

To the Editor April 13, 2020

### **Free Jeremy Hammond**

A federal court found imprisoned hacktivist Jeremy Hammond for contempt in September of 2019, following his refusal to answer 7 questions before a grand jury. Hammond, who is already serving his 7th year of a 10 year Federal Prison sentence after pleading guilty for releasing information about the Private Intelligence Firm Strategic Forecasting (Stratfor). Just months after whistleblower Chelsea Manning refused to cooperate with the federal government's investigation into WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, the same grand jury has reached another impasse - this time with former WikiLeaks source Hammond.

Jeremy Hammond is a member of the hacktivist network Anonymous and a gifted computer programmer whose case has attracted the attention of activists, civil libertarians and those concerned about the rights of political activists. He is currently spending a decade in prison for allegedly disclosing more than seven years of information about the private intelligence firm Strategic Forecasting, Inc. (Stratfor), revealing that they had been spying on human rights defenders on behalf of *corporations and governments*. WikiLeaks published these files in partnership with 31 media organizations worldwide. They were known as the [Global Intelligence Files](#).

Stratfor is a security group based in Austin, Texas. In 2011, hackers took control of Stratfor's website and released a list of names, credit card numbers, passwords, and home and email addresses. The hackers included Jeremy Hammond, who worked with Anonymous to release Stratfor's emails to WikiLeaks. The more than **five million** emails also revealed Stratfor's surveillance of groups such as Occupy Wall Street, and included, [The Stratfor Glossary of Useful, Baffling and Strange Intelligence Terms](#).

The material also contains privileged information about the US government's attacks against Julian Assange and WikiLeaks and Stratfor's own attempts to subvert WikiLeaks. There are more than 4,000 emails mentioning WikiLeaks or Julian Assange. The emails also expose the revolving door that operates in private intelligence companies in the United States. Government and diplomatic sources from around the world give Stratfor advance knowledge of global politics and events in exchange for money. The Global Intelligence Files exposes how Stratfor has recruited a global network of informants who are paid via Swiss banks accounts and pre-paid credit cards. Stratfor has a mix of covert and overt informants, which includes government employees, embassy staff and journalists around the world.

#### **Governmental leaks**

An email involving a Stratfor analyst stated that it had been determined that up to 12 officials in Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency knew of Osama bin-Laden's safe house. Ynetnews reported that, according to internal emails between Stratfor employees, Israel and Russia were engaged in an exchange of information in 2008. Israel gave Russia "'data link codes' for unmanned aerial vehicles that the Jewish state sold to Georgia" and that Russia gave "the codes for Tor-M1 missile defense systems that Russia sold Iran". International Business Times reported that Stratfor had found that several European countries, especially the Czech

Republic, have been petitioning NATO for missile defenses and F-16s to use against Russia. Business Insider reported that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu shared thoughts regarding his distrust of US President Barack Obama, threatened assassination of Hezbollah leader Hasan Nasrallah, and declared intentions to unilaterally start a war against Iran.

### **Corporation leaks**

As reported by The Times of India, some of the emails reveal that Stratfor was allegedly hired by Dow Chemical Company to spy on protesters of the Bhopal disaster. Dow Chemical Company responded with a written statement that read: "Major companies are often required to take appropriate action to protect their people and safeguard their facilities.,"

The released emails indicated that the Coca-Cola Company paid Stratfor to determine "to what extent will US-based PETA supporters travel to Canada to support activism" at the 2010 Olympics.

Threatened with 40 years to life in prison for his activism and suffering numerous injustices at the hands of the legal system, Jeremy accepted a non-cooperating plea deal to one count of violating the arcane and draconian [Computer Fraud and Abuse Act](#). Despite massive support calling for leniency, Jeremy was sentenced to the maximum allowed under his plea agreement and is now serving a ten-year sentence in a federal prison.

Since his arrest in March of 2012, Jeremy has been frequently cut off from his friends and family, and punished with extensive stays in solitary confinement – treatment normally reserved for the most egregious offences. Jeremy did nothing for personal gain and everything in hope of making the world a better place.

Jeremy Hammond recently issued the following statement detailing his reasons for resisting the grand jury:

“As many of you know, I was just a few months from my scheduled release from federal prison when I was unexpectedly dragged in chains and planes to this raggedy detention center in Virginia. I am outraged that the government is threatening additional jail time if I do not cooperate with their grand jury investigation. Their draconian intimidation tactics could never coerce me into betraying my comrades or my principles. In the spirit of resistance and with great contempt for their system, I am choosing silence over freedom.

“I am fully prepared for the consequences of my decision just as I had been each and every time I was faced with similar choices before. Long ago when I realized that government and capitalism were too hopelessly corrupt and unjust to be reformed through legal or electoral means, I chose to engage in civil disobedience and direct action. I knew then that my actions could land me behind bars, yet I fought on anyway; after a dozen arrests and even a prior federal prison sentence for hacking, I chose once again to use my computer skills to attack the systems of the rich and powerful as part of the Anonymous federal case I am doing time for today.

“When I pled guilty, I took responsibility for my actions and my actions alone. I never agreed to be debriefed or testify in any way, unlike the government’s informant Hector Monsegur, aka Sabu, whose reward was one year of probation while I received the maximum sentence allowable by law. It was a painful choice, but ten years in their dungeons was the price I was

willing to pay so I could maintain my integrity. I have never regretted my choices the entire time I have been incarcerated, and having seen and experienced first-hand the abuses and inherent injustice of the prison industrial complex, my commitment to revolution and abolition has only become more deeply entrenched.

“Now, after seven and a half years of ‘paying my debt to society,’ the government seeks to punish me further with this vindictive, politically-motivated legal maneuver to delay my release, knowing full well that I would never cooperate with their witch hunt. I am opposed to all grand juries, but I am opposed to this one in particular because it is part of the government’s ongoing war on free speech, journalists, and whistleblowers. I am insulted that those in power claim that I have an ‘obligation that every citizen owes his government’ to testify. As an anarchist, I am not part of their social contract, and do not recognize the legitimacy of their laws and courts. Instead, I believe in a Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. quote I had taped to the wall of my prison cell for years: ‘One has an obligation to disobey unjust laws.’

“It is difficult to view any of this government’s laws as just when they are so selectively enforced, and when the government turns a blind eye to its own misconduct, misconduct that is on display every day that Trump is in the White House. In my case, the government, through its informant, Sabu, instigated numerous hacks, asking me to break into governments and companies all over the world. Nearly a decade later, this misconduct remains ignored. The NSA continues to surveil everyone and launch cyber-attacks. Trump and his corrupt cronies continue to hold the world hostage to their megalomaniacal imperialist pig whims while simultaneously refusing to comply with subpoenas and inquiries into their vicious abuses of power. Meanwhile, Chelsea Manning and I are doing hard time in this dump for the ‘crime’ of refusing to allow our spirits to break, after ‘serving’ our sentences for exposing government and corporate corruption.

“This absurd hypocrisy and desperate ruthlessness reveals a crumbling legal system, a system that has robbed me of the majority of my adult life but could never take my humanity. I will continue to do the right thing, no matter how long it takes. I know how to do time, and I will never be intimidated by their threats. Ever!! I refuse!!” <https://freejeremy.net/>  
<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2019/oct/10/jeremy-hammond-jailed-computer-hacker-held-in-cont/>

*“I believe in the power of the truth.”* Jeremy Hammond

*“Our integrity sells for so little, but it is all we really have. It is the very last inch of us, but within that inch, we are all free.”* – Alan Moore, V for Vendetta”