

WikiLeaks founder unlikely to face charges

By Sari Horwitz, Washington Post

The Justice Department has all but concluded it will not bring charges against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange for publishing classified documents because government lawyers said they could not do so without also prosecuting U.S. news organizations and journalists, according to U.S. officials.

The officials stressed that a formal decision has not been made, and a grand jury investigating WikiLeaks remains impaneled, but they said there is little possibility of bringing a case against Assange, unless he is implicated in criminal activity other than releasing online top-secret military and diplomatic documents.

The Obama administration has charged government employees and contractors who leak classified information – such as former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden and former Army intelligence analyst Bradley Manning – with violations of the Espionage Act. But officials said that although Assange published classified documents, he did not leak them, something they said significantly affects their legal analysis.

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