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US Blocking Investigation of Afghan Massacre, Bales's Lawyer Says

By [John Glaser](#)

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The lawyer defending the U.S. soldier accused of murdering 17 Afghan civilians said on Friday [U.S. authorities are blocking his ability to investigate the incident.](#)



“We are facing an almost complete information blackout from the government which is having a devastating effect on our ability to investigate the charges preferred against our client,” said John Henry Browne, who is defending the accused Staff Sgt. Robert Bales.

Staff Sgt. Robert Bales has been charged with murdering eight adults and nine children in cold blood. But the official story – that he left his base to kill only once and that he acted alone – [has been challenged by eyewitnesses and other Afghan villagers](#).

The U.S. military has claimed that there is [no access to the crime scene for security reasons](#), but recent [excursions by journalists](#) seeking to view the evidence and interview the eyewitnesses and victims' surviving family members belie those excuses.

Brown claims American authorities are trying to prevent him from investigating by denying access and letting the witnesses scatter without a way to contact them again. "When we tried to interview the injured civilians being treated at Kandahar Hospital we were denied access and told to coordinate with the prosecution team," said Browne.

"The next day the prosecution team interviewed the civilian injured. We found out shortly after the prosecution interviews of the injured civilians that the civilians were all released from the hospital and there was no contact information for them," the statement said.