

WikiLeaks offers \$20,000 reward over murder of DNC staffer linked to email leak

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WikiLeaks head Julian Assange has offered \$20,000 for information leading to a conviction of the killer of a young staffer for the Democratic National Committee. The staffer, a 27-year-old named Seth Rich, was shot twice on his way home in Washington, D.C. around 4 a.m. on July 10. He died later in the hospital.

The circumstances of the murder remain murky. According to D.C. police, the murder was the result of a botched armed robbery. Strangely, Rich still had his wallet, cell phone and watch on his person when his body was found. Because Rich was in charge of DNC voter expansion data and had access to a wide range of information about the inner workings of the Democratic party, some believe that his murder may have been politically motivated.

Though the details of his death are still very unclear, the fact that Assange himself has weighed in so heavily on the case is significant. In a recent interview with Dutch television station Nieuwsurr with Assange via Skype, he openly questioned the official narrative regarding Rich's death:

Assange: Whistleblowers go to significant efforts to get us material and often significant risks. There was a 27-year old that works for the DNC who was shot in the back ... murdered ... for unknown reasons as he was walking down the street in Washington.

Host: That was just a robbery wasn't it?

Assange: No. There's no finding.

Host: What are you suggesting?

Assange: I am suggesting that our sources take risks and they become concerned to see things occurring like that.

Host: But was he one of your sources, then?

Assange: We don't comment on who our sources are.

Host: But why make the suggestion?

Assange: Because we have to understand how high

the stakes are in the United States and that our sources face serious risks ... that's why they come to us so we can protect their anonymity.

The announcement by Wikileaks comes after the Washington, D.C. Police Department issued a \$25,000 reward for information that could solve the case. A police spokesperson said there is "no evidence at this time" that linked Rich's murder to any other ongoing case. The same spokesperson went on to say, "We are very pleased if anyone is going to assist us with the giving of reward money."

It is now suspected that Rich may have been behind the leak of 20,000 emails from the Democratic National Committee server that established widespread corruption and anti-democratic practices within the party. In particular, the leak revealed that the DNC had specifically targeted the Sanders campaign and undermined it in order to assist Hillary Clinton's rise to the nomination. It also showed the corrupt funding practices within the Democratic Party.

One scheme was the Hillary Victory Fund (HVF), which appealed for hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions for Clinton. The fund could accept checks as large as \$356,100, with individuals limited to \$10,000 per state party, \$33,400 for the DNC and \$2,700 for Clinton's campaign. Most of the funds, however, were channeled into the Clinton campaign and the DNC.

A new revelation concerning emails from her personal server has shown that Clinton has consistently done the bidding of her Wall Street donors, while her office gave out high-level positions for those connected to the Clinton Foundation. In particular, one email directly connects her financial backer Morgan Stanley to her diplomatic maneuvers in China.

What is equally significant is the tone of the response

from the major corporate news outlets to Assange's intervention. The headlines hardly contain impartiality, calling his statements a “conspiracy theory” deserving of a “tin foil hat.” Others describe Assange as attempting to “politicize” Rich's death, with the *Daily Mail* referring to it as an “outrage.” Several papers even allege that the story has gained interest due to the machinations of Clinton's Republican opponents in an attempt to smear anyone questioning the official narrative. Clearly, the press is working overtime to discredit Assange's remarks.

The political fallout from the DNC and personal server leaks has deeply worried the Democratic Party. In an effort to distance Clinton from the party machinations, DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman-Schultz stepped down on the eve of the convention in Philadelphia. The political officialdom is now making every effort to downplay the significance of the revelations, while officially implicating Moscow and moving to crush whistleblowers.

The corporate media immediately set about painting the DNC email leak as the result of Russian intelligence, as part of a broader campaign aimed at whipping up pro-war sentiment. The statement in which hacker “Guccifer 2.0” claimed sole responsibility for accessing the DNC servers has since disproved such claims.

One might also note that investigative journalist Michael Hastings died in a fiery car crash in June of 2013 while working on a story concerning CIA director John Brennan. An email obtained by WikiLeaks alleged “Brennan is behind the witch-hunts of investigative journalists” who reveal government secrets. The correspondence was from an internal communication within Stratfor, a global intelligence company with connections to the US state, with a subject line stating that the message was for internal use only and should not be forwarded.

Assange himself has been the target of a six-year-long politically motivated witch-hunt over an alleged sexual assault in Sweden. Originally consisting of four allegations, three have since been dropped due to lack of evidence and a five-year statute of limitations. The case has been spearheaded by the United States, likely in the hopes a conviction against him would allow for his transfer to the American judicial system. Assange has been forced to seek political asylum in the

Ecuadorian embassy in London, unable to leave due to fear of arrest.



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