

# Michael Dagan ~ Online Privacy Guide For Journalists 2017



## **A Guide for the Savvy Journalist in a World of Ever Decreasing Privacy**

Many veteran journalists, but not only these, surely noticed that we are all of a sudden bombarded again from all-over with mentions of Watergate. Books like George Orwell's 1984 are on display at bookstores and an air of danger to

freedom of speech and freedom of the press is spreading slowly like a dark cloud over the Western Hemisphere, raising old fears.

When an American serving president accuses a former president of surveillance; when he prevents central US media outlets access - so far always granted, and taken for granted - to press conferences he holds; and when he incessantly knocks and accuses the media of being the country's enemy number one, it isn't surprising that memories of President Nixon surface up more with every self-pitying tweet about SNL, and that even Republican Senators such as John McCain express fear for the future of democracy.

And McCain is not alone. Many journalists whom I have spoken with recently, expressed concern for whatever lays ahead for the freedom of the press. At a time when it's possible to express the following statement - "Donald Trump controls the NSA" - and not be held a liar, anything's possible. Add that to the fact that recent news on CIA taught us that almost all encryption systems can be compromised, if someone has the perseverance to crack them - and you are en route to envisioning an utterly Dystopian world, where you cannot even get too comfortable laying on your sofa, in front of your own smart TV.

The good news is that it is nevertheless possible to make it difficult for anyone to try and intercept your emails, the text messages you're sending or your phone calls. You can take measures to make the lives of those who want to uncover your sources and the information being revealed to you, much harder. Of course, the degree of effort you're prepared to take to protect your privacy, your sources' anonymity and your data's safety, should be commensurate to the likelihood of a real threat, be that hacking or spying.

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