

Dozens of news outlets accuse Obama of limited access

By James Rainey, Los Angeles Times

Nearly 40 news organizations have accused the Obama administration of improperly controlling images of the president by limiting the access granted to independent photojournalists while allowing free rein by the White House's own photographers.

In a letter and a meeting last week, the news outlets and journalism groups complained to White House Press Secretary Jay Carney about the practice, saying the White House has prevented an unvarnished view of government business, while encouraging officially sanctioned competition for private news organizations.

Limitations on photographers' access to President Obama create "a troubling precedent with a direct and adverse impact on the public's ability to independently monitor and see what its government is doing," charged the letter from the 38 organizations, including the White House Correspondents Association and the Tribune Co., owner of the *Los Angeles Times*.

The White House said it has limited access by photographers only as necessitated by logistics or a desire to preserve a zone of privacy for the president and his family. Carney noted that previous presidents, including George W. Bush, battled with the media over how much of their activity to put into the public domain.

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