

Wikipedia co-founder slams Wikileaks over Afghan documents

September 28 2010



Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia, speaks at a conference in Jerusalem on October 21, 2009. Wales has slammed whistleblower WikiLeaks over its release of Afghan war documents which he said could "get people killed". He also expressed irritation over the website's use of the term "Wiki" in its name, which refers to a site that allows different users to collaborate and make contributions.

The co-founder of online encyclopedia Wikipedia, Jimmy Wales, on Tuesday slammed whistleblower WikiLeaks over its release of Afghan war documents which he said could "get people killed".

Wales also expressed irritation over the website's use of the term "Wiki" in its name, which refers to a site that allows different users to collaborate and make contributions.

"I would distance myself from WikiLeaks, I wish they wouldn't use the

name, they are not a Wiki. A big way they got famous in the first place was by using the word Wiki, which was unfortunate in my view," he said at a business conference in Kuala Lumpur.

WikiLeaks, in collaboration with The New York Times, Britain's Guardian and Der Spiegel of Germany, published 77,000 Afghan war documents in July and has said it will release another 15,000 related documents soon.

Earlier this month, WikiLeaks also announced plans to release a "massive cache" of classified US military field reports on the conflict in Iraq.

Wales, whose user-generated online encyclopedia has been a huge success, said such documents -- which experts say constitute one of the biggest-ever leaks of military intelligence -- must be handled responsibly.

"In the most recent round of leaks, the New York Times for example... actually redacted certain information that could put people in harm's way whereas Wikileaks is planning to publish absolutely everything," he said.

"I think it is really important when we have sensitive information, that we do rely on responsible journalists to sort through it for us... it's much better than dumping all kinds of crazy information online and get people killed," he added.

Wales said the documents could refer to "good-hearted people" working for civil society groups in Afghanistan, who would be affected if they were referred to in the leaked papers.

"It isn't proof of anything but could be enough to get someone killed," he said.

"I don't think Julian Assange wants those people killed, however if he irresponsibly follows the policy of releasing absolutely everything, it's incredibly dangerous for those people," he said, referring to WikiLeaks' spokesman.

NATO chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen has previously warned the release of classified [Afghan war](#) documents may endanger the safety of international and Afghan troops.

The United States and NATO have 152,000 troops in Afghanistan aiming to quell the insurgency that began soon after the Taliban regime was overthrown in a US-led invasion in late 2001.

Created in 2006, [WikiLeaks](#) first gained widespread notoriety with the release of a graphic video of a US military Apache helicopter strike in Baghdad in 2007 that killed two Reuters employees and a number of other people.

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Citation: Wikipedia co-founder slams Wikileaks over Afghan documents (2010, September 28) retrieved 19 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2010-09-wikipedia-co-founder-slams-wikileaks-afghan.html>

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