

The International Federation of Journalists complained Wednesday that news people covering the war in Afghanistan are being monitored by the U.S. military to see if they are sympathetic to the American cause.

The federation said journalists seeking to travel under the protection of U.S. armed forces in Afghanistan may be screened first by an American public relations firm to see if their coverage portrays the military in a positive light.

"This profiling of journalists further compromises the independence of media," Aidan White, general secretary of the Brussels-based federation, said in a statement.

"It strips away any pretense that the army is interested in helping journalists to work freely," the federation statement said.

The complaint followed the publication Aug. 24 of an article in the Stars and Stripes, an independent daily covering the U.S. military, reporting that journalists were being screened by The Rendon Group, a Washington-based public relations company.

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