

McFaul Suggests His Phone Tapped, E-mail Hacked

March 29, 2012

The  Moscow Times

U.S. Ambassador Michael McFaul on Thursday suggested that his work schedule was being leaked to the media after journalists from a pro-Kremlin TV channel showed up at a meeting he attended with a human rights activist in Moscow.

Footage posted on the NTV website shows journalists approaching McFaul as he exited a car Thursday afternoon outside the office of the For Human Rights group headed by veteran activist Lev Ponomarev.

After answering repeated questions, the U.S. ambassador appeared to become irritated and accused NTV of trailing him everywhere he went.

"Your ambassador in our country always goes around without this disrupting his work," McFaul said, speaking in Russian. "Yet you're always at my house. That's interesting. Aren't you ashamed?"

Later, writing on Twitter, McFaul suggested that his schedule was being leaked and implied

that he thought his e-mail was being read and his phone calls listened to.

"Everywhere I go NTV is there. Wonder who gives them my calendar? They wouldn't tell me," he wrote. "Press has right to film me anywhere. But do they have a right to read my e-mail and listen to my phone?"

An NTV spokesperson told Interfax that it was no surprise that the channel knew McFaul's schedule, since they have "a wide network of informers." The spokesperson said journalists dispatched to interview him were gathering footage for the channel's archive.

NTV, which is owned by the Kremlin-friendly Gazprom Media holding, is known for its exposés on opposition groups that use spliced-together clips. Earlier this month, the channel earned opposition wrath for a program called "Anatomy of Protest" that accused opposition demonstrators of taking money from the U.S. government in exchange for attending rallies.

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