What was point in leaking Prince Harry deployment?

by San Diego Union-Tribune

We don't take lightly the public's right to know. Yet, given recent developments, we have to ask: Did the public really need to know that Britain's Prince Harry was fighting on the front lines in Afghanistan?

The answer is no - not if publicizing the location of such a high- value target endangers lives, including that of Prince Harry.

The 23-year-old is in the British army, where he holds a rank equivalent to that of second lieutenant and serves on an attack helicopter. He had been deployed to Afghanistan since December.

That's over now. The British military is pulling Prince Harry out of the war zone, and with good reason.

The deployment had been kept under wraps for obvious reasons. The British public has been worried about Prince Harry since it first became aware that he had joined the military and might be sent to Iraq. That he was instead sent to Afghanistan wouldn't alleviate the worry.

There is no question that Taliban warriors would love to bring harm to Harry, and they wouldn't think twice about killing scores of other British soldiers to get to him. It is for that reason that the British military treated his deployment with such discretion.

Besides, what exactly is the point of releasing these details? The news value here is minimal. This is not a hugely significant story that called out to be broken. And yet it was broken - by a U.S.-based Web site that couldn't wait to release the news, even though the media across the pond had refrained from doing just that. As part of an extraordinary consensus, all print and broadcast media in the United Kingdom maintained a virtual blackout by keeping mum for weeks about Prince Harry's deployment.

By putting on his country's uniform and putting himself in harm's way, Prince Harry acted honorably. Too bad we can't say the same for others in this episode.

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