

Extrait du El Correo

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Persecución a periodistas premios Pulitzer y organizaciones en EEUU

- Empire et Résistance - Bataille pour l'information -

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James Risen*, reportero del *New York Times*, agotó todos sus recursos legales ; enfrenta cárcel por no revelar sus fuentes.



Organizaciones nacionales de defensa de la libertad de prensa y 20 reporteros ganadores del Premio Pulitzer, entre miles más, denunciaron hoy la persecución del gobierno de Barack Obama contra periodistas que cubren asuntos de seguridad nacional y, en particular, el caso del reportero James Risen, del *New York Times*, quien está amenazado con cárcel si no revela sus fuentes.

Una petición firmada por 125 000 personas fue entregada hoy al Departamento de Justicia con el lema : « *Apoyamos a James Risen porque apoyamos una prensa libre* », y acusan que el intento de obligarlo a revelar sus fuentes es un asalto a la libertad de prensa.

Las organizaciones de defensa de periodistas y libertad de prensa -incluidos el *Comité para la Protección de Periodistas*, *Reporteros sin Fronteras*, la *Fundación de la Libertad de Prensa*, y el *Comité de Reporteros por la Libertad de Prensa*- reiteraron hoy su repudio al intento de los fiscales federales de continuar amenazando a Risen con altas multas y/o encarcelamiento.

El Departamento de Justicia, desde 2008, emitió una orden para obligar a Risen a revelar una fuente oficial que le filtró información sobre una operación fallida de la CIA en Irán y que publicó en su libro « *State of War* » [Estado de guerra] en 2006. Ahora el gobierno contempla obligarlo a testificar contra una de sus supuestas fuentes, el ex oficial de la CIA Jeffrey Sterling, en un caso penal contra ese filtrador.

Risen ha dicho que mantendrá su compromiso de no nombrar sus fuentes de información, lo cual lo expone a ser acusado de desafiar una orden judicial para que declare y revele sus fuentes. El caso de Risen ha estado en los tribunales más de cinco años, pero ahora el periodista ha agotado sus opciones legales. Por lo tanto, si el Departamento de Justicia insiste en proceder contra Risen, estará en riesgo de ser encarcelado

Aunque la primera enmienda de la Constitución garantiza la *libertad de la prensa*, no detalla los alcances de esta libertad, y por lo tanto han surgido disputas políticas y legales a lo largo de décadas sobre este punto. Lo que alarma a defensores y periodistas es que el gobierno de Obama, que prometió ser el más transparente en la historia, no sólo ha ampliado las políticas de su antecesor George W. Bush para clasificar como secretas cada vez más operaciones de este gobierno, sino que ha sido el más agresivo en la historia moderna en perseguir a filtradores denunciadores dentro del gobierno (lleva ocho casos según la Ley de Espionaje de 1917, el doble que el total de todos sus antecesores desde 1917) y a los periodistas que trabajan con ellos.

Junto con los firmantes de la petición entregada hoy, 20 periodistas premios Pulitzer (considerado el premio de

periodismo más prestigioso del país) emitieron declaraciones esta semana, no sólo en apoyo de Risen, sino también con feroces críticas al gobierno de Obama por sus políticas que, acusan, han dañado la libertad de prensa en este país.

« La preservación de una prensa libre y sin ataduras tiene una larga historia en nuestro país, permitiendo que ciudadanos ordinarios se enteren de lo que hace su gobierno y para cuestionar acciones llevadas a cabo en nombre de ellos. Los Papeles del Pentágono, el escándalo de Watergate, la masacre de My Lai, la intervención de comunicaciones de ciudadanos estadounidenses sin autorización judicial y tantas más atrocidades jamás hubieran visto la luz del día en un país donde los reporteros deben temer el encarcelamiento por hacer su tarea », declaró el reportero premio Pulitzer **Mark Johnson**, del *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.

David Barstow, reportero del *New York Times* y premio Pulitzer, declaró : « ya basta. El esfuerzo incesante... para obligar a que Risen traicione sus fuentes ya ha causado un daño sustancial y de largo plazo al periodismo en Estados Unidos ». Agregó que el impacto de esto ha generado un clima de temor en Washington donde fuentes oficiales son cada vez renuentes a platicar con periodistas.

Dana Priest, del *Washington Post*, acusa que el gobierno utiliza este caso para intimidar tanto a fuentes oficiales como a periodistas. Señaló que Bush y después Obama clasificaron cada vez más las acciones del gobierno a lo largo de los últimos 14 años, negando al público información crítica para juzgar cómo va esta democracia. Ha correspondido a reporteros como Risen mantener informados a los estadounidenses y cuestionar si un gobierno gigantesco en las sombras es de verdad buena idea. Todos estaremos peor si este caso procede.

Risen ganó un Pulitzer por un reportaje publicado a finales de 2005 en el *New York Times* que reveló el programa secreto autorizado por Bush en 2002 con el cual la *Agencia de Seguridad Nacional* (NSA) llevó a cabo intervenciones de comunicaciones internacionales de estadounidenses dentro del país, sin autorización judicial. El Departamento de Justicia se ha dedicado a perseguirlo por lo que reveló sobre Irán en su libro publicado poco después.

El Comité por la Protección de Periodistas, y, por separado, *Human Rights Watch* y la *Unión Americana de Libertades Civiles* (ACLU) han emitido informes en los últimos meses en los cuales concluyen que la libertad de prensa se ha deteriorado severamente en el gobierno de Obama. El sondeo anual de *Reporteros sin Fronteras* sobre libertad de prensa registra que Estados Unidos de América se desplomó 13 lugares para quedar en el sitio 46, de una lista de 180 países.

David Brooks para **La Jornada**

[La Jornada](#). México, 16 de agosto de 2014

***James Risen** es un periodista de los EEUU que trabaja por cuenta del *New York Times*. Él estudia las actividades del gobierno de los Estados Unidos de América, principalmente en el dominio de la seguridad nacional y de la información. Recibió el Pulitzer en 2006 para haber documentado el programa de vigilancia electrónica de NSA. También en 2006 publica y es perseguido por la Justicia US, a causa de revelaciones hechas en su libro « State of War », sobre varias operaciones clandestinas de los Estados Unidos entre las que están « [Operation Merlin](#) ».

[**Ver las 14 declaraciones.**](#)

Pulitzer Prize Winners' Statements in Support of James Risen

Fourteen Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists issued individual statements - released on August 11, 2014 - supporting fellow Pulitzer Prize winner James Risen. Whatever their news outlet or focus of reporting, these journalists are united in their support for Mr. Risen. The journalists earned Pulitzers in the last decade and a half while working at a range of publications - from national newspapers like *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* to smaller outlets, such as *The Gazette in Colorado Springs* and *Montana's Great Falls Tribune*. Some of their award-winning reporting sent powerful individuals to jail, other reporting resulted in changes in government and corporate policies. Topics included bribery of officials, Congressional corruption, corporate cover-up, Wall Street, Iraq War propaganda, religious persecution in Myanmar, war-torn Afghanistan, secret CIA prisons, mistreatment of U.S. war veterans, hazardous products and workplaces, effects of alcoholism, and complex medical issues, including stem cell research. (Additional statements from Pulitzer winners - beyond the original 14 - are at bottom).*** **

[(The Statements :

Enough is enough. The relentless and by all appearances vindictive effort by two administrations to force Jim Risen into betraying his sources has already done substantial and lasting damage to journalism in the United States. I've felt the chill first hand. Trusted sources in Washington are scared to talk by telephone, or by email, or even to meet for coffee, regardless of whether the subject touches on national security or not. My fellow investigative reporters commiserate about how we're being forced to act like drug dealers, taking extreme precautions to avoid leaving any digital breadcrumbs about where we've been and who we've met. If you value a vibrant free press, you want the Jim Risens of the world out hunting for the toughest truths about how power is used and abused. You don't want them rotting in jail cells. Do we really want to be that kind of country ?

DAVID BARSTOWInvestigative Reporting, 2013 / The New York TimesInvestigative Reporting, 2009 / The New York TimesPublic Service, 2004 / The New York Times

I've known Jim Risen for more than 30 years, been his colleague at three different newspapers, and while I have respected him immensely at every step of the way, I've never admired him more than now. He is carrying the banner for every American journalist. And if he goes to jail, a good bit of our nation's freedom will be locked away with him.

BARRY BEARAKInternational Reporting, 2002 / The New York Times

I join my colleagues in supporting James Risen. The government should let him - and us - do our jobs without harassment.

WALT BOGDANICHInvestigative Reporting, 2008 / The New York TimesNational Reporting, 2005 / The New York TimesSpecialized Reporting, 1988 / The Wall Street Journal

A vibrant democracy is not possible without a free press. Our nation needs journalists who are willing - and able - to reveal facts that make the government uncomfortable.

GARETH COOKExplanatory Reporting, 2005 / The Boston Globe

I join the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, Investigative Reporters and Editors, Dow Jones & Co. Inc. and other news organizations in urging the Justice Department to withdraw the subpoena issued to James Risen in the Jeffrey Sterling case. I agree with them and others that a careful examination of the facts shows that a demand for his testimony is not justified.

JAMES V. GRIMALDIInvestigative Reporting, 2006 / The Washington Post(now with The Wall Street Journal)

Preservation of a free, unfettered press has a long history in our country, allowing ordinary citizens to learn what their government is up to and to question actions carried out in their name. The Pentagon Papers, Watergate Scandal, My Lai Massacre, warrantless wiretapping of American citizens and many other outrages would never have come to light in a country where reporters must fear imprisonment for doing their jobs. A big part of doing our jobs is giving our word to protect whistle blowers.

James Risen has done his job for many years at the highest level. That's why he was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for national reporting. More importantly, it's why his sources trust him. I urge the Attorney General not to prosecute Mr. Risen for standing by his word to a source. Prosecuting Mr. Risen would not only send a chilling message to other journalists seeking to continue our country's great tradition of freedom of the press. It would diminish America's reputation in the eyes of the world as a place that values truth. Our country is better than that.

MARK JOHNSONExplanatory Reporting, 2011 / Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

The Obama administration has invoked prosecutorial discretion in other areas of law, claiming to serve the public interest. It should invoke prosecutorial discretion in the case of James Risen because reporters who cannot protect sources often cannot obtain information vital to the public interest. To see how bad things have become throughout the executive branch, google « Obama promised transparency ».

JERRY KAMMERNational Reporting, 2006 / Copley News Service

As George Orwell said, « The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history. » America needs journalists to write the first draft of history without fear or favor, as my colleague James Risen has. It is deeply disturbing that the Obama Administration is pursuing Mr. Risen for doing his job.

GRETCHEN MORGENSONBeat Reporting, 2002 / The New York Times

The Obama Administration does a grave disservice to our nation in attempting to force a national affairs reporter to name his sources.

This case involves James Risen, a reporter for the New York Times who had written a book, State of War, detailing a botched C.I.A. operation in Iran. The Justice Department subpoenaed Risen in 2008 to learn the identity of a whistleblower. Now, after six years of legal wrangling, Risen has run out of challenges - the U. S. Supreme Court has declined to intervene in the case, and Risen faces prison if he continues to decline to testify.

This is bad public policy on the part of the Obama Administration which, despite its denials, has more aggressively prosecuted whistleblowers than any recent administration.

As an investigative reporter virtually all of my career, I can attest that the vast majority of whistleblowers are citizens who want to improve the performance of their government. They generally are outraged to see the public being ripped off by lazy, entrenched bureaucrats who are being protected by a good-old-boy network.

Frustrated in their attempts to effect change within an unresponsive system, they reach out to reporters like me - and like Risen - to turn over the rocks and expose the slugs to the light of public scrutiny. They know, as I know, that such

public scrutiny can force change even upon those who privately resist it.

Thus, the whistleblower and the investigative journalist are allied with the professed policy of the Obama Administration to improve the performance of the federal government, in this case to reduce the multiple failures of our so-called intelligence community.

But by threatening to send a journalist to prison for refusing to name his sources, the Obama Administration makes the whistleblowers more fearful to come forward, and it makes the journalists more hesitant to expose the failures of the government.

That's just wrong. A government that resists constructive criticism is a government certain to face worsening problems.

ERIC NEWHOUSEExplanatory Reporting, 2000 / Great Falls (MT) Tribune

I wish to express my support for James Risen. Work like his that strengthens the public understanding of government is foundation of good journalism and a vital part of a healthy democracy.

DAVID PHILIPPSNational Reporting, 2014 / The Gazette (Colorado Springs)

If the U.S. government were so concerned about the information revealed in Jim Risen's stunning chapter on a now 14-year-old CIA operation against Iran gone wrong, it would have moved quickly to resolve this matter eight years ago when it was first published. Instead, it seems obvious now that what officials really want is to hold a hammer over the head of a deeply sourced reporter, and others like him who try to hold the government accountable for what it does, even in secret.

As Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama classified more and more of the government's actions over the last 14 years, denying the public critical information to judge how its democracy is faring, it has fallen to reporters like Risen to keep Americans informed and to question whether a gigantic government in the shadows is really even a good idea. We will all be worse off if this case proceeds.

DANA PRIESTPublic Service, 2008 / The Washington PostBeat Reporting, 2006 / The Washington Post

No press shield, no freedom. It's about the great values embodied in the First Amendment and whether they will be undermined at this moment in history or endure for future generations. The fate of James Risen and his anonymous source is our fate and our grand-children's fate. Please, get it right.

MARCUS STERNNational Reporting, 2006 / Copley News Service

It is scandalous that James Risen faces jail time for doing what every good journalist working in the public interest does : protect confidential sources. President Obama and Attorney General Holder should halt all legal action against James to demonstrate that their "war on leaks" is not an assault on the First Amendment and freedom of the press.

JASON SZEP and ANDREW R.C. MARSHALLInternational Reporting, 2014 / Reuters

Additional Statements :

The pursuit of James Risen reveals our government acting as a power unto itself, lying to escape accountability for massive domestic spying and failures in legitimate intelligence gathering. The liberties of the people cannot long endure unchecked government power. Risen and other investigative journalists are not enemies of the state, but watchdogs alerting the people to abuses of the powers we grant those in elected and appointed office.

DAVID CAY JOHNSTON Beat Reporting, 2001 / The New York Times

When a reporter exposes problems within government at any level, the government's response should be to get better – not to try to silence the reporter. We stand with James Risen.

MICHAEL LAFORGIA and WILL HOBSON Local Reporting 2014 / Tampa Bay Times

The Justice Department's pursuit of James Risen puts the lie to President Obama's claim that he « welcomes » debate regarding his national security policies and leads « the most transparent administration in history. » The administration should immediately end its pursuit of Risen and respect all journalists' first amendment rights.

DAVID ROHDE International Reporting Team Coverage, 2009/ The New York Times International Reporting, 1996 / Christian Science Monitor (now with Reuters)

In other countries, the Obama Administration likes to preach the gospel of transparent government and a vibrant press, so why is it prosecuting Jim Risen and stifling the public's access to the decision-making processes of its government at home ? Jim Risen has performed a great service to his nation ; he should be lauded by its leaders, not abused.

DAN FAGIN General Nonfiction, 2014 / Toms River : A Story of Science and Salvation

As the attorney general himself said, reporters should not be put in jail for doing their job. It's as simple as that.

ERIC LICHTBLAU National Reporting, 2006 / The New York Times