

HOW TO GET THE GOVERNMENT TO EASE UP: INVOLVE SCOTT SHANE

This is fairly extraordinary. BuzzFeed reports that in an effort to alleviate some of the pressure from the UK it is bringing in the NYT – but just one reporter from the NYT – to report on the Snowden stories.

“In a climate of intense pressure from the UK government, The *Guardian* decided to bring in a US partner to work on the GCHQ documents provided by Edward Snowden,” *Guardian* spokeswoman Jennifer Lindenauer said in an email. “We are continuing to work in partnership with the NYT and others to report these stories.”

That reporter is not James Risen – who of course broke the original NSA story with Eric Lichtblau. It is not Charlie Savage – who had an important story based on the Snowden leaks already.

It is Scott Shane.

The *Times*’s Charlie Savage and other reporters have chased the NSA story aggressively, despite Snowden’s choice to go to filmmaker Laura Poitras, the *Guardian*’s Glenn Greenwald, and Barton Gellman, who has written about the documents for the *Washington Post*. Snowden said he did not go to the *Times* because the paper bowed to Bush Administration demands to delay a story on warrantless wiretapping in the interest of national security; he was afraid, he said, the paper would do the same with his revelations.

Now, *Times* reporter Scott Shane is at work on a series of stories expected to be published next month jointly with the *Guardian*, a source familiar with the plans said. The source said the internal arrangement has also been the cause of some tension in the newsroom, as other national security reporters working on the NSA story – Savage and James Risken, among others – are not centrally involved in stories based on the *Guardian's* documents.

Scott Shane has an increasingly consistent ability to tell grand tales that serve the interests of The Powers that Be. And somehow his stories about extremely sensitive subjects like drones don't get chased for leaks.

Was the alleviation of pressure tied to Scott Shane in particular, a journalist who hasn't followed this story as closely as some of his colleagues?