



Money laundering and narcotics trafficking charges have been lodged against Bitcoin-based online marketplace Silk Road with arrests made in San Francisco.

For members interested they can view a copy of the [criminal complaint against Ross W. Ulbricht](#) and the allegations made.

In addition to the charges above, there is also an allegation of a murder. In fact the FBI is currently claiming that there was an actual murder committed. The complaint alleges that Ulbricht had paid money to kill a blackmailer who claimed to have an extensive list of Silk Road sellers and buyers. However that is not part of the current criminal charges - the reason for this is simple (a) the murder would have been committed in Canada and (b) Canadian authorities don't seem to have a record of the victim.

Whether or not there turns out to have been a murder remains to be seen but the part about blackmail is central to any broader discussion of Bitcoin or other virtual currencies. Think about it for a second. The accusation that someone was able to get a list of Bitcoin users at all undermines Bitcoin's very reason for existence.

Members should read between the lines - this only highlights how using an ostensibly untraceable currency is an invitation to criminals and potential blackmailers should they obtain information which in turn threatens the very existence of such entities.

Moreover any inefficient policing of such alternative financial monetary systems is, I feel, absolutely the ultimate magnet for anyone, including official bodies, that may benefit from the discrediting of any such alternative monetary scheme which they may feel is a genuine threat to the existing status quo – being the regulated ‘big brother’ government controlled systems. Food for thought.

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