Freedom of Expression, Censorship, & The Internet

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Article 19

> *Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.*

Article 20

> *Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.*

George Orwell was an optimist

> *Who controls the past, controls the future: who controls the present controls the past*
>
> — George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty Four, 1949

The re-writing of history is now much more efficient than when George Orwell imagined armies of Winston Smiths cutting holes in newspaper archives

Online archives are easily censored

rassing for the Indian-born Briton, coinciding as it does with his plans to become a big player in the City.

Reuben and his elder brother David launched a website last month announcing their intention

been victims of organised crime – one of the reasons they scaled down their activities in Russia.

Simon and David, 64, may together be worth £2.1 billion, according to a recent estimate.

makes some unflattering allegations about Simon's business methods. Anglo, once part of Spain's Repsol oil group, was an independent petrol retailer with about 45 service stations in

the company's chances of acquiring Save, which he wanted to buy himself. in the event, Save was not sold to either Anglo or Reuben.

Neither side would comment on the case last week, but Reuben is

case against the government of Kazakhstan, which had confiscated their assets in the country. They also went to court to fight an attempt by gangland interests to appropriate their stake in Russia's

came from legitimate sources.

Simon Reuben's next legal battle – against Anglo Petroleum – is unlikely to come to trial before next year. But he is clearly not afraid of a fight.

So, Norman, any regrets this time?

Lord Lamont has kept some odd company since leaving politics. Now a company he chairs faces collapse. **Jamie Doward** reports

HE FAMOUSLY lathered himself while singing 'Je ne regrette rien' when Britain was humiliatingly jettisoned from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism, but it is debatable whether these days Lord Lamont can affect such a cheery disposition.

The coruscating business career on which he set his heart, following his ignominious ousting as Chancellor of the Exchequer, has proved elusive for Norman Stewart Hughson Lamont. Several of his business ventures have fallen by the wayside while others have landed him in deep controversy, raising questions over his judgment.

Lamont, 61, is battling for credibility as one of the companies he chairs hovers on the brink of collapse. Shares in Galileo Innovations, the investment company set up by the controversial businessman and former pipe-fitter Paul Davidson, were suspended by the Stock Exchange last Tuesday after it failed to publish its annual report.

The Cheshire-based company's board is now struggling to work out whether Galileo – whose shares have crashed from 20p to 1p – can continue as a going concern. It is the latest setback for Davidson, who achieved notoriety last year when the Financial Services Authority launched an investigation into a spread bet he took out shortly before another firm he was involved with – Cyprotex – was floated.

Why Lamont – who joined investment bank NM Rothschild after leaving the Cabinet – ended up as chairman of a tiny floated company is open to question. But the chance to share in its potentially lucrative future must have been a consideration. Unlike some of his contemporaries (Hurd, Hestletine) Lamont – who declined to return calls – is not hugely wealthy. He left Rothschild in 1995 and several other companies he joined experienced difficulties. The Taiwan Investment Trust, ECIT Finance, Equity Consort and First Philippine Securities all ended up in liquidation.

A number of other companies, on whose board Lamont sits, are not capable of delivering him the sort of salary associated with Tory grandees. Clarges Energy is a tiddler with a near anonymous profile, and sitting on the board of the Indonesian Fund, an investment trust, is unlikely to be a huge money-spinner.

But Galileo's board believed it had potential to produce stellar financial rewards. The company boasted that it had a pipeline of exciting companies ready to come to market. As Sir Anthony Joliffe, one of the non-executive directors, put it when Lamont was appointed in July last year: 'Lord Lamont shares our views of the company's prospects and opportunities.'

The company had great hopes for its first investment, Fluid Conditioning Systems, which had developed replenishable oil solutions for the automotive industry. Another growth business was Scientific Detectors, which made analytical equipment for use in the pharmaceutical and petrochemical industries.

By the end of last year Galileo was predicting that three of its investments would float on the same day in the fourth quarter of 2002. But the triple score never happened, possibly because war fears scuppered the chances of getting the companies away at a reasonable price.

Fortunately for Lamont, he has other business interests to fall back on. He is a consultant to Rotch, the Mayfair-based property company run by the Iranian-born brothers Robert and Vincent Tchenguiz. Rotch is reputed to preside over a property portfolio valued at £4bn and is also the largest shareholder in tenanted pubs giant Pubmaster. The brothers – who eschew publicity – are ranked 90th in Britain's rich list.

Lamont is also a director of Scottish Annuity & Life Holdings, the Bermuda-based company that provides reinsurance products to the life insurance industry and wealth management services to high-net-worth individuals.

Then there is the directorship of Balli Group, the metals trader headquartered in London, which has huge interests in Romania. Balli co-owns Sidex International with LNM, the steel group whose offshore parent company is run by controversial millionaire Lakshmi Mittal. His bid for Sidex was famously backed by a supportive letter from Tony Blair.

In addition to sitting on the board of the British Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Lamont is director of the British Romanian Chamber of Commerce and organised several dinners to help advance business relations between the two countries.

One dinner – in honour of Romanian president Ion Illiescu – was attended by millionaire metals trader Virendra Rastogi, now the subject of a Serious Fraud Squad investigation. Another – for the Romanian Prime Minister and attended by Trade secretary Patricia Hewitt – was sponsored by Mittal.

Lamont's appeal to powerful businessmen must lie at least in part in his extensive political contacts. He is chairman of a little-known but hugely influential right-wing body called Le Cercle. Founded in the 1950s by France's Antoine Pinay and German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, Le Cercle – also known as The Atlantic Circle – describes itself as an 'informal group of European and American professionals – politicians, retired ambassadors, former generals, lawyers and active participants in banking, oil, shipping, publishing and trading companies'.

Guest attendees have included Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger, the Sultan of Oman, Romania's Illiescu and King Hussein of Jordan. Comparisons with the highly secretive Bilderberg Group are inevitable, especially as one attendee, the late Alan Clark, MP, suggested Le Cercle had close links to the CIA.

It is perhaps his links with Le Cercle which reinforce Lamont's most controversial business relationship, that with Iraqi billionaire Nadhmi Auchi, who was arrested in Britain last Monday. Auchi, who is known to have attended a number of Le Cercle meetings, made millions selling Italian warships to the Iraqi regime in 1980.

Lamont is a director of one of Auchi's biggest companies, Compagnie Internationale de Participations Bancaires et Financieres, the financial arm of General Mediterranean Holdings, which holds a stake in BNP Paribas and Jordan's Union Bank for Savings and Investment.

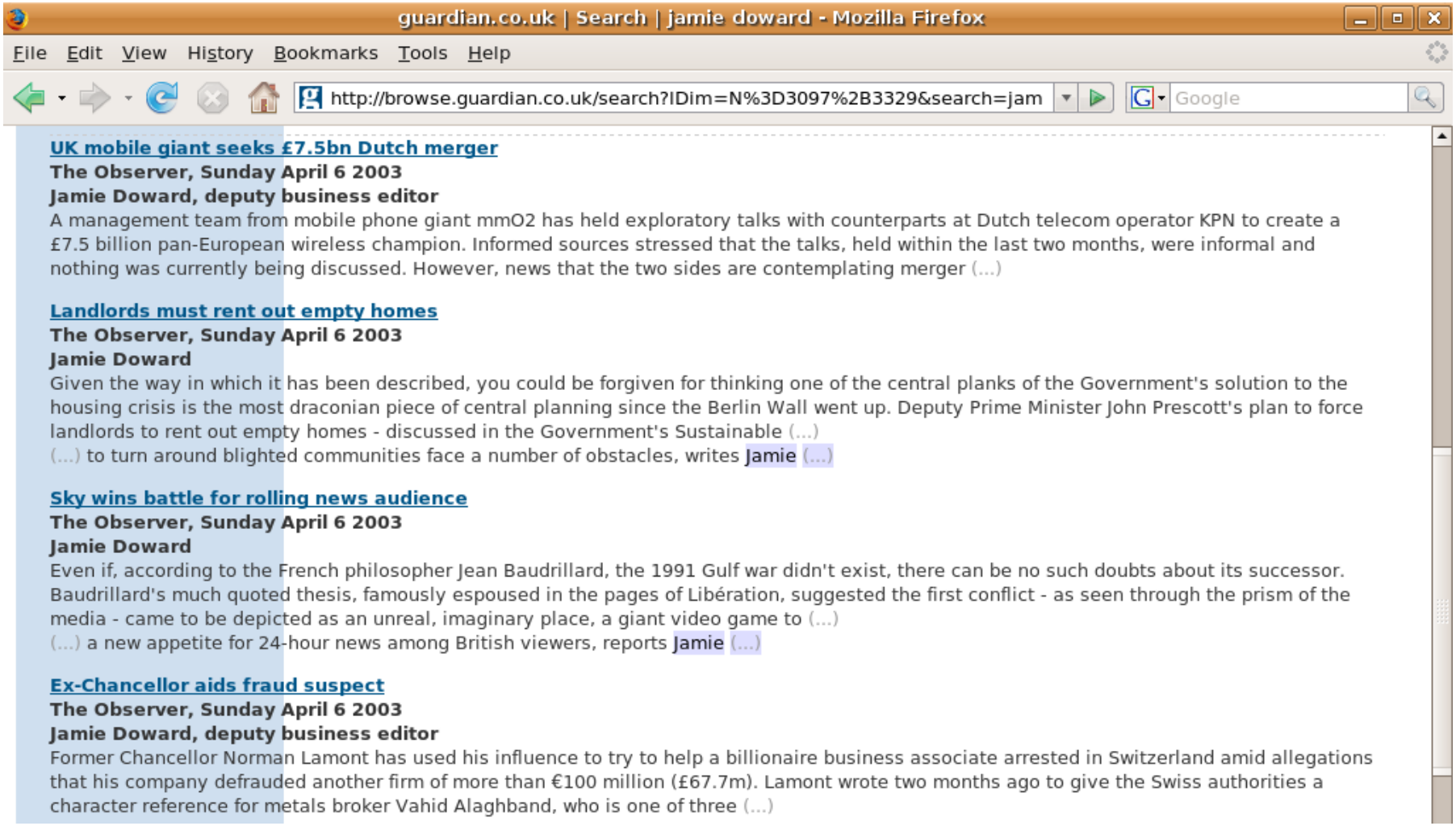
Auchi – a former Baath party activist who is thought to have been advising the UK Government on Iraq – was arrested on a French extradition warrant. Next month the corruption trial involving oil giant TotalFinaElf is expected to hear allegations that he channelled £28m commission from the oil company to buy a refinery in Kuwait. Auchi has denied any wrongdoing.

Whatever the outcome, Lamont could well look back on last week as the point his fortunes took another turn for the worse.

It may be some time before the peer who pocketed thousands of pounds from a Cheshire pipe-fitter and an Iraqi billionaire sings in his bath again.

Lord's prayer: Lamont is battling for credibility as a company he chairs teeters on the brink. (Photograph by Martin Argles)

Online archives are easily censored



The Internet facilitates centralization

- Centralized systems work better: cheaper, more versatile, and more efficient
- By eliminating distance, the Internet allows greater centralization
- Centralized archiving of physical newspapers is awkward, but online archiving works well
- This makes life easier for readers, and censors too
- Many libraries are now dropping archiving of paper in favor of electronic subscriptions

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Skills for Business is launching two Sector Skills Councils. To find out more about how employers are responding to the UK's skills crisis, see next Sunday's Observer Business Section

The Observer skills FOR BUSINESS

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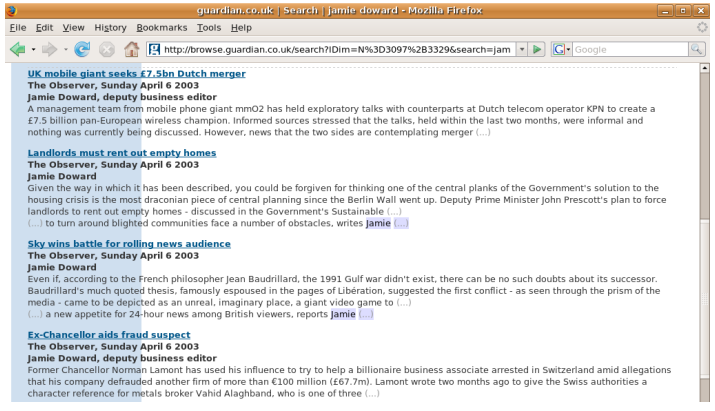
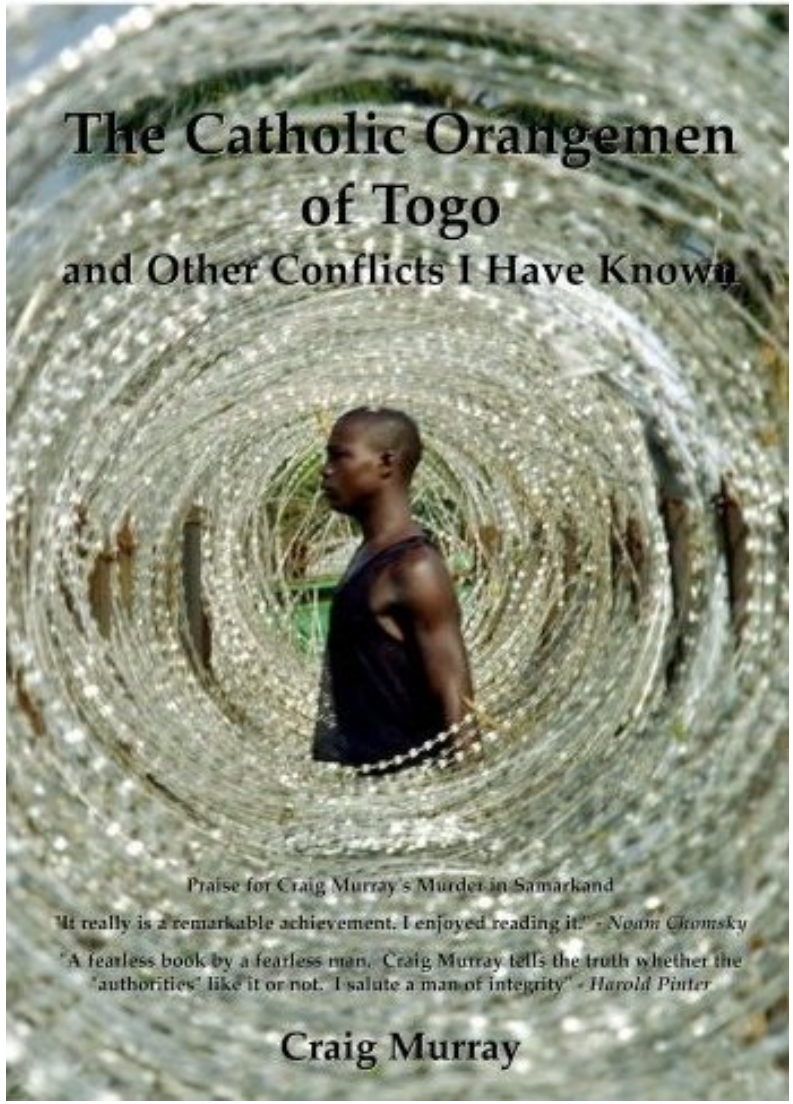


The Internet eases publication too

- "The Catholic Orangemen of Togo", by Craig Murray, was dropped by its publisher due to libel threats
- Even the Cambridge University Press pulped a book, "Alms for Jihad" by J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins, following legal action
- The lack of support from a publisher and network of book shops would previously be devastating
- However, the Internet facilitates self-publishing and marketing



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Internet architecture allows censorship

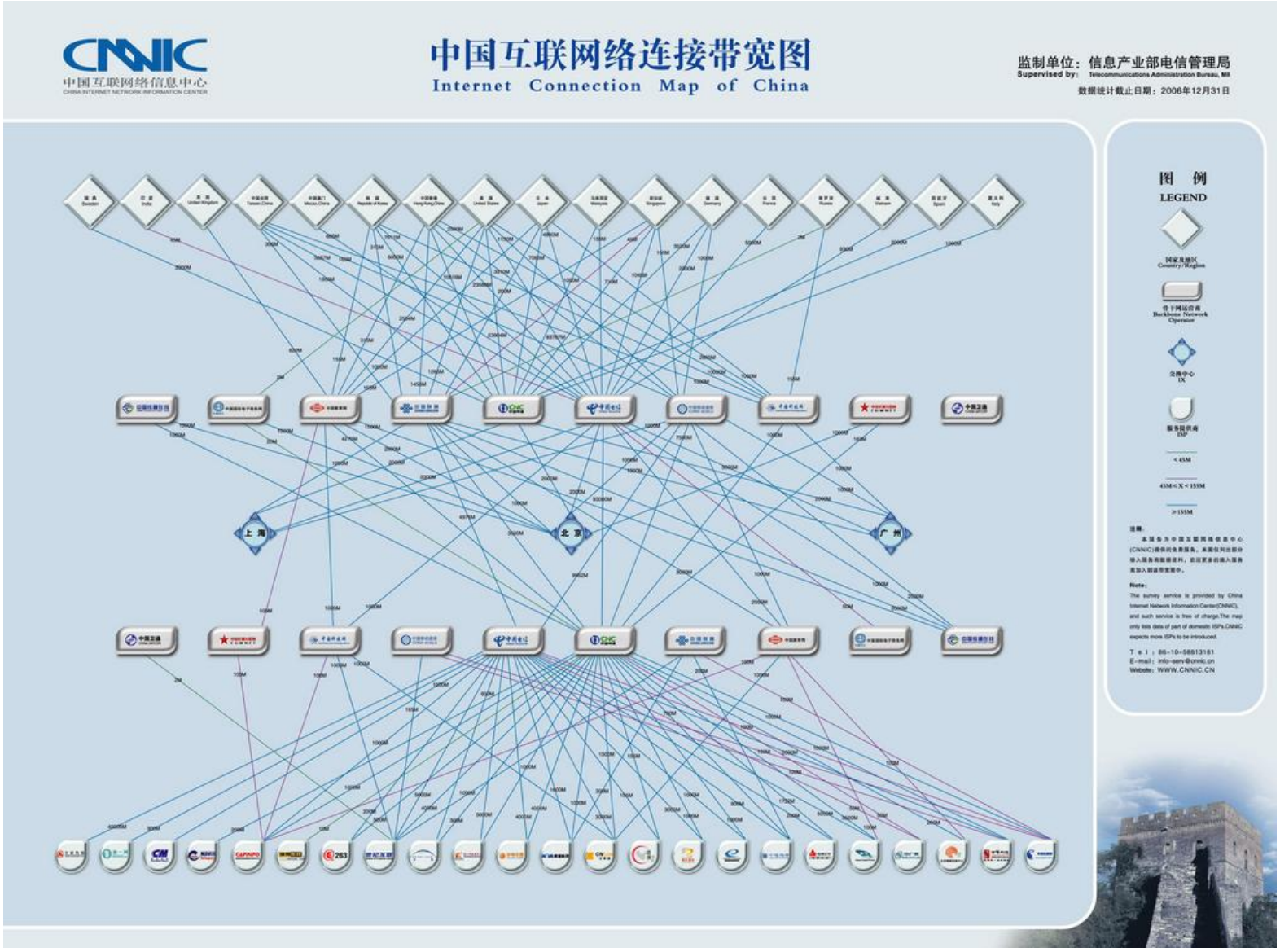

Diagram: China Internet Network Information Center

What is being blocked, and why

- According to the Open Net Initiative, at least 70 countries filter the Internet in some way; from Asia, to Europe, to the Americas.
- The types of material censored varied depending on country, e.g.:
  - Human Rights (blocked in China)
  - Religion (blocked in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Iran, Bahrain)
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Search Engine results are censored

Searching for "Tiananmen Square" on Google.com and Google.cn

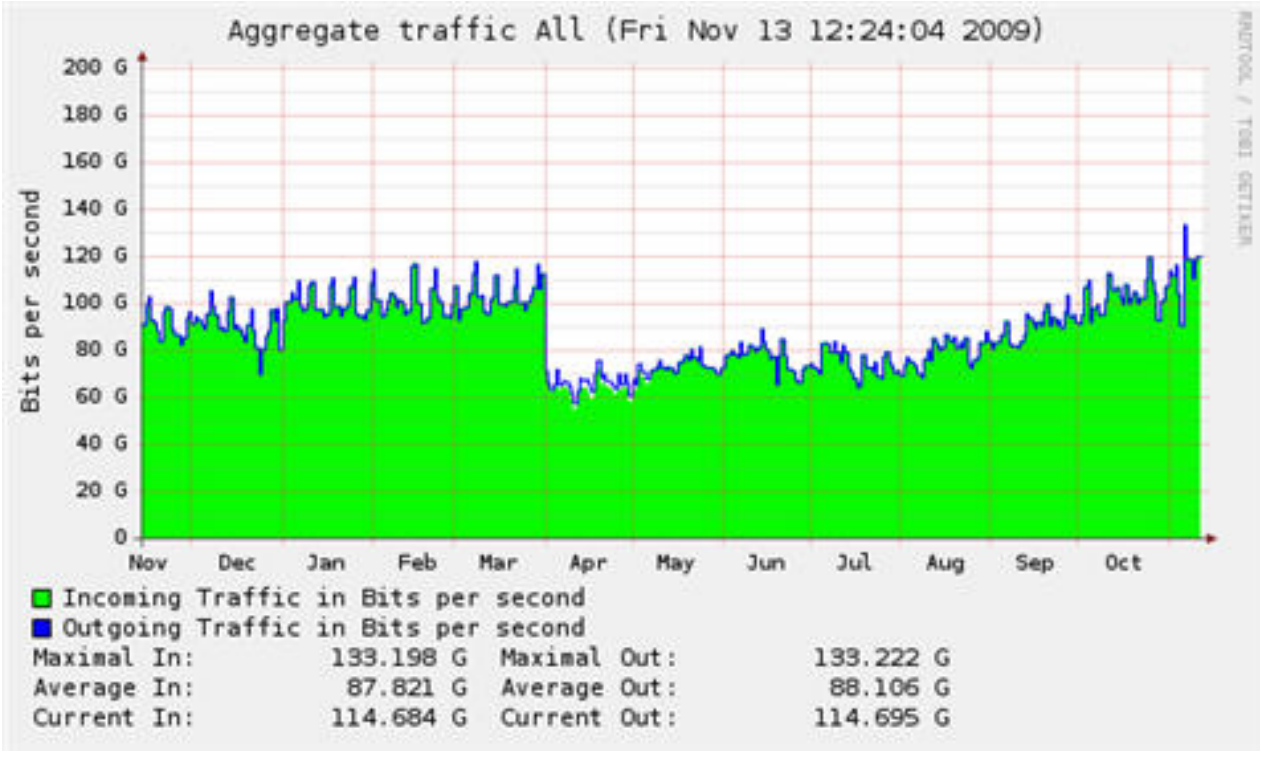
Chilling effects: self-censorship through fear, intimidation, and punishment

People can be intimidated into not testing rules through fear of detection and retribution

"I call on Egyptian government officials to take the necessary procedures to protect the Egyptian youth from the spread of subversive religious ideologies among them by permanently shutting down religious institutions in this country."

— Kareem Amer (sentenced to four years of prison in Egypt)

Sweden's iPRED experience



> Our analysis shows that consumers increasingly want to decide for themselves when to watch and from which screen. Unfortunately, many have become adept at circumventing the IPRED legislation.
>
> — Jens Heron, Mediavision

Resisting Internet censorship

> *The Net interprets censorship as damage and routes around it.*
>
> — John Gilmore, 1993

No longer true on a technical level: censorship is in the routers.

Remains true on a social level: when material is censored, people distribute copies and draw attention to them

But what if people are too afraid to do this?

United States Constitution: 1st Amendment

> *Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*

McIntyre v. Ohio Elections Commission

> *Protections for anonymous speech are vital to democratic discourse. Allowing dissenters to shield their identities frees them to express critical, minority views . . . Anonymity is a shield from the tyranny of the majority . . . It thus exemplifies the purpose behind the Bill of Rights, and of the First Amendment in particular*

Twitter in Iran: Good.

Iran Protests: Twitter, the Medium of the Movement

By **LEV GROSSMAN** Wednesday, Jun. 17, 2009

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Stories

- In Iran, Rival Regime Factions Play a High-Stakes Game of Chicken
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Share The U.S. State Department doesn't usually take an interest in the maintenance schedules of dotcom start-ups. But over the weekend, officials there reached out to Twitter and asked them to delay a network upgrade that was scheduled for Monday night. The reason? To protect the interests of

From http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1905125,00.html

Twitter in USA: Bad.

FBI Raids Queens Home in G20 Protest Twitter Crackdown

AP Photo/Matt Rourke

That's right, a Twitter crackdown. A lawyer for Jackson Heights social worker Elliot Madison, 41, says that the feds searched his client's house for 16 hours on Thursday after Madison was arrested on September 24th at a Pittsburgh hotel room with another man. What were they up to? Sitting at laptops sending Twitter messages advising G20 demonstrators about riot police activity in the streets. And yet *real* Twitter threats like Lindsay Lohan and Courtney Love remain at large.

Madison, a self-described anarchist, was in Pittsburgh volunteering for the Tin Can Comms Collective, a group that uses Twitter to send mass text messages during protests describing events observed on the streets or over police scanners; stuff like "SWAT teams rolling down 5th Ave." Tin Can was active during the St. Paul RNC protests, and the authorities are now on to them. Madison was charged with hindering apprehension or prosecution, criminal use of a communication facility and possession of instruments of crime; he's currently out on bail.

from http://gothamist.com/2009/10/05/fbi_raids_queens_home_in_g20_protes.php

Internet surveillance is pervasive

- Conventional surveillance methods had to be targeted
- Internet censorship is capable of monitoring everyone, all of the time
- Governments are increasing monitoring: SORM (Russia), Golden Shield (China), Data Retention Directive (EU), and Interception Modernisation Programme (UK), Warrantless Wiretapping (USA)
- 1 in 7 East German citizens worked for the Stasi. Today we can achieve the same results with a fraction of the cost

Traffic data surveillance

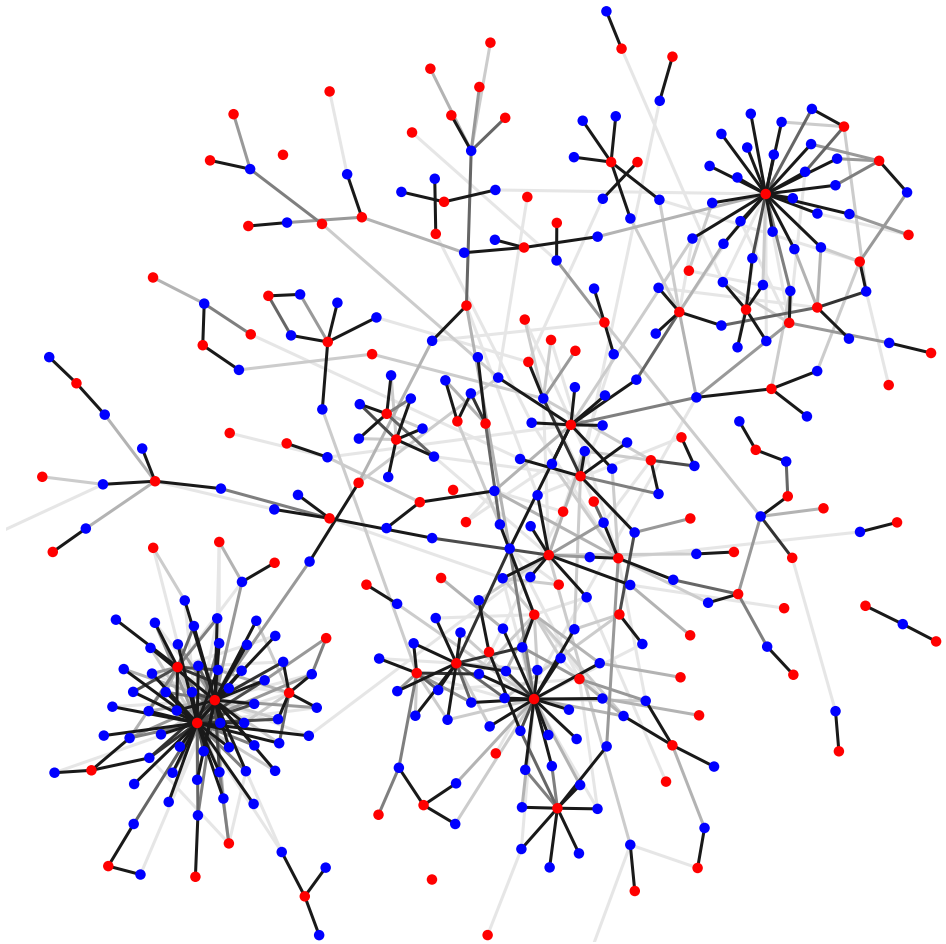
- Traffic data (who talks to whom, how often and for how long) is the core of intelligence capabilities
- This information is cheaper to record and store, compared to full content
- Because it can be easily processed by computer, data mining techniques can be used to understand social structures

> *No government of any colour is to be trusted with such a roadmap to our souls*

— Sir Ken Macdonald, former director of public prosecutions, on the UK Interception Modernisation Program

Importantly, information on social networks can be derived

- Communities
- People



From "The Economics of Mass Surveillance" by George Danezis and Bettina Wittneben

The Transparent Society

- David Brin proposed that in a world of pervasive surveillance, balance could be maintained by allowing everyone to monitor everyone else
- Bruce Schneier retorted that surveillance amplifies existing powers
- Many countries restrict anonymous speech (e.g. Germany and China)
- It is easy for those in power to call on the weak to link their names to opinions

Photo: Manos Simonides

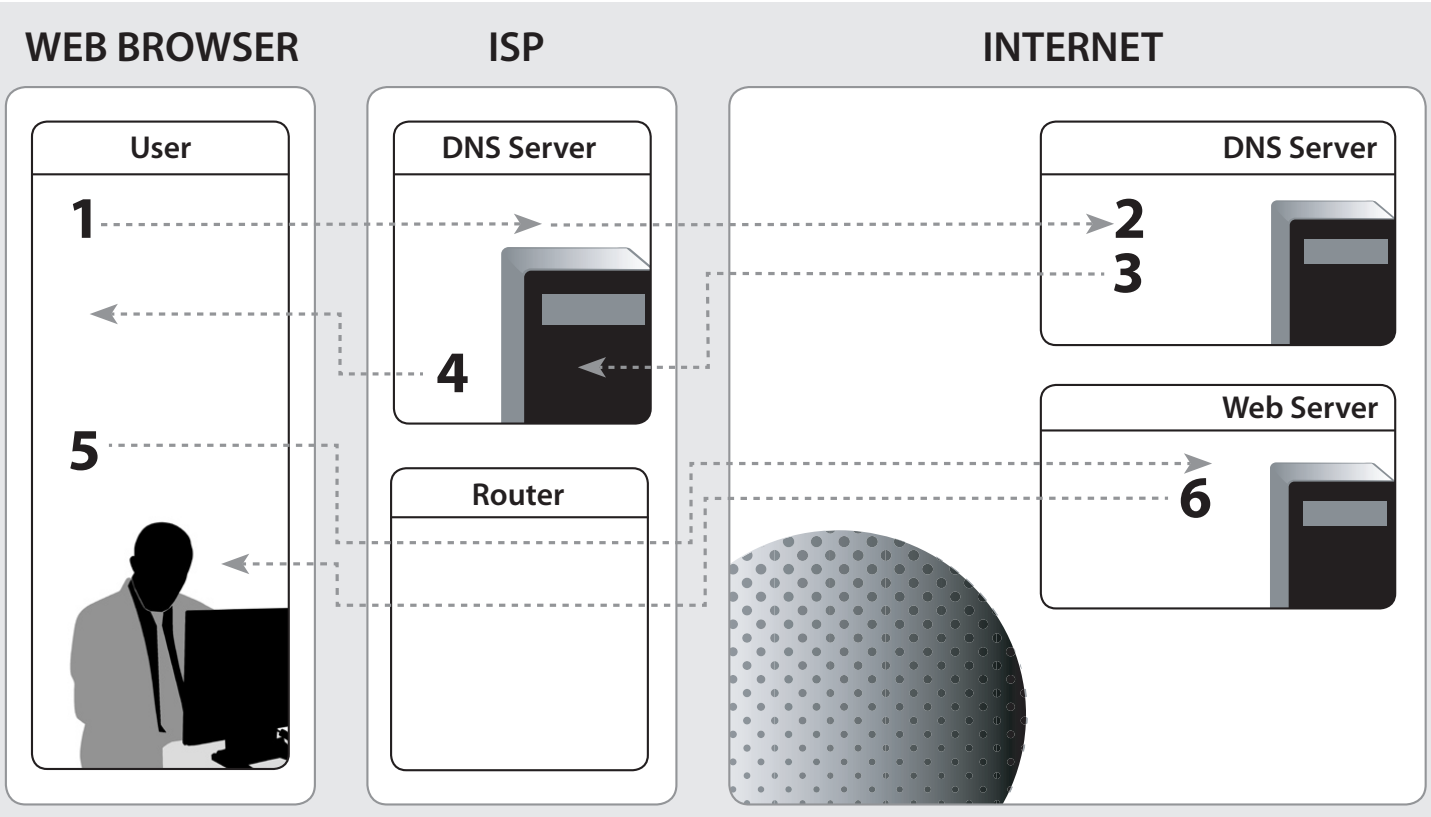
Censorship resistance systems

- Software to resist censorship should
  - have a diverse set of users
  - work where you are without special steps
  - be sustainable (what if the company goes broke?)
  - be decentralized (swapping censors doesn't help you)
  - protect you by default
  - have accessible standards and published designs (black box vs. glass box)
  - be fast enough that you'll use it daily
  - doesn't promise perfect everything including a fully encrypted Internet
- These properties should be maintained even if the censorship resistance system is partially compromised

Blocking with technology

- When a country's government controls international connectivity, they can block requests for banned websites and destinations
- There are a number of different approaches (DNS blocking, IP address blocking, etc.)
- Software may be produced in-country, but often is an adapted commercial product
- These companies not only make the software, but provide a continuously updated list of websites to be blocked

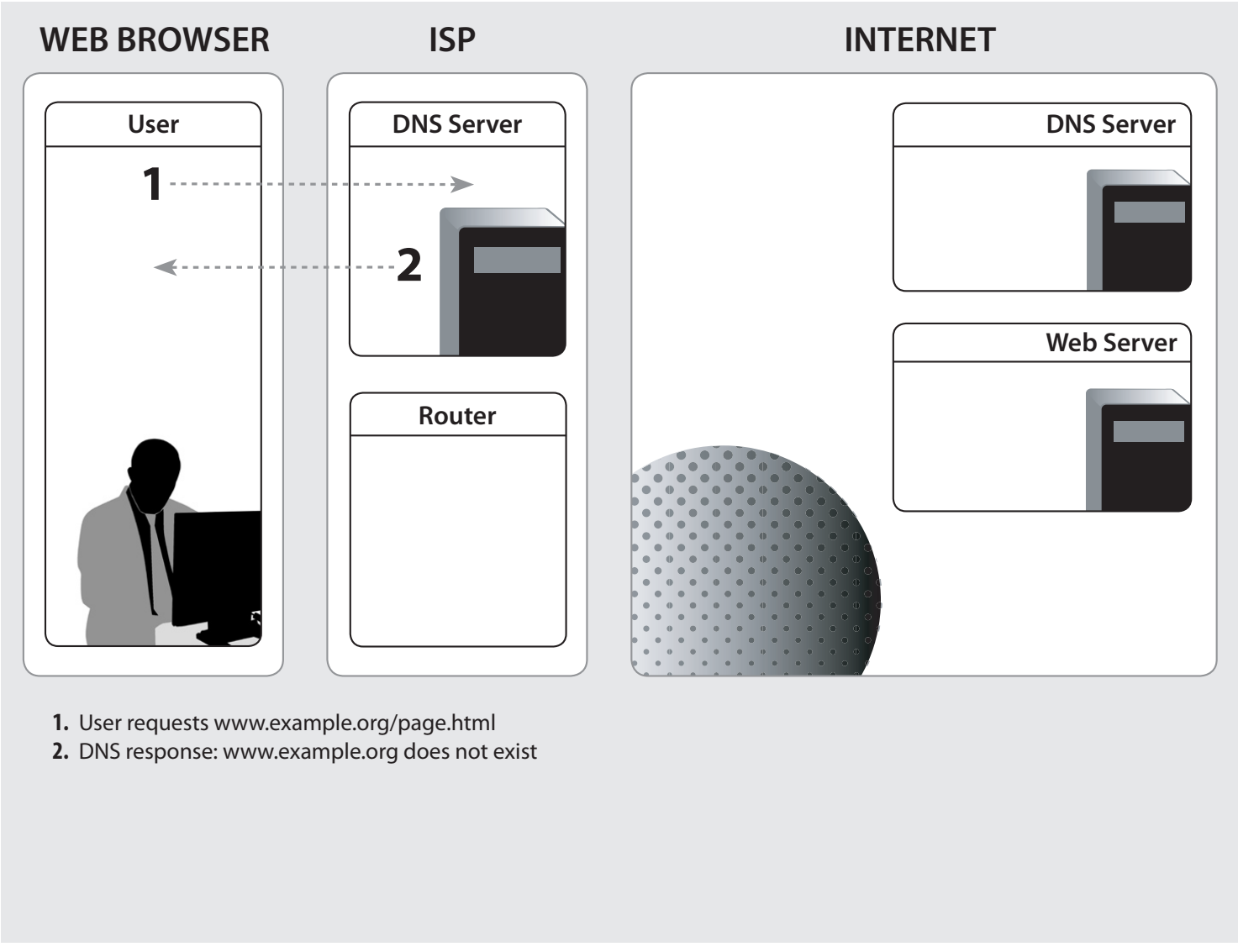
Normal web browsing



1. User requests www.example.org/page.html
2. DNS lookup for www.example.org
3. Lookup response: www.example.org is 192.0.2.166
4. www.example.org is 192.0.2.166
5. Get web page: www.example.org/page.html at 192.0.2.166
6. Here is www.example.org/page.html

Diagram: Jane Gowan

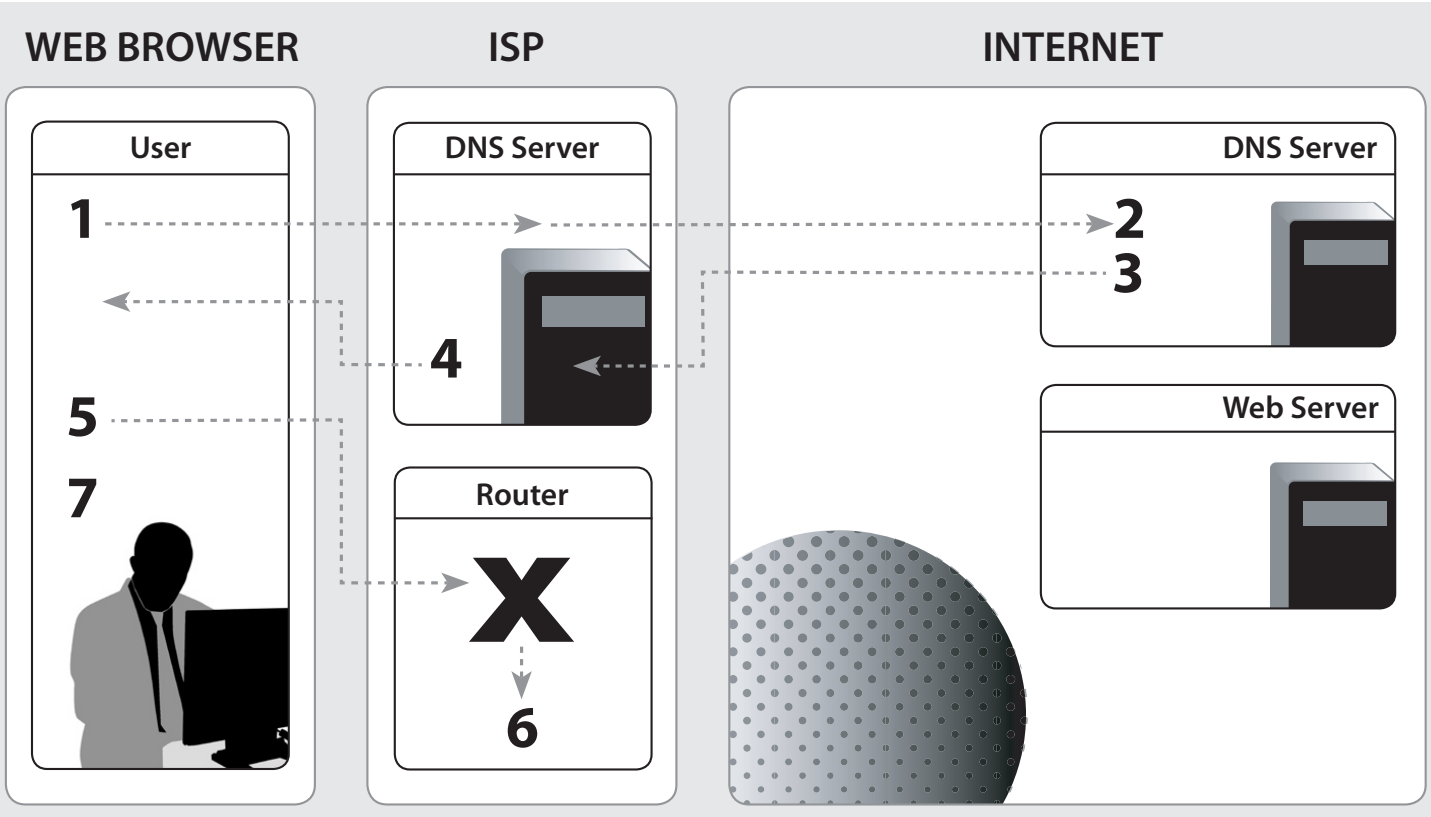
DNS tampering



1. User requests www.example.org/page.html
2. DNS response: www.example.org does not exist

Diagram: Jane Gowan

IP blocking



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5. Get web page: www.example.org/page.html at 192.0.2.166
6. Router drops all packets to 192.0.2.166
7. Browser concludes that www.example.org is inaccessible

Diagram: Jane Gowan

Trade-offs in blocking systems

- DNS blocking
  - Easy and cheap to implement
  - Blocks at domain name granularity – over blocks protocols, web pages
  - Trivial to bypass

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- Proxy blocking
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  - Blocks at webpage level – low over-blocking
- Hybrid blocking – IP based redirection to proxy
  - Tricky to get right, but cheap
  - Has some vulnerabilities
  - Blocks at webpage level – low over-blocking

Who wants online privacy?

- Ordinary people
  - To avoid personal information being sold to marketers
  - Protect themselves when researching sensitive topics

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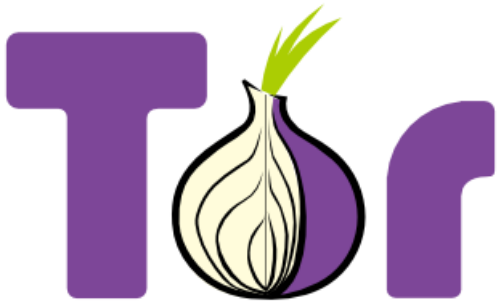
- Businesses
  - To observe their competition and build anonymous collaborations

Anonymous communication

- People have to hide in a crowd of other people ("anonymity loves company")
- The goal of the system is to make all users look as similar as possible, to give a bigger crowd
- Hide who is communicating with whom
- Layered encryption and random delays hide correlation between input traffic and output traffic

Tor is a low-latency anonymity system

- Based on technology developed in the Onion Routing project



TorProject.org

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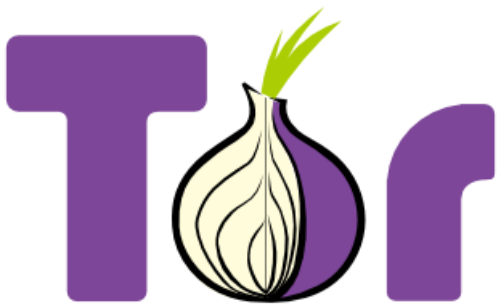

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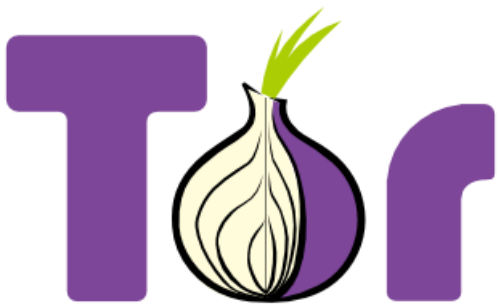

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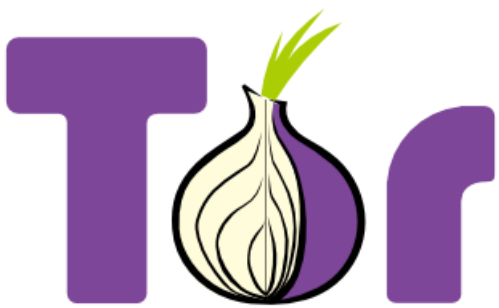

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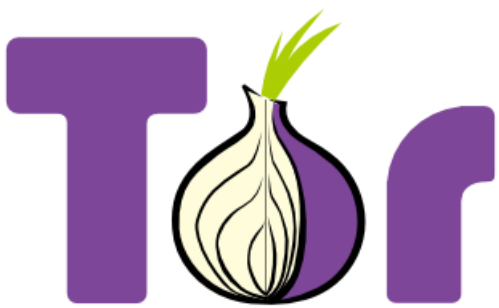

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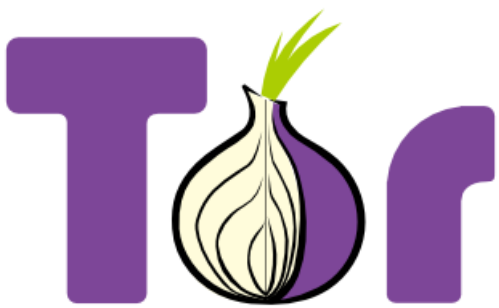
- Centralized directory authorities publish a list of all servers; client doesn't trust the network by design



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Tor hides communication patterns by relaying data through volunteer servers

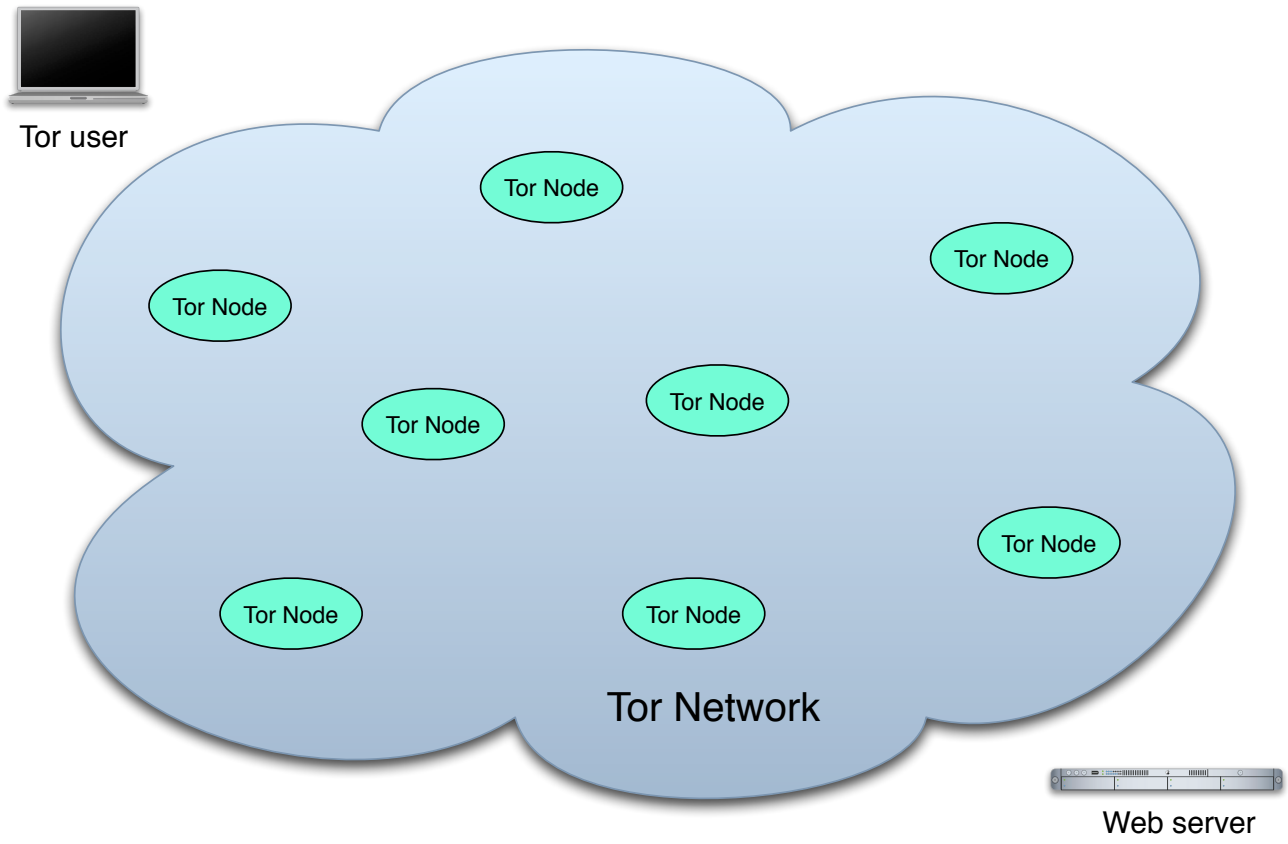
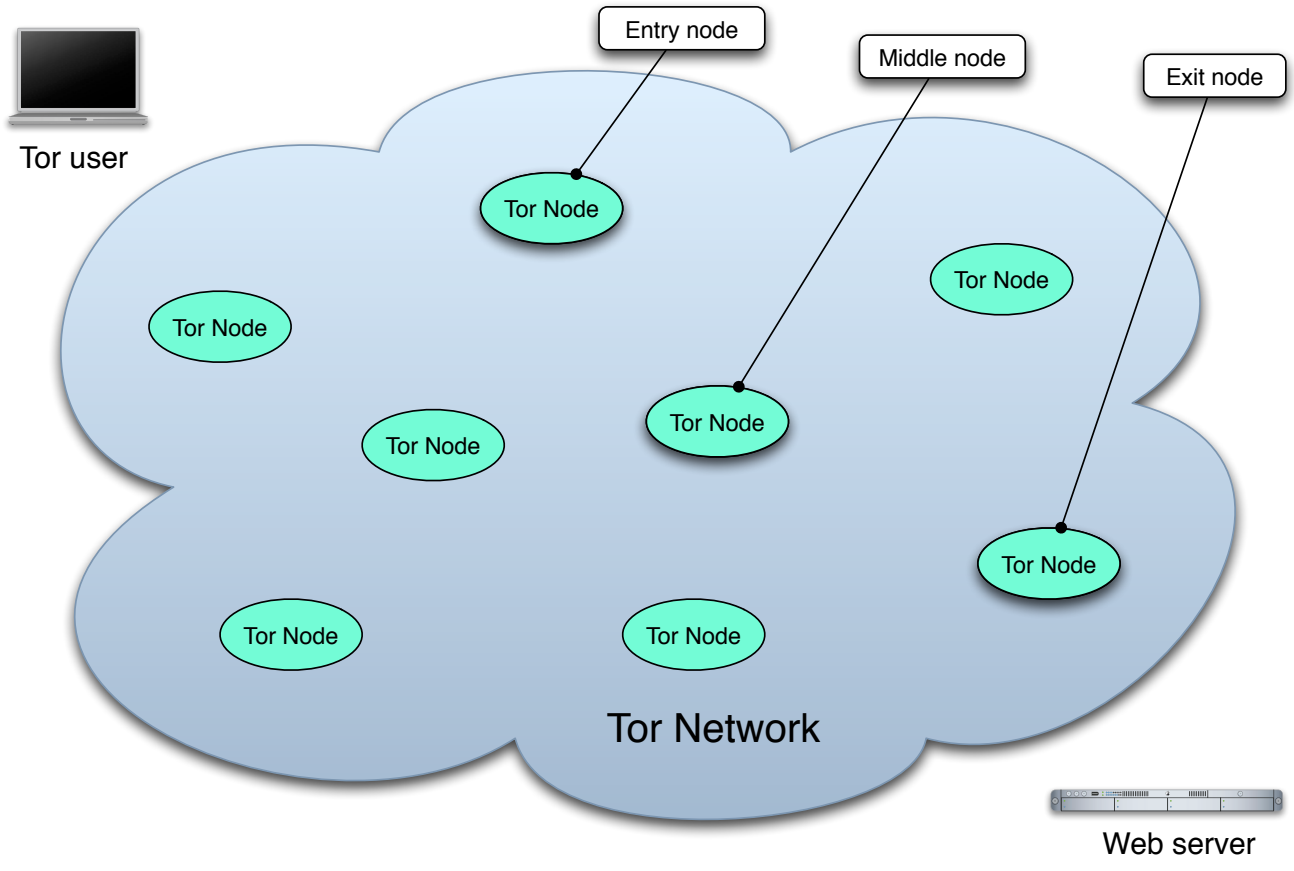


Diagram: Robert Watson

Tor hides communication patterns by relaying data through volunteer servers



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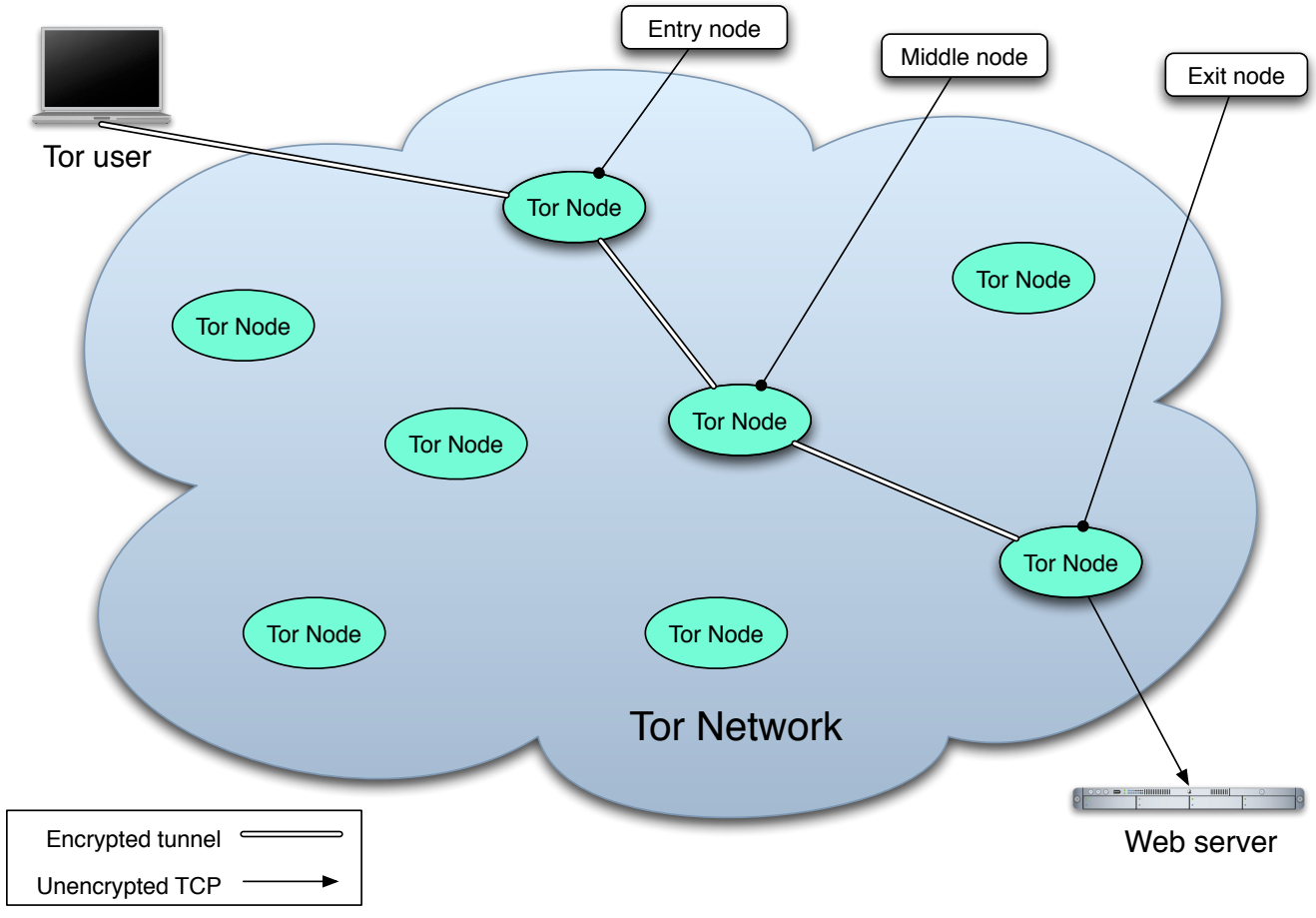
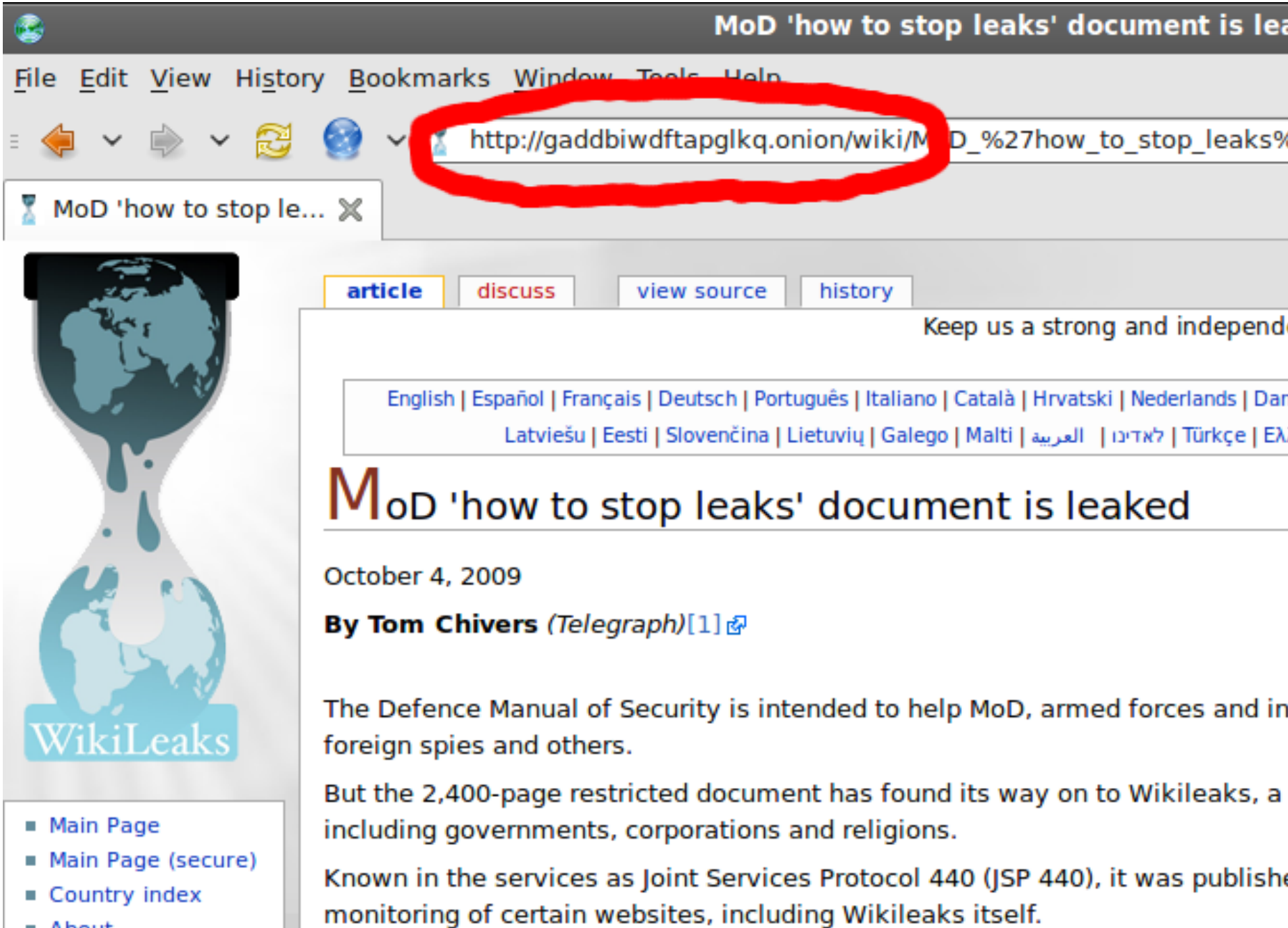
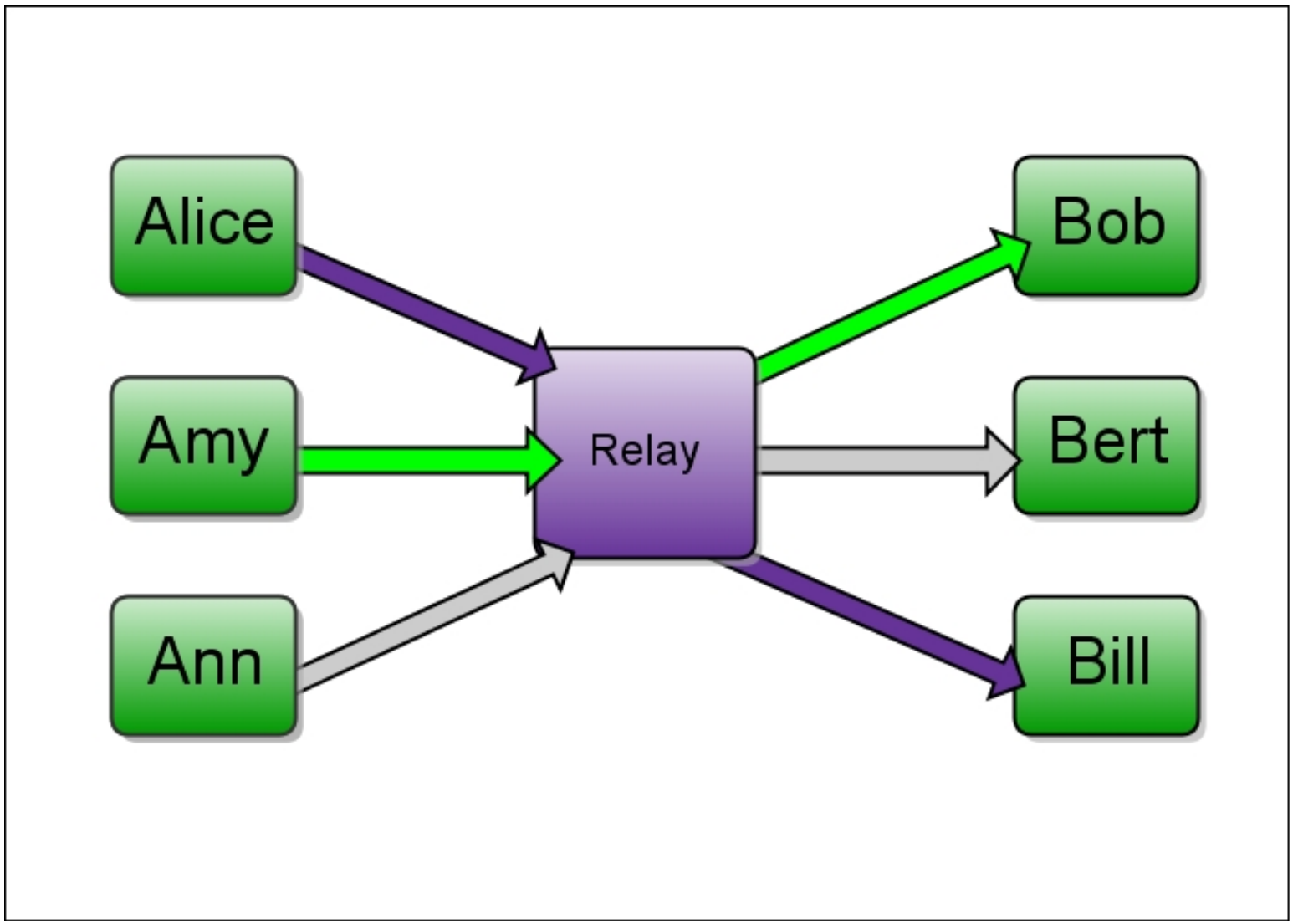


Diagram: Robert Watson

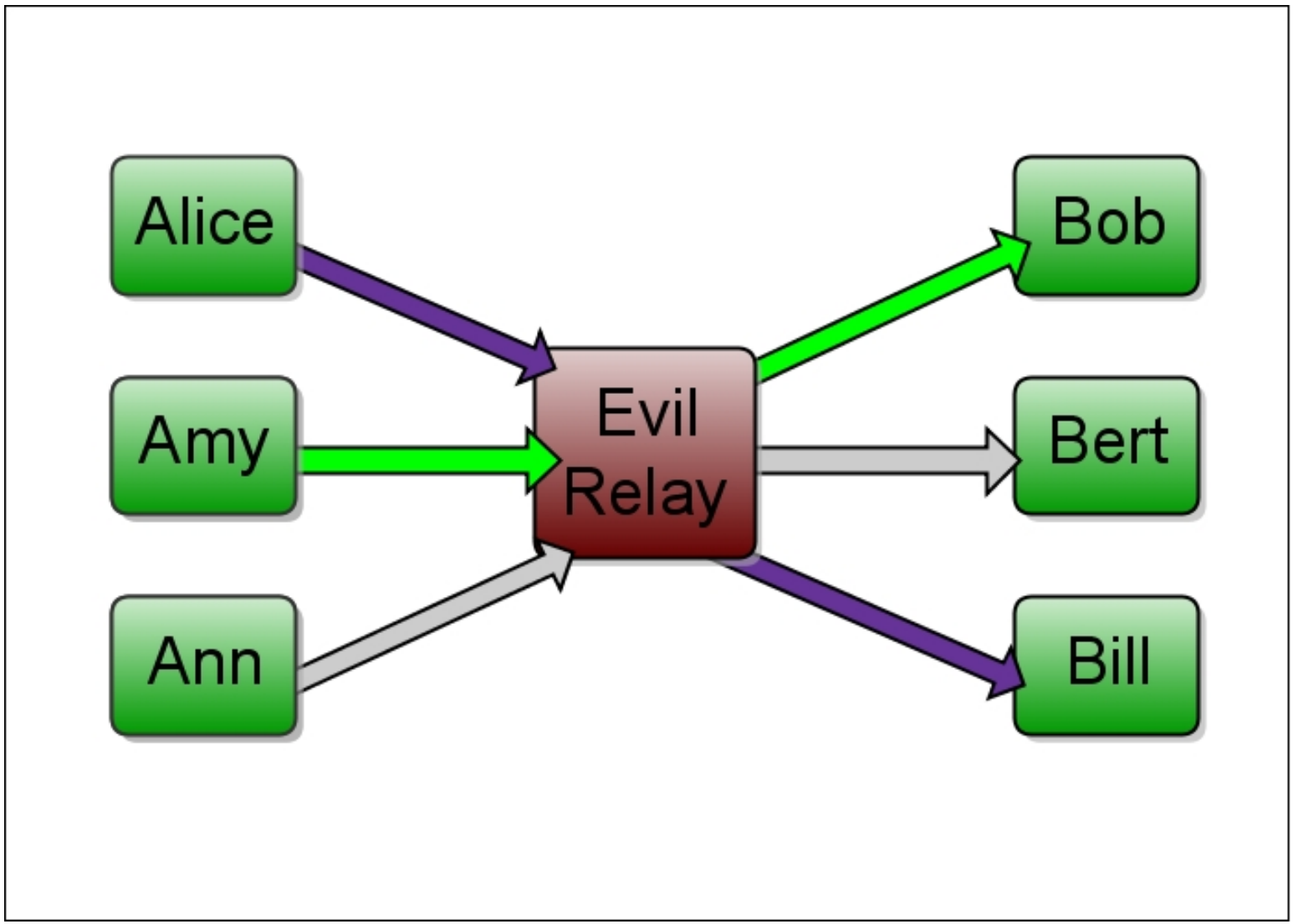
Tor hidden services allow censorship resistant services



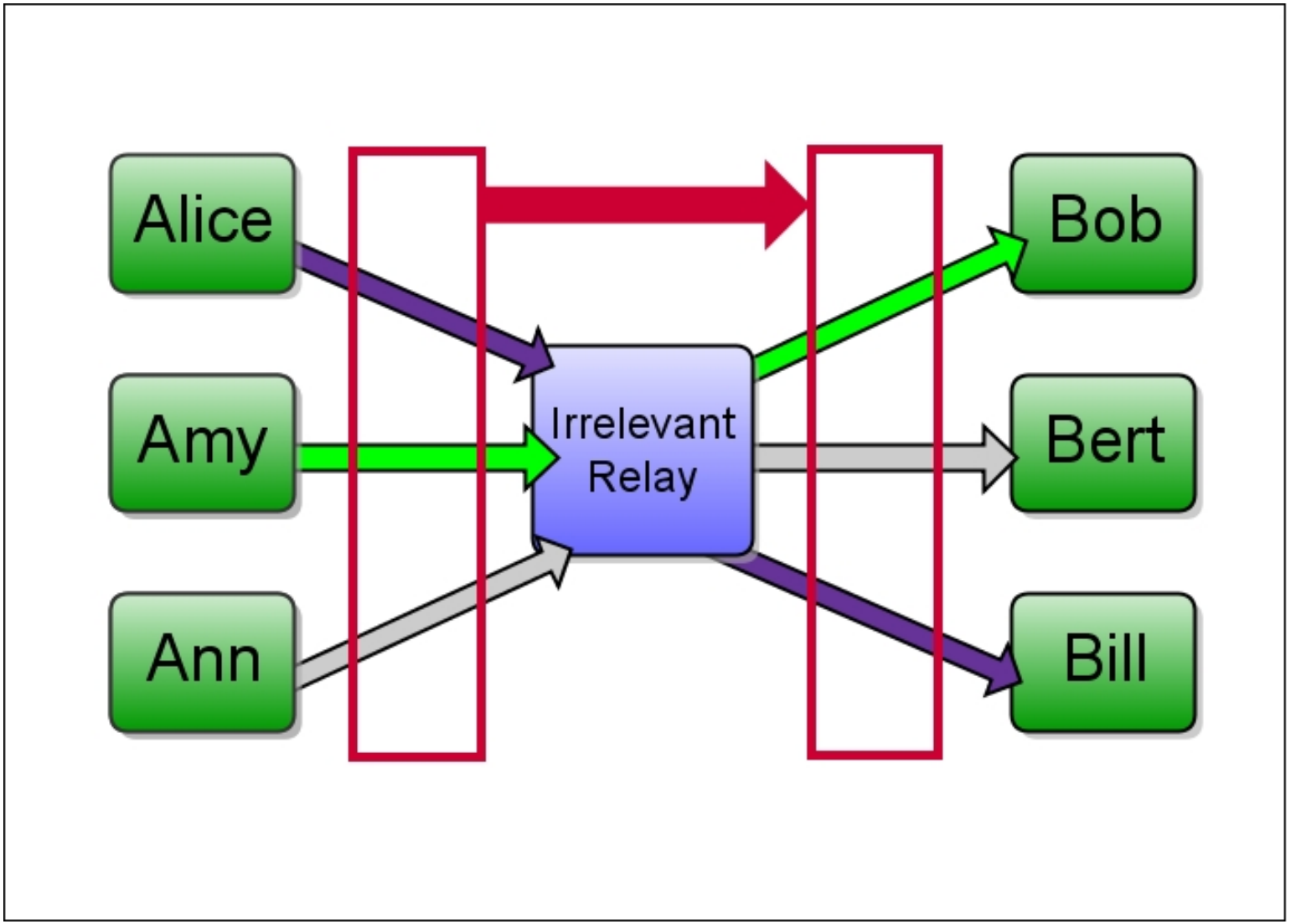
How is Tor different from other systems?



How is Tor different from other systems?



How is Tor different from other systems?



Limitations of censorship resistance

- Censorship resistance is thought controversial – especially by the censors
- There is something for everyone to like, and something for everyone to dislike, going on with censorship resistance systems
- Bad people do use them to do bad things (for many different definitions of bad people)
- It is impossible to block bad uses, even if we could come up with a common definition of bad content
- The systems are not perfect, so it is possible some people will be caught

Conclusions

- The Internet and centralisation can both improve and harm freedom of speech
- Slogans regarding the borderless nature and inherent freedoms of the Internet are frequently wrong
- Technical details matter: how a system is implemented can make a radical difference
- Technologies can be used to resist censorship and improve privacy
- However, policies must be changed too and pressure is needed on legislators

One Version of the Future

> *I'd like to change the design of the Internet by introducing regulation–Internet passports, Internet police and international agreement–about following Internet standards. And if some countries don't agree with or don't pay attention to the agreement, just cut them off.*

— Eugene Kaspersky, Co-Founder & CEO of Kaspersky Labs

Internet Access as a Human Right

> *We think it's something you cannot live without in modern society. Like banking services or water or electricity, you need an Internet connection*
>
> — Laura Vilkkonen, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Finland

Tor Project's Mission

> *We remain committed to defending online privacy and anonymity as a human right.*

How to get there

- Increased funding of research and development for privacy, circumvention, and anti-censorship technologies
- Policy and Legal frameworks for free access, free speech, and anonymity

Credits

- Thank you to Steven J. Murdoch, `http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/users/sjm217/`, for the research and basis for this presentation.
- Photographer and Diagram credits as listed throughout the presentation.