote an article in 2010 titled: *'The "Evil Guys List"? "Free Journalism" in the Service of US Foreign Policy: The Role of Reporters without Borders'* questioned who is behind the organization:

The most interesting question is not the deeds of Hu Jintao or Putin or Ahmadinejad in the last year in relation to their national press, but rather who is judging these leaders. We might well ask, "Who judges the judges?" The answer is, Washington. Reporters Without Borders is an international Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). According to

its website it is headquartered in Paris, France. Paris is a curious home base for an organization that, as it turns out, is financed by the US Congress and by agencies tied to the US government.

If we go to the RWB website to find who stands behind these self-anointed judges of world press freedom, we find nothing. Not even their board of directors are named, let alone their financial backers. Their annual published Income and Expenditure statements give no clue who stands behind them financially

RWB's former Secretary General Robert Menard admitted that the budget for the organization was provided by "US organizations strictly linked with US foreign policy." So which U.S. organization is linked with Washington's foreign policy? The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) of course, which has funded the international NGO who criticizes Washington's enemies when it comes to the freedom of the press. Endgahl mentions a ZNET article written by Diana Barahona's in 2006 titled 'Reporters Without Borders and Washington's Coups' on the NED's funding of RWB which was denied by its executive director Lucie Morillon at the time:

As one researcher found after months of trying to get a reply from NED about their funding of Reporters Without Borders, which included a flat denial from RSF executive director Lucie Morillon, the NED revealed, according to Diana Barahona writing in Znet that Reporters Without Borders received grants over at least three years from the International Republican Institute. The IRI is one of four subsidiaries of NED. An IRI spokesperson has denied IRI funding the RWB

The 2016 Press Freedom Index will most likely keep U.S. rankings in a "not so bad" category to show the international community that they are neutral, but that is just a facade. Governments targeted for "Regime Change" will be on top of the list as the worst for press freedoms including Ecuador, Cuba, Syria, Russia and Iran. The Press Freedom Index serves as a propaganda tool to demonize countries that are not subservient to Washington's interests. Reporters Without Borders should be seen in the same category as the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists who recently produced 'The Panama Papers' and that is a paid propaganda mouthpiece for Washington. RWB has a purpose and that is to provide ammunition to criticize censorship by governments not subservient to Washington for the most sophisticated propaganda machine in modern history, the U.S. mainstream media.

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