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Wikileaks: Implications for Diplomacy and Intelligence Exchange

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I have a confession to make. Or else a boast. It all depends on the point of view you bring to today's discussion.

Julian Assange is Australian. A creature of a particular period in Australian social history, and of a particular, and I should say somewhat peculiar, upbringing – nomadic, on the road, sometimes hiding, struggling to find a compass.

But I won't focus on his very intense and secretive organisation that famously relays caches of information to the world, but on the impact of this process.

WikiLeaks owes its fame or notoriety overwhelmingly to the cache of material it was given by 23 year old soldier Bradley Manning, who is facing the prospect, if found guilty at his trial, of a very long prison sentence.

It is impossible to conjecture accurately whether WikiLeaks itself will ever again gain access to such confidential information – or whether any other organisation will do so.

But we can by now, as the most dramatic of the Manning files start to find their place in history rather than in current affairs, begin to risk generalising on implications, as our topic today requires of us.

Have the WikiLeaks so far been amazing or predictable? Do the leaked documents discredit American foreign policy or vindicate it? Will they trigger more closely guarded confidentiality or greater transparency within and between governments? And, more important, do they undermine or boost the value of diplomacy itself?

These are issues that of course affect how we all go about our statecraft, and our international exchange of intelligence.

WikiLeaks is not in itself a source, of course. It is an electronic platform that provides a way for people who wish to spill information they have obtained that is secret or suppressed, into the public market-place. So it is not the originator of the material. Nor, for most of the world, is it the disseminator. WikiLeaks has had to go to mass media organisations – mostly newspapers, I'm intrigued to note as a newspaperman myself - with the skills at assessing and presenting information, and the attentive audiences, in order to gain the maximum impact sought by the whistleblowers and others who supplied the organisation with the leaked material.

This naturally presents potential problems for the media that choose to run with the WikiLeaks material, since much of the claims made are impossible to corroborate. For instance, a small Indonesian trade union has filed in Jakarta a defamation action against leading Australian quality publisher Fairfax newspapers and the US embassy, seeking \$US1 billion damages on behalf of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

The United Federation of Labour Unions of State-Owned Enterprises - an umbrella group representing workers in government businesses - filed against a story citing US diplomatic cables obtained via WikiLeaks that alleged that Dr Yudhoyono - whose reputation for honesty helped win him a landslide second term 18 months ago - and his wife Kristiani Herewati were implicated in corruption and abuse of power. Dr Yudhoyono denied the criticisms, which he said amounted to "character assassination." A telephone conversation that had been planned between Dr Yudhoyono and US President Barack Obama was cancelled after the publication of the leaked cables, but it is not clear that the link was causal. Habibuokhman, the lawyer for the union group taking the action, said that the claim had been filed "as the allegations have ruined our national pride." The suit will probably go nowhere, but the story illustrates the risks involved in the on-publishing of the WikiLeaks when the sources of the cables may be unverifiable.

The breadth of the material so far, of the colourful identities named and often made subject to blunt critiques, and of the issues canvassed, underlines the continuing centrality of the US in global affairs.

It also reflects two age-old elements in diplomacy. When people talk, especially people from the same profession – such as, in this case, diplomacy - they naturally tend to focus on points that they share, perhaps exaggerating them, rather than on what divides them. Kim Jong-il? A crazy guy. Iran? A one-country axis of evil.

Sometimes, though, the cables that comprise most of the leaks skirt the truth, as we might expect if we follow the definition of a diplomat – which I believe rather unfair - as someone sent abroad to lie for their country.

The other longstanding quality of diplomacy that the leaks reveal is the extent of the convergence of thinking among cosmopolitan, educated people across the world.

It is no shock that a Chinese diplomat should feel quite comfortable about the idea of South Korean governance in the Korean peninsula, nor that some Arab leaders should find Mahmoud Ahmadinejad uncongenial.

That this information should emerge from the US, results from Washington's post-9/11 anxiety about a lack of capacity to fill in the dots between disparate threads of evidence, leading to a much wider sharing within government institutions of non top-secret data.

This is not the case, however, in Australia and most other countries in this Asia-Pacific region, where most diplomatic assessments remain highly confidential and closely guarded.

The conclusions drawn by American diplomats may be predictable, but they are often expressed in colourful language. A Turkish minister's “reported ties to the heroin trade, well-known predilection for teenage girls, and his son's open mafia links make him a weak link in the cabinet”, for instance.

This must help ensure the cables are at least read, just as good journalism contains information presented in a lively package.

Besides the accounts of encounters with sources of potentially useful information at cocktail parties and elsewhere, the diplomatic memos released by WikiLeaks demonstrate that a lot of the information sent back to Washington comprises second and third-hand material, some of it from journalists, who naturally tend to swap insights with diplomats.

Are a lot of the leaks about personalities rather than policies? Of course. Getting a fix on other countries' key players is a crucial part of assessing whether, and how persistently, those policies will be applied and how they may change. Discerning what foreign leaders want from your country is a core area of diplomacy.

Mostly, the leaks published to date tend to vindicate US policy, by stressing its acceptability to key players. But that's natural. Only braver emissaries will tell their political masters and mistresses that they are wrong or their policies don't work, and overwhelmingly what we have so far, is the view from American diplomats.

The style shifts a little between the presidencies covered, with more robust and less nuanced verdicts dating from the George W. Bush era - just as, we in Australia presume, the thrust of messages from the posts may have modified as Alexander Downer gave way as our Foreign Minister to the Kevin Rudd era dominating our foreign policy, first as prime minister and for the last year in an almost unchanged manner, as hyperactive foreign minister.

A lot of commentators have rightly stressed that the people who come off worst are those proven to be lying, such as the Yemeni leader who admitted he would pretend that his government had dispatched the bombs that the Americans actually dropped on al-Qa'ida targets there.

Consistency is commendable, and ultimately makes life a lot easier for nations and for politicians, as for everyone else. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu claimed about

WikiLeaks that since in Israel leaders tended to speak publicly as they do privately, they were not especially concerned.

Will the wider world now act more openly as a result of the platform provided by WikiLeaks? Will diplomats' work become fully transparent?

For the US State Department there may be little choice anyway. The genie won't go back in the bottle. The threat of publication will lurk as every cable is composed. But this does not necessarily mean the rest of the world will follow. Politicians will want to take to meetings, negotiating positions that are stronger than those that may ultimately prove acceptable.

What if their bottom line positions are readable by the other parties?

Australia has had its share of whistleblowers, including a new independent MP Andrew Wilkie, who formerly worked as an army officer then as an intelligence agent in our Office of National Assessments. But most Australian politicians and public servants continue to believe, at base, that they own the information collected by and for government.

Apart from at the US State Department, where the content of cables is likely to be more bland – and possibly thus less incisive or useful - these days, we are likely to see a retreat to greater secrecy.

More governments, and in the US government agencies apart from the State Department, will stress back-channel routes to pass on information, person-to-person, through phone calls, through the use of emissaries outside the constraints and vulnerability of the diplomatic arena.

This is also the trend in the corporate world and, extraordinarily, even in that of think tanks and universities, where the Chatham House rule has become almost universally adopted as a means of keeping views and information away from the wider public.

The leaked memos will be discussed at diplomatic finishing schools the world over. Not so much their content, as the prospect that any message transmitted electronically may be vulnerable to exposure. This will change the way diplomats and political leaders frame their encounters, especially in circumstances where trust is crucial.

Heather Hurlburt, executive director of the National Security Network in the US, has asked whether Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin could have gone to Camp David without months of quiet preparation, or Richard Nixon to China if that visit had been arranged in the full public glare.

It is almost 50 years since Canadian Marshall McLuhan coined the term global village. This is a time of transition, as a result of a shift in global power and the rapid evolution of technologies. Journalism and the way it is delivered is part of this. It is inevitable that diplomacy, its international uncle, should change, too.

But expect a strong rearguard action. The forces of discretion, of confidentiality, of secrecy even, should not be underestimated. And in a world where China's soft power is being slowly projected, like the first dusting of snow, then such traditional forces will incrementally gather strength rather than wither in exposure to the light of the public glare. We see in China, the capacity of a focused, well funded power elite to use the very tools of liberalism that make a WikiLeaks possible, deployed with devastating effectiveness in the opposite direction – enhancing control via the internet and the mobile phone, now used to learn immensely more about what people think and where they might be at any time, and who their friends are.

We should not, however, underestimate in the meantime, the damage that WikiLeaks might have wrought on diplomatic establishments in the West, that are of course the targets of Assange and his associates.

Kim Beazley, Australia's ambassador to the USA, a former defence Minister and leader of the Labor Party, says that WikiLeaks is "like American foreign policy being neutron

bombed.” Beazley’s line is that through the affair to date, the institution of the State Department itself has stood intact, and even affirmed, and people who have regarded American diplomats as hypocrites have been proven wrong by the content of the leaked cables.

But people within the edifice are nevertheless being badly damaged, he worries. For day after day, they have to face up to people about whom they have sent cables now published openly, “and some of them are in real trouble.” He believes that as a result WikiLeaks should be defined as “an act of vandalism” - not as whistle blowing. It’s naturally essential to have outlets available to people who expose what should be in the public domain. But what has been exposed so far, Beazley says, is not that type of material. And there’s more, much more, to come as people continue to trawl through the Manning downloads.

Most of the views and analysis, chiefly on the part of American diplomats, exposed by WikiLeaks, has veered if anything on the liberal rather than the realpolitik or neocon sects of the US public policy church. One would place Jeffrey Bleich, the American ambassador to Australia and a close friend of President Barack Obama., also in that solid gold liberal camp. But he worries that “WikiLeaks is removing from us, sources of honest information.” People will be much more careful about being frank in discussing national affairs with anyone from Washington, he believes.

He is one of those who has tended to concur with recent critics who have complained that the US should look to diplomacy more and military solutions less. However, he views the leaks as having the opposite effect. “For anyone possessing stolen information to be able to just post it on the net for the world to see, is very damaging to people who believe in diplomacy,” compromising the ability to share information.

Bleich says he has always been a strong advocate of a free press. But there are also matters that need to be kept secret, he believes – including inside families and in businesses. Families don’t tend to post their disagreements, nor businesses their strategic plans, on the net.

“Journalists too, keep their contacts and sources confidential,” he says. Who decides what is to be shared to which appropriate people? He worries that the championing of the leaking process means that any individual who comes into the possession of information can feel not only an entitlement, but even a moral requirement, to publish it as widely as possible. What happens, he asks, if someone at a hospital comes across your medical file.

Within Australia, much of our interest in WikiLeaks has revolved around American cables about our ubiquitous former prime minister and now foreign minister Kevin Rudd. We have discovered through WikiLeaks that the American embassy in Canberra conveyed back to the State Department in Washington that Rudd appears to be a “control freak,” that he announced major initiatives “without advance consultation,” and that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade was consigned under his reign as prime minister to “a backwater.”

Interesting, in a way. But these and many of the other reports published through the cables so acquired by Wikileaks, were already widely known to consumers of the Australian media. Australians didn’t have to wait until American cables were leaked, to discover the troubling truth about their own former leader.

The news about how Rudd was mishandling the resounding mandate he was handed by voters in December 2007, began to be published soon after he became prime minister.

The Wikileaks cite a December 2008 review by previous US ambassador Robert McCallum in which he pointed to “Rudd’s foreign policy mistakes,” including “significant blunders” such as Australia’s withdrawal from the proposed quadrilateral dialogue with India, Japan and the US, “done without advance consultation and at a joint press availability with visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi.”

Dan Clune, the US charge d'affaires in Canberra, said that DFAT “seemed to be out of the loop,” a memo referring to it as “a backwater.” He wrote of Rudd’s “haphazard, overly-secretive decision-making process.” It is not such a surprise to discover that diplomats should reflect such information, analyses and concerns, canvassed widely in media and other circles in the capital, in their cables back to head office.

One revelation tells of Rudd’s discussion during a 75-minute lunch, 20 months ago with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, which will have reinforced the Chinese leaders’ misgivings about him. Rudd told Clinton he was “a brutal realist on China”, argued that the international community should “prepare to deploy force” against China if “everything goes wrong” with its integration as a responsible stakeholder, called the Chinese leaders paranoid about Taiwan and Tibet, and revealed that his government’s Defence white paper’s focus on naval capability was devised to counter China’s rise. If the diplomatic strategy doesn’t work out, we’ll “deploy force,” Rudd is quoted as saying.

One would have liked to be a fly on the wall when Rudd suggested to Chinese leaders they consider, as he apparently reported to Clinton at their lunch, a “small ‘a’ autonomy deal with the Dalai Lama.” Chinese leaders, whom he described as “paranoid about both Taiwan and Tibet,” tend to respond rather defensively to such suggestions from foreigners, whether they speak Chinese or not. Rudd also suggested, according to the note of the lunch conversation, in classic Ruddist vocabulary, “a third-track discussion of the long-term modalities for how such an autonomy deal could work.” He explained that his Asia-Pacific Community plan - now claimed as the lever that created the expanded East Asia Summit, including the US and Russia - was intended to ensure China did not dominate the region, resulting in a “Chinese Monroe Doctrine”. And the report concludes that Rudd kindly promised to send Hillary a copy of a speech he had made at Beijing University,

Rudd himself has responded to the WikiLeaks publications: “I’m sure much worse has been written about me in the past, and probably much worse will be written about me in the future. Journalists write things which are pretty interesting from time to time. Guess what, diplomats do as well.” He told al-Arabiya television that nobody had profited from the leaks: “Diplomacy is done in secret because diplomacy seeks to solve problems for which there are no other public solutions. Therefore we in Australia condemn the release of this material. It helps nobody. In fact, it is a real problem for us all.”

We don’t know where all the assessments made in the stash of cables ultimately derived. But many diplomats move in the same circles as journalists, share information with them, and perhaps most importantly, read what they reveal. Journalists around the world – and certainly in Australia – are frequently invited by foreign embassies and consulates to discuss with them, their perceptions of political, economic and diplomatic trends. It is safe to presume that a substantial proportion of the material, was ultimately sourced from journalism, including from my newspaper “The Australian” - truths dug up about Rudd, his modus operandi, and his impact on his own government and on those of our region, in the usual way: by reading publicly available documents including speeches and transcripts, and chiefly by talking to a wide range of contacts, including key players, painstakingly acquired through constant networking.

The focus of much of the global coverage of the Wikileaks drops, has been on the process rather than the content: on how information was obtained that had been held in confidence. And the international interest has also narrowed down to the celebrity leakmeister himself. The arrest of Assange, and the lubricious nature of the charges against him from Sweden, naturally set him centre stage – rather than the material he has made available. A couple of months ago, Assange was invited to participate by videotape in a TV program questioning Prime Minister Julia Gillard, in which he asked whether the Australian people should consider charging her with treason. And Assange’s mother has complained that

Rudd has failed to register a diplomatic protest with Sweden over its request to extradite Assange from Britain over sex-related charges.

Wikileaks that might prove more especially interesting, would be those from foreign ministries in Beijing, Moscow, Tehran or Pyongyang. But Assange's contacts do not appear to be targeting those more successfully secret regimes than the US State Department – or if they do, they've drawn blanks so far.

Chen Yuming, China's ambassador to Australia, told me that Beijing is taking “a cool and calm approach to WikiLeaks.” As well it might.

The leaks to date do not stray far from that US diplomasphere. When the site set up in 2007, it announced that “our primary interests are oppressive regimes in Asia, the former Soviet bloc, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. But we also expect to be of assistance to those in the West who wish to reveal unethical behaviour in their own governments and corporations.”

Yet so far we haven't had a peep about sinister goings-on in Citi Group, barbarism at BHP-Billiton, strange deeds at Sime Darby, malfeasance at Mitsui, or worse at Western Union.

Plenty about diplomats and governments, overwhelmingly focused on the USA as a target or a conduit rather than those “oppressive regimes” originally targeted. But of “unethical behaviour” in the corporate world, zip – at least, that has made an impact on public opinion.

Why is that?

One answer might be that companies today have learned from the evil ways of Enron, say, and in Australia of James Hardie over asbestos, and are palpably and transparently dedicated to the common good.

Another, might be that the listing requirement of continuous disclosure ensures that all relevant information is being made available rapidly to the public. So... nothing of any potential interest or significance is being hidden.

A third possibility is that large companies, especially – the ones whose behaviour is most likely to have an impact on most citizens – have become increasingly astute about how they manage information whose ownership they claim, and of course those whom they employ with access to such information.

A colleague of mine once scored a scoop, citing the discussion about a new move in the tactical chess game between two large corporations. On this occasion, he gained the information because he had rung a key player, who spoke briefly and then told the journalist that he had to go into a meeting and would call back later if possible. But the company executive failed to turn his mobile phone off properly, and the line remained live through the planning session.

Such incidents are extraordinarily few, however – and companies keep updating and upgrading their technology and their staff telecommunication rules. Partly as a result, the fabled “paperless office” is finally starting to become a reality in some businesses, with workers operating at computer terminals wherever the need arises, rather than in cubicles that are permanently assigned them. This makes it much easier to trace any leaks that might occur. The more that routine correspondence and discussion takes place online, the greater the ease of surveillance and control.

Investment banks, fund managers, legal partnerships and public relations firms – which are the main outside bodies to which privileged corporate information tends to be divulged – are very much under the gun these days, the first suspects when any unauthorised information surfaces. They are thus tighter in their own policing of data access.

And the trend towards greater regulation, naturally keeps extending the remit of lawyers in the corporate world, with adversarial legal norms challenging in some areas, longer established, traditional business values that might place a higher premium on networking.

A risk here, is that trenchant action to prevent contrived, false rumours misinforming markets, can end up scaring analysts to such an extent that we end up with uninformed markets. At question, is the issue of what is the core of a company – what does it own that makes it unique. In the case of miners, that is answerable – though only in part – by the deposits to which they have access.

But for most other businesses in a country like Australia in which the service sector dominates the economy, the company's core assets tend to be defined as their people, and their information – less often, their brand. And while corporations naturally attempt to ensure their norms over-ride others within the workforce, professional and personal values will nevertheless rub against company goals from time to time.

One complexity about policing ownership of information is that stealing it, does not clearly deprive the original owner of it, though it may well of course dilute its value. Governments tend to guard knowledge as if it is their possession – thus the constant battles in our country and others over freedom of information requests, even at times over the most innocuous seeming material.

It was only the relaxation of such controls, in the light of concerns over the narrowness of right-to-know constraints that prevented the pooling of intelligence in the lead-up to 9/11, that gave Wikileaks its recent treasure trove of cables from the US State Department.

But many companies persist in habits of control that tend to assume that all information can be sensitive, and can be misused by adversaries and competitors.

The infliction of Chatham House Rules that enable speakers at meetings to eschew responsibility for their remarks, and to talk in a shroud of semi secrecy, has become the default mode of conferences in Australia.

The phrase “commercial-in-confidence” is used ubiquitously, and especially commonly in politics, where such corporate habits have become adopted, to signal that “further correspondence on this subject will not be undertaken.”

Yet the spread of share ownership within our Asia-Pacific region reinforces the need for greater corporate disclosure as a core democratic issue. And corporate law, as well as listing rules, require market participants to disclose continuously, key financial and other information.

The penalties for not doing so – or for leaking information partially, for personal gain - can be immense of course. Insider trading has, since the expansion of share ownership, taken on in some jurisdictions the taint of violent crime.

Is it possible that there is more to tell, that even while meeting those obligations, corporations can make big mistakes and do bad things?

Absolutely. But Julian Assange and his cohort have other fish to fry, and Wikileaks seems to have have lost interest in corporate shenanigans.

Finally, some sage words from one of Australia's most senior diplomats, John McCarthy, known well to many here. He has served as ambassador to the United States, Mexico, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, and as high commissioner to India. He recently wrote an essay for the excellent organisation Asialink, on the ramifications of WikiLeaks.

He said that most national security systems have espoused a strict ethic on the protection of information – reflected in the rule that information should be accessed on a need to know basis. For the first generation or so after World War II, he said, the imperatives of the Cold War meant that the then prevailing mindset in governments about secrecy was not challenged in a serious way. It was in this environment that my generation (roughly the

Vietnam generation) entered the foreign service. Since then, there have been three historical shifts.

First, people want to know the truth – with Watergate and the intelligence assessments of Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction confirming the mistrust of the authorities in the West. Legislatures, said McCarthy, have demanded from national executives a more equitable distribution of power - involving more access to information. And civil society was also wanting to get in on the act. After 9/11, national security again became a priority and people accepted the need for secrecy, but within narrower bands, specifically on counter terrorism issues.

The second historic shift, McCarthy said, was of course the internet. “New forms of information storage and communication have created a new information world. We [the Vietnam generation] use emails and know how to access a website, but most would have only a vague idea how a cyber war might be conducted. Few would have much concept of how to mount public diplomacy programs using modern techniques. Almost none would have comprehended how it was possible for Private Manning to download 250,000 cables onto a CD. Against this, the lives of the younger half of our populations have been increasingly moulded by the availability of information. They would not have heard of D-notices (the system by which Australian and British governments persuaded editors not to publish items, the publication of which was deemed prejudicial to the national security interest). They believe they are able to find out what they want within five minutes on line. They are much less easily persuaded of the merits of safeguarding information than were their parents.”

The third global shift is a change in the nature of foreign affairs itself. The conduct of national external policies has become more multifaceted. “Most old style Foreign Service practitioners were brought up on a diet of security and commerce,” said McCarthy. “Today their work not only includes these worlds, but education, science and a multitude of other disciplines. There is an entirely new agenda of so-called transnational issues: climate change, drugs and people smuggling, the control of new diseases. Anyone running a large embassy now will tell you how many people from different sectors come through its doors. Foreign policy has many more stakeholders wanting to know what is going on.”

WikiLeaks’ long-term importance will not lie in the details it has revealed, but in the reactions to WikiLeaks in western democracies and what this shows about the difference between community thinking and official practice.

McCarthy rightly said that “who says what matters a lot. To have a journalist say X is a venal idiot is one thing. To have a US embassy say so is another. Examples come to mind here in relation to American comments about figures in Afghanistan and Pakistan. To assume that Leader Y thinks part of his national constituency is a dangerous bunch is one thing. To have him quoted as saying so to the United States ambassador is another. The release of comments by Indian politician Rahul Gandhi about the Hindu Right caused enormous strain.”

And to have a leader quoted speaking in blunt terms about another country - particularly where that country is a supposed friend - is yet another. Lee Kuan Yew’s alleged comments about this country, Malaysia, naturally aroused considerable concern as well as controversy.

Make no mistake, McCarthy said, face matters everywhere. And it matters a great deal more in Asia and other non-western societies. “Certain things are never said publicly - particularly comments about lack of intellect or status. And remarks coming from a leader have a particular positive or negative force. Aggressive, rough language, when uttered or even repeated in public, is not acceptable.

“As for the effect on those who have to deal with the United States itself, the fascination most politicians and diplomats have for a private exchange with the great and powerful will doubtless soon prove again to be deeply and irresistibly seductive.”

In the end, WikiLeaks is a product of democracy. And what appears to be occurring, is a widening gulf between official and community attitudes, with the latter much less concerned about the sharing of what has been said or obtained confidentially.

In the short term, access to information is already being tightened. Manning himself is languishing in a military jail, from which he is unlikely to emerge any time soon. So WikiLeaks is sparking the opposite trend from its original goal of prising open, what states were keeping secret. There is a reversion from electronic communication. People with confidential information are using the phone more often, and one-on-one conversations, rather than sending it by email. And McCarthy noted a new, special aversion to passing on private critiques from a foreign source of, say, an Australian government policy – in case it is picked up externally and you are accused of letting the side down. There is also a concern that, post-WikiLeaks, posts will tone down the frankness of their critical observations of the conduct of regimes where they are operating. McCarthy, who should know, said however that more than 80 per cent of the content of general political assessments from embassies and 90 per cent of general economic assessments could be freely shared without repercussions.

The range of analyses and perspectives in cables that used to be shared by a number of people back in head office, are now being pruned, cut back and restricted, principally by self-censorship.

But McCarthy added that “if WikiLeaks does indeed demonstrate that there is real community support for more openness, this will be an important and positive outcome of the whole controversy - one which politicians will be unable to ignore. WikiLeaks is also likely to stimulate thinking in relevant Australian and other western ministries about how to handle information in future.”

But there remains a consensus that privacy provisions should remain – for instance, to prevent the disclosure of personal details of ordinary citizens who have a consular problem. And the bottom line of a trade negotiation, and national security information, such as an imminent naval action or protection of an intelligence source which could be endangered by disclosure, are widely accepted as requiring continuing secrecy.

And, McCarthy said, since “we do not dispute the right to business confidences, protection of media sources or protection of police informants, we should respect genuine confidences imparted to our diplomats. But the public response to WikiLeaks suggests governments may have work to do to bring publics along to this viewpoint. Ultimately, principled open government should be the basis for the implementation of foreign policy.”