SecureDrop and the New Ecology of Whistleblowing

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Charles Berret
Columbia University

SecureDrop? A WikiLeaks for Every Newsroom

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Hey, tech holdouts: Enough is enough

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A discreet way to share documents and messages with Washington Post journalists.

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What is SecureDrop?

The Washington Post's SecureDrop is a discreet way for readers to share messages and materials with our journalists. It offers greater security and anonymity than conventional e-mail and Web forms.

How do I use it?

SecureDrop relies on Tor, an application designed to encrypt your communications and obscure your computer's IP address.

In order to use SecureDrop:

- Go to a place with a public Internet connection, one that you don't normally frequent.
- Download and install the Tor browser bundle from **https://www.torproject.org/**.
- Open the Tor browser and copy this url into the browser address bar: **http://vbmwh445kf3fs2v4.onion**.
- From this url, you will be able to send messages and files to a secure dropbox that we will check periodically.
- You will be provided with a codename that you will use it to log in to check for replies from The Post.

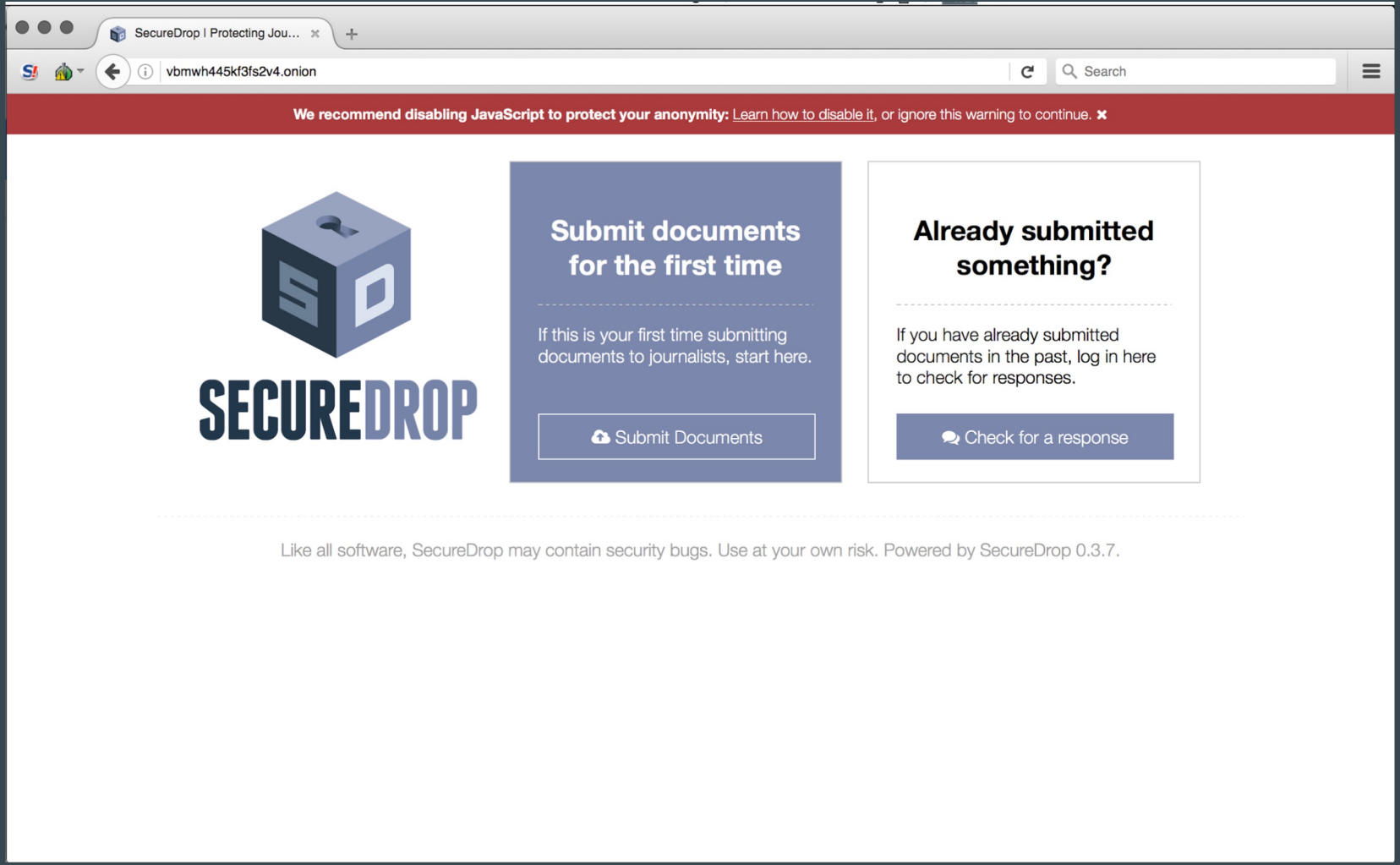
Keep the codename you are provided safe and secure. We will not know your codename, and you should never share it with anyone. If you forget your codename, we will have no other way to contact you.

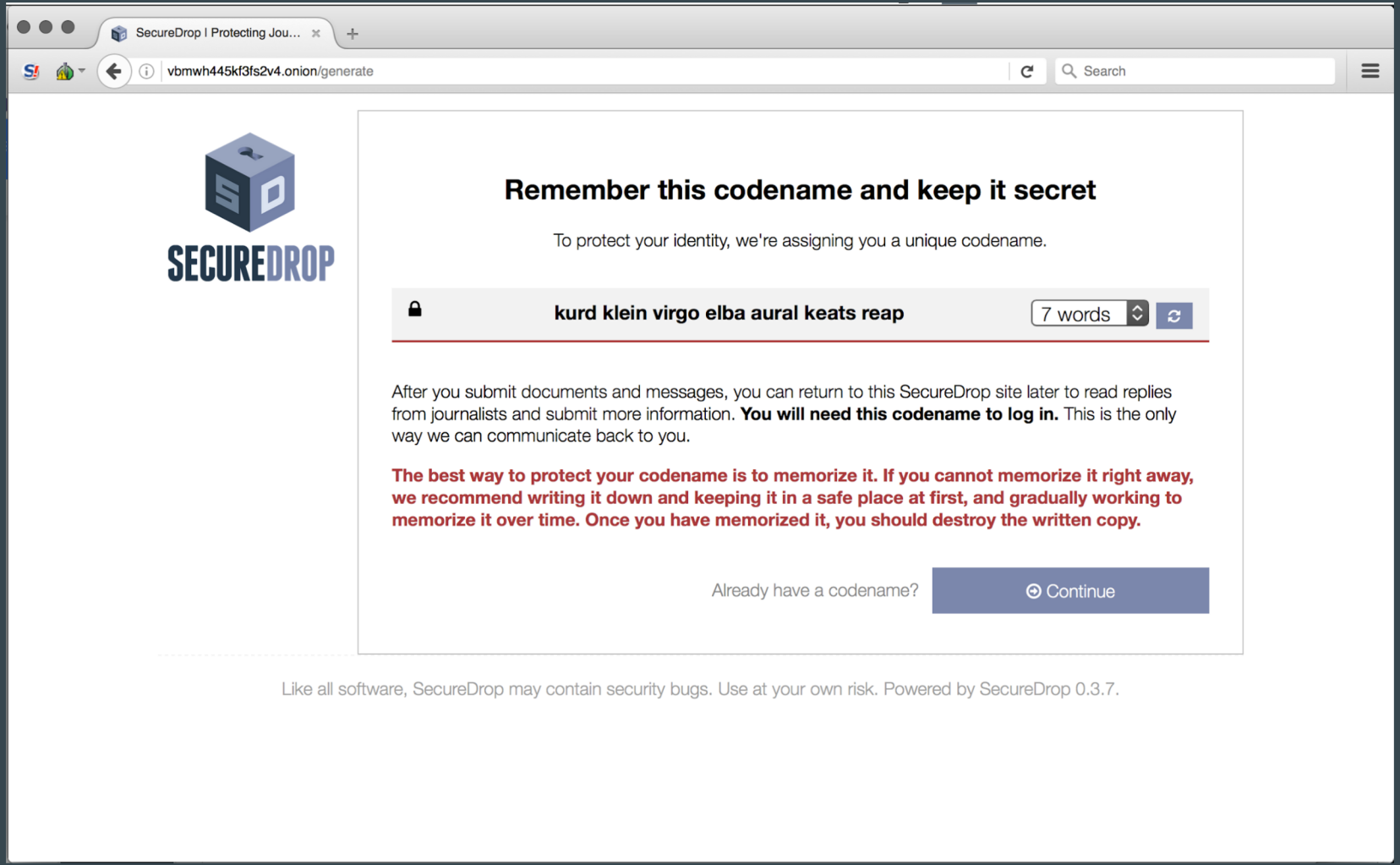
What steps are taken to protect my privacy and anonymity?

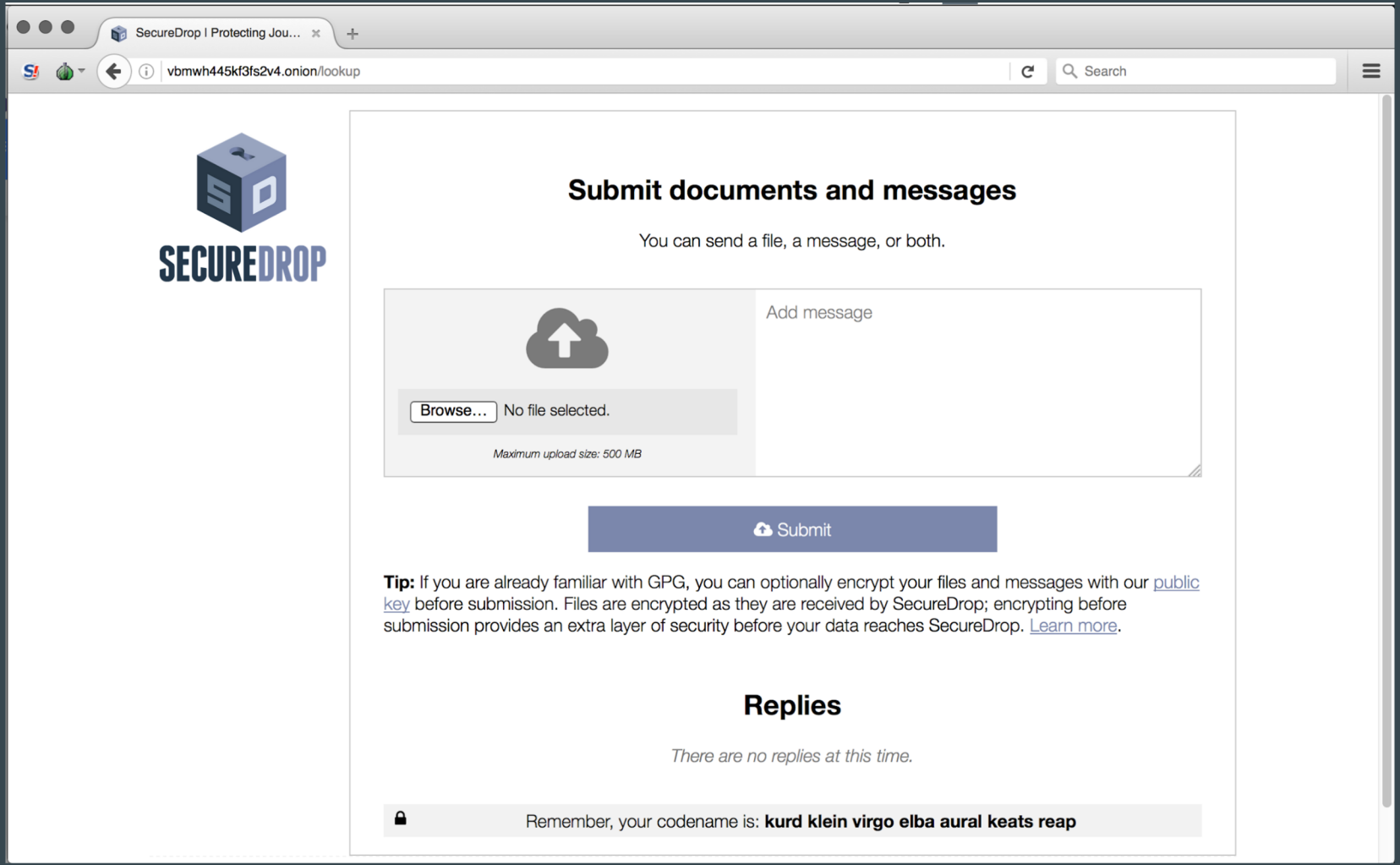
Nearly all digital communications can leave a trail. The Washington Post's SecureDrop is designed to minimize these digital trails using best practices, such as:

- limiting collection of information logged about your browser, computer or operating system;
- using Tor to encrypt and anonymize your communications with us;
- storing submissions in encrypted form on our systems;
- physically isolating SecureDrop from the rest of our network.

However, no system is 100 percent secure, and even with these measures, there might be a risk of someone discovering who you are or what you are sending. In addition to using SecureDrop, we recommend that you:


SecureDrop | Protecting Jou...
vbmwh445kf3fs2v4.onion
Search
We recommend disabling JavaScript to protect your anonymity: Learn how to disable it, or ignore this warning to continue.
SECUREDROP
Submit documents for the first time
If this is your first time submitting documents to journalists, start here.
Submit Documents
Already submitted something?
If you have already submitted documents in the past, log in here to check for responses.
Check for a response
Like all software, SecureDrop may contain security bugs. Use at your own risk. Powered by SecureDrop 0.3.7.


SecureDrop | Protecting Jou...
vbmwh445kf3fs2v4.onion/generate
Search
SECUREDROP
Remember this codename and keep it secret
To protect your identity, we're assigning you a unique codename.
kurd klein virgo elba aural keats reap
7 words
After you submit documents and messages, you can return to this SecureDrop site later to read replies from journalists and submit more information. You will need this codename to log in. This is the only way we can communicate back to you.
The best way to protect your codename is to memorize it. If you cannot memorize it right away, we recommend writing it down and keeping it in a safe place at first, and gradually working to memorize it over time. Once you have memorized it, you should destroy the written copy.
Already have a codename?
Continue
Like all software, SecureDrop may contain security bugs. Use at your own risk. Powered by SecureDrop 0.3.7.


SecureDrop | Protecting Jou…
vbmwh445kf3fs2v4.onion/lookup
Search
SECUREDROP
Submit documents and messages
You can send a file, a message, or both.
Add message
Browse…
No file selected.
Maximum upload size: 500 MB
Submit
Tip: If you are already familiar with GPG, you can optionally encrypt your files and messages with our public key before submission. Files are encrypted as they are received by SecureDrop; encrypting before submission provides an extra layer of security before your data reaches SecureDrop. Learn more.
Replies
There are no replies at this time.
Remember, your codename is: kurd klein virgo elba aural keats reap

AN ENORMOUS CACHE of phone records obtained by *The Intercept* reveals a major breach of security at Securus Technologies, a leading provider of phone services inside the nation's prisons and jails. The materials — leaked via SecureDrop by an anonymous hacker who believes that Securus is violating the constitutional rights of inmates — comprise over 70 million records of phone calls, placed by prisoners to at least 37 states, in addition to links to downloadable recordings of the calls. The calls span a nearly two-and-a-half year period, beginning in December 2011 and ending in the spring of 2014.

Particularly notable within the vast trove of phone records are what appear to be at least 14,000 recorded conversations between inmates and attorneys, a strong indication that at least some of the recordings are likely confidential and privileged legal communications — calls that never should have been recorded in the first place. The recording of legally protected attorney-client communications — and the storage of those recordings —

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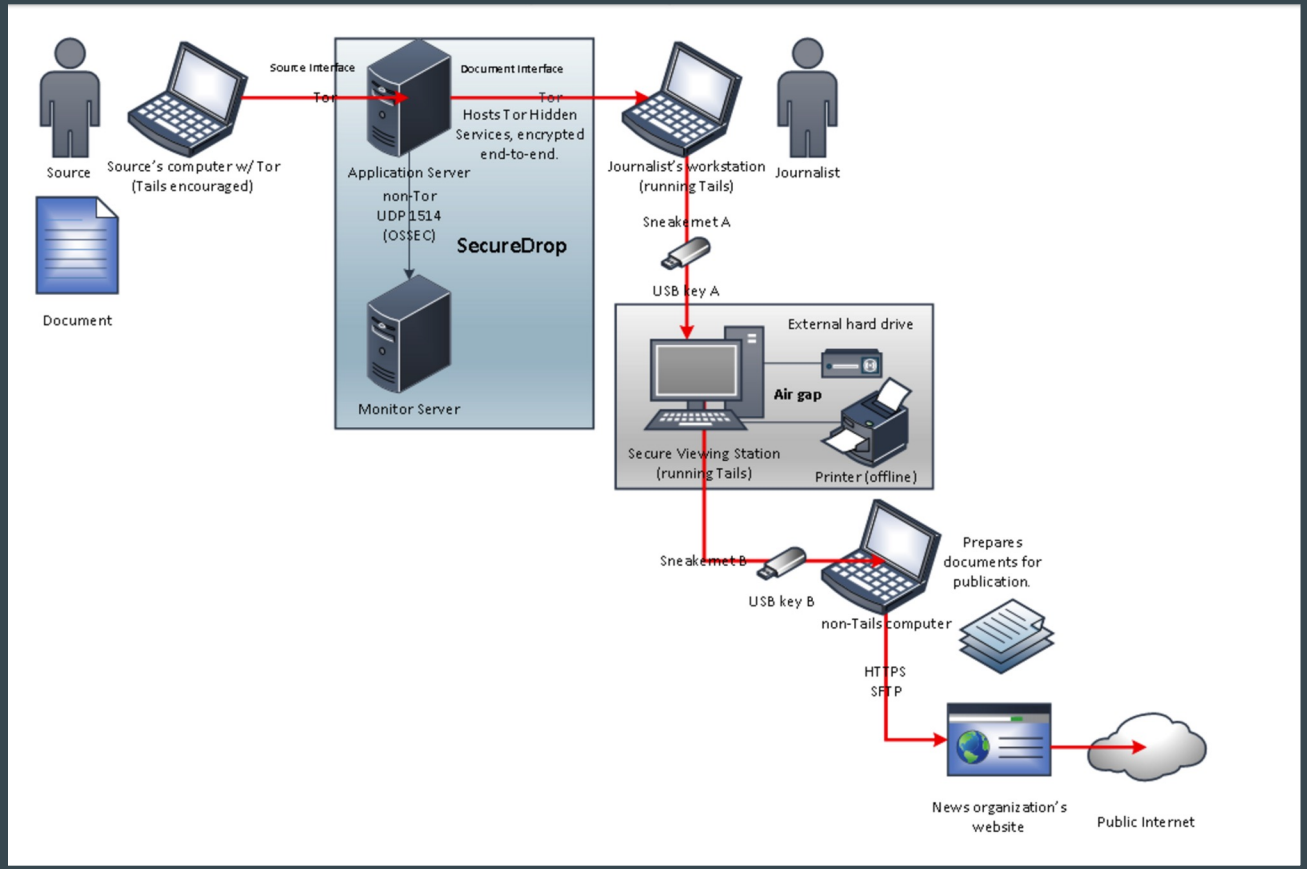
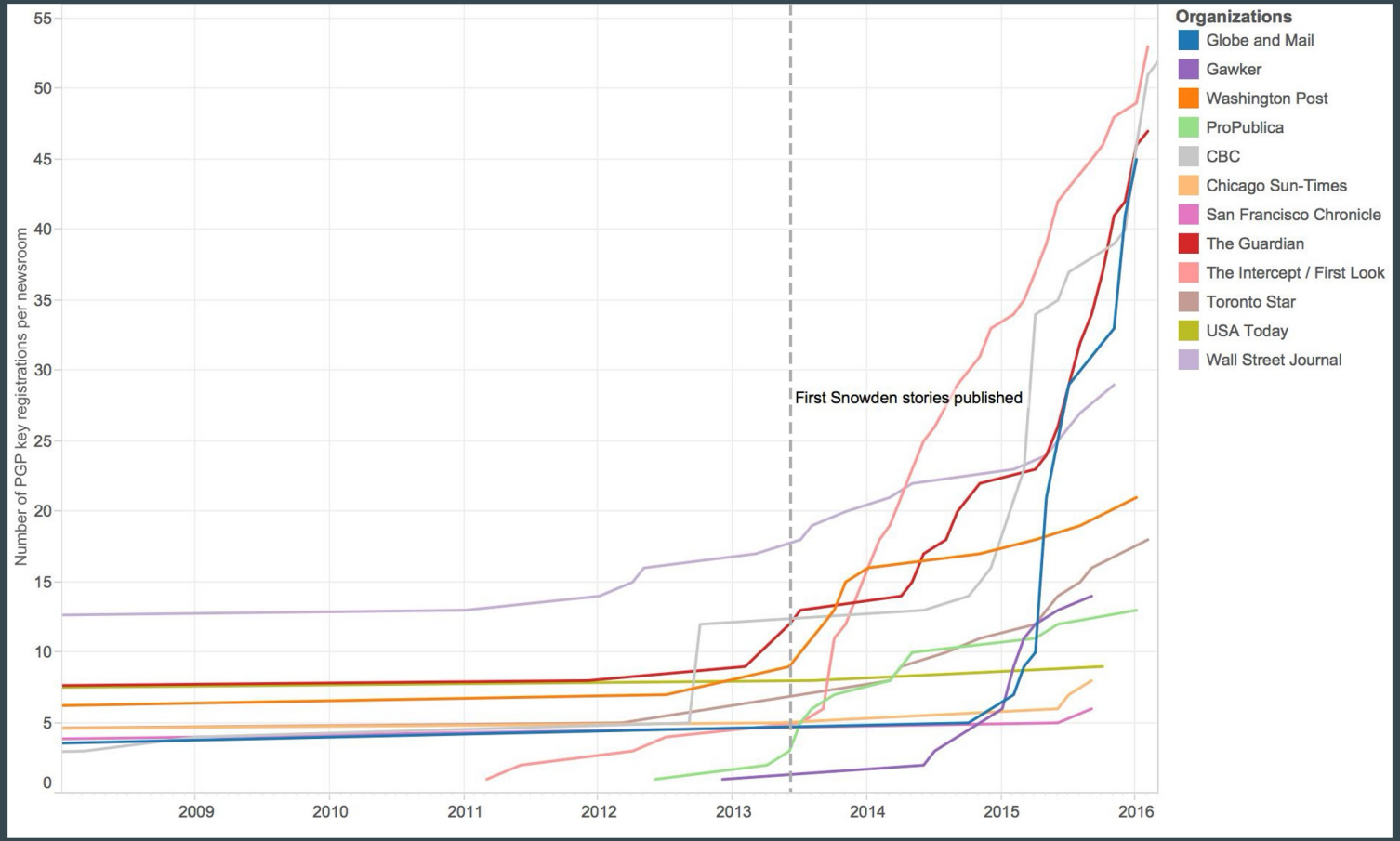

Source
Document
Source's computer w/ Tor
(Tails encouraged)
Source Interface
Tor
Document Interface
Tor
Hosts Tor Hidden Services, encrypted end-to-end.
Application Server
non-Tor
UDP 1514
(OSSEC)
SecureDrop
Monitor Server
Journalist's workstation
(running Tails)
Journalist
Sneakernet A
USB key A
External hard drive
Air gap
Secure Viewing Station
(running Tails)
Printer (offline)
Sneakernet B
USB key B
Prepares documents for publication.
non-Tails computer
HTTPS
SFTP
News organization's website
Public Internet

How Does SecureDrop Fit into Newsrooms?

What shows up in SecureDrop?



PGP Key Registrations in Selected Newsrooms, 2008-2016

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At CPAC, Conservatives Settle Into Their New Role

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Stephen K. Bannon's CPAC Comments, Annotated and Explained

H.R. McMaster Breaks With Administration on Views of Islam

After Election, Trump's Professed Love for Leaks Quickly Faded

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR FEB. 15, 2017

President Trump on Wednesday described leaks from intelligence agencies as a "criminal action," despite praising groups like WikiLeaks during his campaign. Stephen Crowley/The New York Times

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Trump Intensifies His Attacks on Jou
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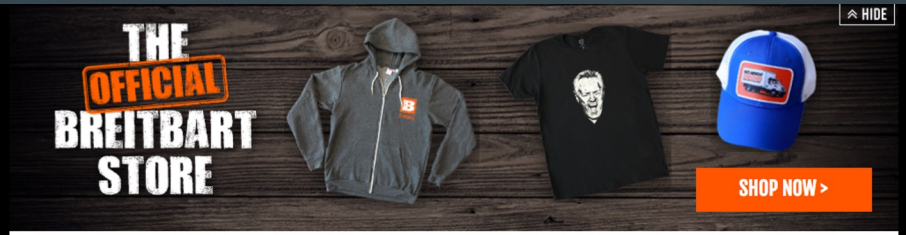

TECH TOOLS GAIN TRACTION AMID TRUMP WAR ON LEAKS

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by AFP | 18 Feb 2017

Washington (AFP) – As President Donald Trump warns of a crackdown on US government leaks to media, interest is growing in technology tools that allow sources to share information anonymously.

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One such tool called SecureDrop, being used by at least 30 US and global media organizations, offers a way for sources to anonymously communicate via encrypted servers.

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What's new in the world of digital whistleblowing?

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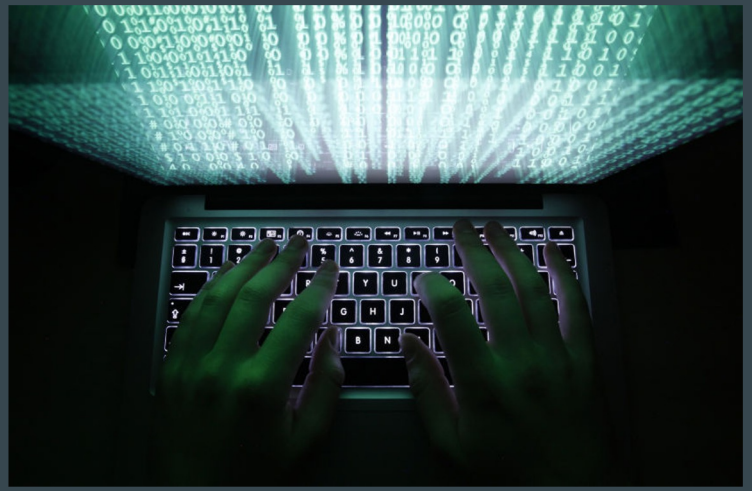

Thanks!