

Assange & Sweden

Miscellaneous Information: Part 4

8 August 2011 – 30 juni 2012

This is a somewhat random collection of news clippings and other items relating to accusations of sexual misconduct that have been made against Julian Assange by Swedish authorities. Much of the material is in Swedish, but I believe that at least half is in English.

The quality and reliability of the various items vary widely. In some places I have added clarifications, warnings, etc. [*in italics, within square brackets and initialed--A.B.*]. But there is nothing systematic about that, either, and everything in this document should be interpreted with due caution.

Questions and comments regarding any of the information included here are welcome and may be addressed to me via e-mail at: editor@nnn.se

– Al Burke
Nordic News Network

Links to other parts of the series

*Documents in PDF format
Require Adobe Reader or similar program*

Part 1: 14 August 2010 – 16 December 2010
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case1.pdf

Part 2: 17 December 2011 – 17 February 2011
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case2.pdf

Part 3: 20 February 2011 – 17 July 2011
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf

Part 5: 1 July 2012 – 27 October 2012
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case5.pdf

For more and better-organized information:

www.nnn.se/nordic/assange.htm

Subject: Long overdue court update

Date: 8 Aug. 2011

From: Sunshine Press (WikiLeaks)

Dear close friends and ardent supporters:

We apologise that we have not been in touch regarding the appeal hearing last month but below is a summary of what happened.

Appeal Hearing before the High Court, 12 and 13 July 2011

Gareth Peirce, Ben Emmerson QC, and Mark Summers for Julian Assange (appellant); Claire Montgomery QC respondent (for the Swedish prosecution), before judges Thomas and Ousley.

Summary: Julian Assange's appeal was held at the High Court in London on 12 and 13 July. The date of the judgment has not been announced. It may be handed down in the first week of August at the earliest—but it is more likely that it will be delivered in September/October. If Julian Assange's team wins the appeal, the prosecutor will appeal the decision, and vice versa.

In the appeal, Counsel for Julian Assange (appellant) successfully drew attention to:

- The discrepancy between the EAW and the statement by the complainants written by the police;
- The fact that the complainants did not go to the police to press charges but to inquire about ways to compel Julian Assange to get tested for STDs after they both discovered they had slept with him;
- That SW had felt railroaded by the police and others around her when a criminal investigation started;
- That AA did not feel she had been subjected to abuse and had no intention of reporting the events (she had gone to the police station to accompany SW).

Emmerson QC managed to frame the discussion around the two women's statements, which showed clear consent. This forced Montgomery QC to go beyond the wording of the EAW and concede that the women had had consensual sex, although she later argued that they did not do so 'freely without coercion' (the discussion centered around the wording 'let him continue').

The press coverage of the appeal did not do Julian Assange's legal team justice. For the most part, the press reported more on Montgomery QC's reply, and focused on the sensationalist aspects of the case, quoting police narratives of interviews with friends of the complainants rather than the statements by the complainants themselves.

The press at times misquoted what was said in court. For example, the Guardian Live

feed reported Judge Ouseley as saying "It is important to note that Assange tore the condom, not that he used one that gave up the ghost mid-action". This has now been deleted from the original page, but the sentence has been repeatedly reproduced elsewhere as Guardian Live coverage of the case. Other tweets reported the sentence as "He did not use [a condom], to give up the ghost in the middle of the action! (laughter from the courtroom)" and "it is important for double criminality that Assange tore the condom and it wasn't one that gave up the ghost in the middle of the act". Taken out of context, the tweet by The Guardian correspondent appeared damning. In fact, Judge Ouseley was clarifying that the judges have to establish, for the purposes of double criminality, whether the description of conduct in the statement and the forensic tests (indicating 'wear and tear' of the condom) match the description in the EAW, which alleges that Julian Assange deliberately tore the condom.

Counsel for the appellant presented three submissions. The fourth (submission 3), a technical point on the dates of the allegation on the EAW was dropped after the prosecution submitted a different translation for one of the allegations of the EAW.

See <http://justice4assange.com> for updates and for detailed information of the appeal....

Over the past eleven months, all discussions on the 'Swedish case' have been centered on the allegations against Julian Assange and whether they are procedurally correct, not whether they are true. This is a terrible injustice as it means Julian Assange has still not been given any opportunity to respond to the allegations or give his version of events. Julian Assange's legal team is prevented by law from challenging the allegations on the facts of the case or through Julian Assange's own version of events. Instead, the legal team is limited to challenging the validity of the European Arrest Warrant and to showing how the EAW document does not match procedure or the allegations against him as presented by the prosecution.

The substance of the hearing

The first challenge to the validity of the European Arrest Warrant (EAW) was based on the grounds that the allegations on the arrest warrant did not reflect the description of the events as described in the complainants' statements (on which the EAW is based). Emmerson QC and Mark Summers for Julian Assange argued that the judges were not examining the evidence, but the material that gave rise to the EAW (the complainants' statements), and therefore this was admissible in the proceedings.

Emmerson QC argued that the EAW for Julian Assange is not a fair, proper and accurate description of the conduct alleged (a requirement under the Castillo case, in which Lord Justice Thomas was one of the judges). Emmerson QC contrasted the statements by the two complainants with the EAW's description of the conduct. From the statements there was no indication of lack of consent, or of a reasonable belief of lack of consent on the part of Julian Assange-- which are the necessary elements to criminality in sexual offences under English law.

The EAW on the other hand made references to violence and *mens rea* ('acting in a manner designed to violate her sexual integrity'), which cannot be inferred from the original complaint. According to Montgomery QC for the Swedish prosecution, the

original complaint indicated that the women did not 'freely' consent (i.e. did not actually consent)— and that the complaint satisfies the double criminality test.

With reference to the 'rape' allegation, the judges will have to determine if, as Montgomery QC argued, an alleged moment of lack of consent (as a result of not being fully awake) is sufficient to constitute 'rape' despite the fact that consent was present immediately before and immediately after the moment of penetration. Emmerson QC argued that this reasoning was 'crazy'— which has been repeatedly cited in the press.

In practice, if the courts find that the original complaint does not match the description of the allegations in the EAW, it allows the judges to apply the double criminality test to all four of the alleged crimes (including 'rape'). Montgomery, QC for the Swedish prosecution argued that it is not possible to 'untick' the 'rape' box in the EAW.

The judges will have to consider the applicability of the Castillo case to this case. They will also have to consider the greater implications of considering extraneous materials in EAW proceedings given that this will only apply to some European countries and not others given that in this case, Sweden has disclosed part of the material of the prosecution, while other EU countries may not disclose such information at any stage of the investigation (a consequence of having different systems of criminal procedure across the EU). The judges will also have to consider the implications of finding that there is double criminality, having looked at the original statement by the complainants, for the definition of consent under English law.

The second challenge to the validity of the EAW for Julian Assange was that the EAW has been issued for the purposes of questioning and not prosecution, which is contrary to the wording of the UK's Extradition Act. It was established that Julian Assange had not been charged. If the judges find in favor of Julian Assange's arguments, Submission 2 alone would invalidate the entire EAW.

Mark Summers, for Julian Assange, argued the Swedish prosecutor had acted disproportionately, because she had not availed herself of Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA), the standard inter-EU manner to conduct trans-state interviews. Summers argued that the judge had erred in February in finding that Julian Assange was 'accused' rather than suspected, given that the judge had failed to objectively find a point in the investigation which could be said to mark the threshold from 'suspect' to 'accused' (the Ismael test).

Montgomery QC argued that applying the Ismael test (i.e. English procedural standards) to European civil law jurisdictions to determine whether the threshold of 'accusation' has been crossed is inappropriate. Montgomery QC's argued that the judges must take a cosmopolitan approach even if technically, Julian Assange was not accused. Montgomery QC argued that the judges must follow the Asztalos case, which discouraged extrinsic factual or expert evidence except in exceptional EAW cases. Asztalos also allows for no (or very little) scope for argument on the purpose of the warrant.

The third ground for challenging the validity of the EAW (Submission 4) was that the Swedish prosecutor Marianne Ny is not a 'judicial authority' under the UK Extradition Act 2003. The wording of the act deliberately distinguished itself from the EU Framework Decision by inserting the word 'judicial'. This was reflected in Parliament

during discussions about the Extradition Act bill. Parliamentary discussions explicitly addressed the issue of who should be considered a judicial authority. Parliament intended 'a judicial authority' to be an independent and impartial member of the judiciary, which would exclude prosecutors and policemen.

Lord Justice Thomas said that if this argument was correct, it drives a substantial wedge into the application of the European arrest warrant. Emerson QC argued that the decision in the case of Enander, which the prosecution relies upon, was erroneous because it had gone against parliamentary intention by finding that the police were a judicial authority and were therefore authorised to issue an EAW. The court found in Enander that the UK Extradition Act 2003 must be interpreted in terms of the Framework Decision, which gives states the powers to designate their own issuing authorities of EAWs. Montgomery, QC, argued that in Sweden there is no clear separation between powers and that Sweden has designated the prosecutor an authority that can issue the warrant, and that the UK courts do not have the powers to nullify this.

Although we do not know when the judgement will come we imagine it will be when court re-opens in late September or early October.

*Kind regards,
The WikiLeaks Team*

Inappropriate flirting— the great modern sin

*Terence Blacker:
The Independent
9 August 2011*

Now at least we know why it has been difficult to find a hotel room on the Suffolk/Norfolk border recently. Apparently, there has been an invasion of women anxious to catch a glimpse— or more— of my neighbour Julian Assange, currently in residence at Ellingham Hall. "We definitely had a problem with groupies," his host, Vaughan Smith, has said. "Julian is hunted by a certain type of woman— and hunted is the right word— who can get quite pushy."

It is not only the groupies who have been giving Assange grief. In her new book, *The Revolution Will Be Digitised*, the eminent investigative journalist, Heather Brooke, tells the story of her disenchantment with the hero of the Wikileaks saga. Once she and Julian had seemed to be on the same side, fighting the good fight for free speech against the evil monsters of government and big business, but the more she saw of him, the less she liked him.

Their falling-out says more about current sexual politics than the ethics of leaking information. The way Brooke describes Assange, he sounds like a genuine misfit— paranoiac, ambitious, possibly delusional, borderline creepy, and with low standards of personal hygiene.



Heather Brooke

He is an unlikely target for gangs of groupies, one might think, and yet, according to Brooke, he has a certain magnetism. "When he had his eyes on me I had the sense he was looking into my soul," she writes. "The teenage girl in me swooned, but the investigative journalist concluded [*on what basis? – A.B.*] that the detached / intense thing was a technique."

In spite of the swooning, Brooke portrays Assange as a heavy-handed flirt who was "unaware of personal boundaries". Married and not the slightest bit interested, she found him rather too insistent. The final straw came when, having jokingly been referred to as a messiah, he asked her whether she would like to be his Mary Magdalene and bathe his feet at the cross. [*This is "flirting"? Did Ms. Brooke interpret it as a serious suggestion? – A.B.*]

It is not a cool chat-up line, that's for sure, but, reading the press serialisation of Brooke's book, I was surprised to find myself feeling slightly sorry for this odd, socially inept man. He may well have been guilty of a lumberingly clumsy come-on [*if that's what it was, which seems unlikely – A.B.*] but, in the world of grown-ups, is that such a frightful crime? In the context of the important debate surrounding the leaking of confidential, high-level information, is not the story of how a man flirted with a woman not something of a distraction?

As the person who set in motion the exposé of MPs' misuse of allowances and doggedly saw it through to the end, Heather Brooke is clearly as tough and resolute a journalist as one would wish to find. She is certainly capable of looking after herself.

Yet, like others before her, she has ended up playing the vulnerable-woman card. In this age of empathy, inappropriateness has become one of the great modern sins, and flirtation is regularly confused with something altogether more serious. It is as if we now understood that, when a man engages in ill-considered banter with a woman, that is, by its nature, an act of aggression.

Employment courts are kept busy by such cases, and the press love to report them. Last week, we heard how a managing director on a salary of £90,000 took her chairman to court for calling her a "sexy nurse". She lost.

It is easy, particularly when high-profile rape cases (including Assange's) are in the news, to conflate flirtation and sexual aggression and create a myth of villains and victims, but it helps no one, least of all women.

It's done: bruised egos lead to the release of uncensored WikiLeaks cables

Bernard Keane

Crikey

1 September 2011

The full, unredacted set of WikiLeaks cables is now available online and in readable form, courtesy of a three-way clash of egos between Julian Assange, disgruntled ex-WikiLeaks volunteer Daniel Domscheit-Berg and the Guardian's senior journalists.

The release places in potentially grave danger US diplomatic sources whose names have been removed from the publicly released cables.

How? A document containing the full set of over a quarter of a million cables was placed online in encrypted form late last year. In what circumstances is unclear — according to different sources, it was done either by Julian Assange himself or, it now seems more likely, posted unwittingly by a WikiLeaks supporter, after material taken by Domscheit-Berg was returned to WikiLeaks. By that time, full unencrypted sets of the cables had already been passed by WikiLeaks to the The Guardian, which passed them to The New York Times against Assange's wishes.

In any event, the online material at that point was unreadable without a password. The problem was, the password was made available, by none other than The Guardian's David Leigh, in his book released in February this year co-written with Luke Harding, *WikiLeaks: Inside Julian Assange's War on Secrecy*. An extract from the book, which was published after the encrypted material had gone online:

Eventually, Assange capitulated. Late at night, after a two-hour debate, he started the process on one of his little netbooks that would enable Leigh to download the entire tranche of cables. The Guardian journalist had to set up the PGP encryption system on his laptop at home across the other side of London. Then he could feed in a password. Assange wrote down on a scrap of paper:

CollectionOfHistorySince_1966_ToThe_PresentDay#

"That's the password," he said. "But you have to add one extra word when you type it in. You have to put in the word 'Diplomatic' before the word 'History' Can you remember that?" "I can remember that." Leigh set off home, and successfully installed the PGP software.

Leigh thus, as part of his effort to cash in on his once-intense but by then-soured relationship with Assange, had revealed the key to decrypting the entire set of cables that had been available online.

However, it has taken an extended period for people to link up the material that is available, with the key. Enter Daniel Domscheit-Berg, whose “Open Leaks” project has flamed out spectacularly in recent weeks. According to Der Spiegel, someone from Domscheit-Berg’s group — which narrows the suspects very rapidly — has in recent days been drawing attention to the connection between the file online — long since mirrored and distributed beyond hope of retrieval — and the password.

The vast irony of the breach is that for over a year, WikiLeaks has been accused by sections of the media, governments and foreign policy wonks of placing informants and sources in danger by releasing the cables, in contrast to the “responsible” handling of leaked material by the mainstream media . The New York Times’s Bill Keller actually boasted of lengthy meetings with the State Department to agree which cables his paper would release. Now, it turns out, it was the mainstream media itself that was responsible for distributing the magic password that may well place lives at risk.

This has sparked a remarkable round of recriminations. WikiLeaks — presumably Julian Assange, although it’s unsigned — has launched an extended spray at The Guardian, Leigh and his editor Alan Rusbridger for the breach, and accused The Guardian (again) of breaching the security conditions WikiLeaks placed on the material. WikiLeaks also says it immediately contacted human rights organisations and the State Department to advise of the breach, and to establish whether the State Department’s source notification program — put in place when the cables were first released last year — had contacted everyone identified as being at risk if their identities were revealed (bizarrely, its action of contacting the State Department was misrepresented by diehard WikiLeaks opponent and US apologist Michael Fullilove as WikiLeaks complaining to the Americans that it had been “hacked”). WikiLeaks also says the breach was behind its sudden, dramatic surge in cables release, which has seen thousands of cables released in the last few days.

In response, The Guardian has rejected all responsibility, in a piece by former WikiLeaks employee-turned-critic James Ball. The Guardian itself released a statement:

Our book about WikiLeaks was published last February. It contained a password, but no details of the location of the files, and we were told it was a temporary password which would expire and be deleted in a matter of hours. “It was a meaningless piece of information to anyone except the person(s) who created the database. No concerns were expressed when the book was published and if anyone at WikiLeaks had thought this compromised security they have had seven months to remove the files. That they didn’t do so clearly shows the problem was not caused by the Guardian’s book.”

However, The Guardian seems unaware that it would be impossible to “remove the files” once they had been mirrored and made available as a torrent, as if data could simply be pulled back off the internet by the body first posting it regardless of what others had subsequently done with it.

Shortly before deadline, Wikileaks was conducting a global consultation to determine if it should release the unredacted cables itself, with nearly all opinion favouring release.

The leak is the result of the vast egos involved in the WikiLeaks saga and the deep distrust, not to say visceral loathing, that has replaced once close relationships between the fractious Assange and WikiLeaks staff and external collaborators (however much they would reject the term) such as Leigh and his Guardian colleagues. And the latter appear to have preferred big-noting themselves with “meaningless pieces of information” to protecting potentially grave source material as closely as possible.

[The key question remains: Why did Leigh and Harding publish the password in their book, and without checking first with Assange? — A.B.]

Comments at: <http://www.crikey.com.au/2011/09/01/its-done-bruised-egos-lead-to-the-release-of-uncensored-wikileaks-cables>

What drives Guardianistas so crazy about matters Assange?

*Guy Rundle
Crikey
14 September 2011*

So you thought the WikiLeaks saga couldn't get any stranger, more convoluted or more ridiculous in juxtaposing stories of world import with petty absurdity? Think again. In what must surely be the last part of the final act of The Guardian's tortured relationship with the organisation, chief reporter David Leigh has been mounting a desperate rearguard action against charges that he bears major responsibility for the availability of 250,000 unredacted diplomatic cables — and, it would seem, losing. There was also a sideshow featuring investigative journalist Nick Davies, your correspondent and an errant glass of wine.

As always, these aren't the major stories — they're the ones coming out of the total cable dump, which is now providing a seventh wave of major news stories (credited and otherwise), since the Afghan logs were released last year. But WikiLeaks becomes the story, not only because of legitimate questions about the ethics of whistleblowing, but because it's an easier story to tell — a simple narrative, limited number of characters, and it fits into an easier story (idealism gone awry) than messy stuff about states, wars, secrets, etc.

My colleague Keane covered the first part of this latest twist in the tale, but a quick recap — nearly two weeks ago WikiLeaks released all 250,000 cables in an unredacted form from the “Cablegate” archive, claiming that an interview given by former WikiLeaks member Daniel Domscheit-Berg had alerted people to the presence on the net of complete copies of the file, WikiLeaks also noted that the files could be opened by a password published in February this year, by Guardian journalists David Leigh and Luke Harding in their insider book on Cablegate. WikiLeaks said that it had known of this security breach for months, but had kept silent about it — now that it was revealed, access to the cables needed to be as widespread as possible.

WikiLeaks's five former mainstream media partners condemned the move, and David Leigh jumped in on Twitter, noting:



@davidleigh3

David Leigh

No member of the public read the unredacted cables until #Assange deliberately surfaced them this week. Why has he done it? I despair

Leigh's defence was useful because it put the different approaches of WikiLeaks and the left-liberal mainstream media in sharp relief. After all, the whole WikiLeaks argument has always been that conspiracies exist via an imbalance of levels of knowledge and connection between the inside and outside of the conspiracy. With Domscheit-Berg's revelations, and the extant password, attentive insider networks — journos, activists, and of course, security services — could access the files.

Far better, their argument ran, to let everyone have access, and equalise information levels. Leigh's tweet appears to suggest that the worst thing that could happen would be that "the public" would get hold of them. No! Not ... the public!

That's not completely fair — Leigh and others allege that WikiLeaks's release is unnecessary, designed to embarrass Domscheit-Berg, and that Assange had always intended to release the unredacted cables in any case. They maintain that the fault lies with Assange for leaving the files online, using the same password, and not informing them of the release.

But last week, that argument came under attack, when *The Economist* broke ranks, and made the simple point against Leigh: "Mr Assange's file management looks sloppy, but Mr Leigh's blunder seems bigger. Since digital data is easily copied, safeguarding passwords is more important than secreting files."

Leigh responded to this, and a couple of early commenters, on the comments string almost immediately:

david leigh wrote:

Sep 8th 2011 5:49 GMT

It's easy to be anonymous, act knowing, and defame me. But your facts are wrong. The only person who published the raw US cables was Assange. No other website did. He did so because of a spat with rival Daniel Domscheit-Berg, not because of the Guardian book. He was even trying to persuade the Guardian editor to work again with him a couple of weeks ago, far from complaining of any imaginary password "blunder". We have a tape of that meeting. Nothing in our

book enabled the cables to be published and five news organisations, ours included, have condemned Assange's reckless move. Whoever you are, you might check with me next time you want to throw around such uninformed remarks.

Following this, numerous commentators sought to correct Leigh, especially regarding his claim that the book did not allow the cables to be "published". Since they were only "published" when decrypted using Leigh's password, this was clearly in error —and one commenter even provided a log of users searching for, finding and decrypting the cable.

Three days later, Leigh threw in the towel:

david leigh wrote:

Sep 10th 2011 8:13 GMT

Just to clear up a couple of factual points.

Yes, I understand the archive with z.gpg somewhere in it was posted by Assange or his friends in an obscure location around 7 December 2010...

... Obviously, I wish now I hadn't published the full password in the book. It would have been easy to alter, and that would have avoided all these false allegations. But I was too trusting of what Assange told me.

Strange days indeed, but they got stranger for this correspondent that Wednesday, when attending the launch of Heather Brooke's new book *The Revolution Will Be Digitised*. I was there by chance, having run into Heather — well-known as the journo who instigated the UK parliamentary expenses scandal — in the street on her way to the launch, a block from my flat...

Brooke was closely associated with the Guardian team, and my relations with their star reporter Nick Davies was not good. In mid-December 2010, Davies had written a report of the s-x crime allegations against Assange, based on a translation of the leaked Swedish police file. When I obtained a copy of the same report, I came to the conclusion that Davies' article — which had become the English version of record — had not conveyed the full contradiction and ambiguity of the police report. [*This is far too generous. Davies' account is grossly distorted.* — A.B.] After I wrote a passing mention in Crikey of this matter, Nick raised a hue and cry, and we had met at a pub to talk through our differing views of the matter. Later, when I informed him by email that I continued to disagree with his version of events, he was not pleased — and when I published a long critical account in *The Monthly*, he was, to say the least, extremely upset (and I suspect he is yet to see the fuller version in the April print edition of *Counterpunch*).

So, having grabbed a wine and spotted Nick's white halo in the crowd, I was prepared for a bit of froideur — but when I turned around from saying hi to a Spiked / royal correspondent pal, Nick was already barrelling up to me.

"Oh, hi Ni —".

“You c — t, Rundle. Why don’t you f — k off. No one wants you here.”

“Well I’m invite — .”

“Oh you just bailed up Heather in the street. F-ck off, you c-nt. You’re the worst journalist I’ve ever met.”

We stood at an impasse, for an interminable minute, with Nick saying “go on, f-ck off, c-nt” every 10 seconds or so.

After a little more of this, he ambled back to the Guardianista corner. Heather gave her speech, the book was launched, and I made to leave. As I said a brief goodbye to Private Eye’s Francis Wheen, Davies spotted me again and approached Wheen.

“Look, this is the c-nt I’ve been telling you about,” he said to Wheen.

“Calm down, Nick,” said Francis.

“But he’s an absolute c-nt — OK step aside, you c-nt,” he said, turning to me.

“Well I will — to leave,” I said.

“OK then, take that,” he said, launching half a glass of dry white straight at me.

The next day’s Evening Standard would say that it was a good shot. It was indeed, and the booze slid straight into my eye. I made a remark about going to change my contact lenses, and went home. It also contained the inaccurate accusation that The Monthly had published a “retraction” of my article (the online version was taken down, without prejudice).

OK, that’s when it got meta-weird. The last thing I had done was to give Nick my exact address in Frith Street — so that he could sue me for libel as he had expressed a wish to do, and The Guardian’s copy of the police report, and interpretation, could be compared with mine in open court (oh, that’s right — you didn’t retain a copy of the report, did you guys?).

Three quarters of an hour later, a familiar voice came drifting up from the street to our first-floor window. Outside my flat, Davies was pacing back and forth, barking into a mobile phone.

Back and forth he went on the pavement for 10 minutes, before joining his companion in the Thai restaurant directly opposite. What was this? Coincidence? He knew I lived here, and Soho has 9000 restaurants. A stake-out, perhaps, with chicken green curry? Who knew? Radio Girl and I watched, fascinated for a while, as he talked non-stop at his friend, all the way up to Newsnight. Then they wandered up Frith Street.

Fun times, though I couldn’t read or write for two days. But what on earth drives the Guardianistas so crazy about matters Assange? Even Heather, a journalist I have a great respect for, argued in her speech that the digital revolution had been “destroyed by one man — Julian Assange”. Really? He’s that powerful? Or the people around him that weak? That’s not really an analysis, it’s a Dilbert cartoon — “Assange broke the internet”.

Ditto Davies, Leigh — who has spent months baiting Assange on Twitter — and others who can't think straight, even when they have legitimate criticisms of Assange. Those who found him impossible to work with simply moved on. Those who became entranced by him, and infused with his radical vision find him a little hard to get over. When you can't deal with that, you become lost for words, and before you know it, you're on the pavement striking out with whatever's to hand.

Comments at: <http://www.crikey.com.au/2011/09/14/rundle-what-drives-guardianistas-so-crazy-about-matters-assange/>

Aftonbladet: 2011-09-16

OTV "Scarlett är världens vackraste kvinna, jag vill inte se henne naken"
Diskussionen som nästan skapar bråk. **Se bilderna Laul inte vill se**

Translation: "Scarlett [Johanson] is the most beautiful woman in the world. I don't want to see her naked. See the photos that Laul doesn't want to see."

AB: 2011-09-24

Samhällets fiende

Dan Josefsson om Julian Assange: En ensam och trasig nyliberal som vill riva sönder demokratin

Förra året fick Wikileaks ledare Julian Assange kritik från de egna leden för sin despotiska ledarstil. Han svarade med att sparka kritikerna. En av dem, en 25-årig volontär från Island, fick följande avskedsord via en krypterad chatt:

"Jag är denna organisations hjärta och själ, dess grundare, filosof, talesperson, ursprungliga kodare, finansiär och allt annat. Om du har problem med mig, piss off."

Utbrottet tycks onekligen bekräfta att det ligger något i kritiken mot Assange som chef. Men få tycks ha funderat över att han kallar sig filosof. Vilken är filosofin bakom Wikileaks?

Jag borde veta det. Redan 2008 skrev jag entusiastiskt om Wikileaks som ett "fascinerande och nyskapande projekt för demokrati och yttrandefrihet" (29 feb 2008). Ett par år senare träffade jag Julian Assange och övervägde att jobba för organisationen. I dag måste jag generat erkänna att jag inte förstod vilket syfte Assange faktiskt har med organisationen.

Julian Assange har hjältestatus som kompromisslös granskare av makten. Men maktgranskning är inte något han har hittat på [*och det har han inte heller sagt — A.B.*]. Publicering av hemligstämplat material från hemliga läckor har tvärtom varit en del av journalistiken sedan den blev "undersökande" på 1970-talet. Wikileaks har bidragit

med tekniska lösningar för att rationalisera själva insamlandet av läckt information. Men det är inte mycket till filosofi, och tekniken kan teoretiskt sett vilken organisation som helst använda i dag. Avhoppare från Wikileaks konstruerar redan egna system och jag ser fram emot fler viktiga avslöjanden.

Julian Assanges speciella filosofi måste sökas någon annanstans än i en okuvlig vilja att granska makten. Letandet kan börja i manifestet *Conspiracy as Governance* (Konspirationen som styrelseform) som han skrev 2006, samma år som Wikileaks grundades. Här framgår att Assange ser staten i sig som en ondskefull konspiration.

Enligt manifestet överlever den onda staten tack vare ett omfattande hemlighetsmakeri, vars enda syfte är att gynna de individer som står i statens tjänst. Om statens möjligheter att ha hemligheter slås sönder kollapsar konspirationen— det vill säga staten. Ett nytt samhälle kan då uppstå där folkets strävan efter "sanning, kärlek och självförverkligande" inte längre kan nedtrampas. Det låter vackert, men bara en drömmare kan tro att nationer kan administreras enbart genom kärlek. [*Kanske, men det låter inte som någon nyliberal som jag någonsin hört talas om. — A.B.*]

Assange gör ingen distinktion mellan diktaturer och demokratier, och det har sin förklaring. Robert Manne, professor i statsvetenskap i Melbourne, har påpekat att Assange åren 1994–2003 var djupt involverad i Cypherpunk-rörelsen (*The Monthly*, mars 2011). Det var en liten grupp extrema högerlibertarianer som utvecklade sin filosofi på en mejlinglista. Där betraktades staten som en dödsfiende och man ville använda kryptering för att hindra staten från att se vad individer sysslar med. Cypherpunkare skissade till exempel på en elektronisk, krypterad valuta som skulle göra alla ekonomiska transaktioner osynliga och därmed omöjliggöra beskattning. Cypherpunkarnas ville tvinga staten på knä och drömde om ett samhälle utan statsmakt, helt byggd på oreglerad *laissez faire*-kapitalism. Tonen var elitistisk, sexistisk och djupt antidemokratisk.

Förklaringen till att Julian Assange drogs till Cypherpunk-rörelsen finns i hans förflutna. Den i dag 41-årige Assange har publicerat hela två självbiografier. Den första, *Underground*, kom 1997. Den andra, *Julian Assange: The unauthorised autobiography* kom ut i torsdags. Denna är visserligen snarare ett utkast till självbiografi. Julian Assange hamnade i en våldsam konflikt med förlaget Canongate och vägrade skriva färdigt boken trots att han fått flera miljoner i förskott. Förlaget svarade med att släppa den halvfärdiga boken mot hans vilja.

När jag kombinerar informationen i böckerna med intervjuer och blogginlägg framträder en tydlig bild. Detta är en man som privat befunnit sig i krig med australiensiska staten i nästan hela sitt liv.

Julians mamma var vänsteraktivist. I början av 1970-talet var hon inblandad i att avslöja Englands hemliga kärnvapenprover i Australien. Polisen ska då ha hotat att ta ifrån henne vårdnaden om Julian, som var fyra år gammal, om hon inte upphörde med sin aktivism. Enligt Julian Assange berättades historien om statens hot ofta under hans uppväxt, och han tog djupt intryck.

När Assange var nio år blev hans mamma tillsammans med en man som misshandlade henne. Från 11 till 16 års ålder tvingades Julian Assange tillsammans med sin mor leva gömd och på flykt undan kvinnomisshandlaren. Även detta satte spår. I nya boken

skriver Assange att mannen var medlem i en sekt som stal barn, och att sekten infiltrerat australiensiska myndigheter. På så vis ska förföljaren ha fått tips om var i landet Julian Assange och hans mamma gömde sig. Mamman avfärdar den teorin i en intervju i The New Yorker (7 juni 2010). Men Julian Assange är alltså ändå övertygad om att monstret från hans barndom var lierad med australiensiska staten.

Som tonåring fick Julian Assange en dator och blev en skicklig hacker. Han gifte sig som 18-åring och fick en son. Två år senare slog polisen till, han åtalades för datorintrång och dömdes till böter. Samtidigt lämnade hustrun honom och tog sonen med sig. Julian Assange startade en rättsprocess för att få ensam vårdnad om barnet. Det hela utvecklas till en ursinnig och mycket långvarig kamp mellan Julian Assange och staten. Tillsammans med sin mamma byggde han upp en liten aktivistgrupp som försökte förmå tjänstemän att anonymt läcka information som kunde stärka Assanges chanser att vinna processen. Det var som en förlaga till Wikileaks.

Efter flera års strid tvingades Assange 1999 acceptera delad vårdnad. Hans mamma beskriver hur dåligt både hon och Julian mådde: "Det var som att komma tillbaka från ett krig." (The New Yorker 7 juni 2010). I samma intervju berättar hon att Julian Assanges bruna hår efter sista rättegångsförhandlingen bleknade till vitt. Hon säger sig vara övertygad om att hennes son än i dag lider av "obehandlad posttraumatisk stress".

Det är förståeligt att Julian Assange ogillar staten. Han har råkat illa ut och mycket talar för att prövningarna gjort honom till en typisk rättshaverist, övertygad om att staten är en enda stor konspiration.

I ett blogginlägg skrivet 2006 säger han sig känna stark samhörighet med Aleksandr Solzjenitsyn och dennes dissidentvänner i Stalins arbetsläger: "Hur nära löper inte parallellerna till mina egna äventyr!" Precis som Solzjenitsyn tycker sig Assange ha förmågan att genomskåda fernissan av lögnen och "se staten som den verkliga är!" (17 juli 2006).

Josef Stalin skickade Solzjenitsyn till Gulag. En domstol i Australien gav Julian Assange delad vårdnad om ett barn. En viss skillnad kan tyckas, men för Julian Assange är övergreppen jämförbara. Han ser världen i svartvitt. [*Han ser "paralleller" enligt citatet ovan – ett tänkesätt som få journalister avstår från. Josefssons kolleger hos Aftonbladet har t.ex. sett paralleller mellan Assange och Roman Polanski.--A.B.*]

När Julian Assange startade Wikileaks 2006 gjorde han det med hjälp av kompisar från Cypherpunk-gruppen. Fem år senare är han vänsterns nya stjärna. "Statliga hemligheter är till sin natur korrumpierande", deklarerar han. "Staten har ingen rätt att ha hemligheter" (Frontline 4 april 2011).

Vi är få som reflekterar över det faktum att staten i demokratiska länder har ett mandat att ha vissa hemligheter. Detta mandat missbrukas förvisso ofta. Men lösningen kan inte vara att allt som staten gör och vet ska offentliggöras i realtid. Hur skulle myndigheterna då kunna slåss mot organiserad brottslighet och skattefiffel? Hur skulle välfärdsstaten kunna skydda sina svagaste medborgare om alla statens uppgifter var offentliga?

Frihetskämpar som Assange själv ska dock få ha hemligheter. Julian Assange är krypteringsexpert och Wikileaks en orgie i krypterad kommunikation, täcknamn och smygande [*av uppenbara skäl hade man trott – A.B.*].

Denna dubbla standard skapar ett logiskt problem. Rebellerna i en diktatur kan med Julian Assanges välsignelse starta en revolt och störta diktatorn. Men om man sedan tar sig för att forma en demokratisk stat så kommer Julian Assange omedelbart att göra sitt bästa för att avslöja den nybildade statens hemligheter. Går det överhuvudtaget att bygga en stat under sådana omständigheter? Varför överhuvudtaget stödja revolten från första början om målet— att bilda regering— ses som något per definition ondskefullt? [*Stämmer inte enligt ovan: "Ett nytt samhälle kan då uppstå där folkets strävan efter 'sanning, kärlek och självförverkligande' inte längre kan nedtrampas."* Dessutom: Vem skall bestämma vilka hemligheter är absolut nödvändiga och vilka får avslöjas-- Dan Josefsson, Carl Bildt, Hillary Clinton...? — A.B.]

Nyligen lade Julian Assange ut 250.000 telegram från USA:s utrikesdepartement på nätet utan föregående granskning eller strykning av sådan information som det inte är etiskt försvarbart att publicera. Många blev besvikna, men sett i ljuset av Assanges mål att sabotera statens arbete oavsett vad den sysslar med så är manövern inte förvånande. [*Många blir säkert besvikna på att Dan Josefsson här underlåter att nämna att det var The Guardians David Leigh m.fl. som först gjorde dessa telegram tillgängliga.* — A.B.]

Ett resultat blev att The New York Times, El País, The Guardian, Le Monde och Der Spiegel tog sin hand ifrån Julian Assange. Tidningarna har hjälpt till att källkritiskt och journalistiskt bearbeta och publicera en mindre del av telegrammen, men i ett uttalande säger man att publiceringen av det obearbetade materialet är djupt oansvarigt. The Guardian, en av Wikileaks äldsta samarbetspartners, skriver att hela Wikileaks har "reducerats till språkrör för en enskild individ med problem— emellanåt briljant, men allt mer labil och oberäknelig" (2 sept 2011). The Guardian tycker att en i grunden god idé fuskas bort. [*The Guardian är knappast någon opartisk källa eller etisk förebild i detta sammanhang. Det gäller även The New York Times.* — A.B.]

Jag skulle snarare säga att det är Wikileaks idé som är problemet.

Vi är många som längtar efter en rättvisare värld. Julian Assange dök upp från ingenstans och lovade att fixa en revolution [???]. Jag blev själv så fascinerad av materialet Assange fick fram att jag vägrade se honom för vad han är: En ensam och trasig libertarian som vill riva ner det demokratiska samhälle som vi, hur hopplöst svår uppgiften än ibland kan verka, ändå måste försöka bygga tillsammans.

• *Dan Josefsson*

* * *

Brief response to a correspondent's request for my (A.B.) reaction to Josefsson's analysis:

This piece is a bit more subtle than most other journalistic attacks against Assange, but it can hardly be characterized as "fair and balanced". For example:

• "Jag är denna organisations hjärta och själ, dess grundare, filosof, talesperson, ursprungliga kodare, finansör och allt annat. Om du har problem med mig, piss off."

This isolated quote certainly sounds dreadful, and there is much else to indicate that Assange is not the most socially competent soul on the planet. According to the recently published unauthorized autobiography, he has himself acknowledged that he has "a touch of autism, like all hackers" (vaguely recalled from *The Independent*).

So the quoted outburst is not at all surprising. But what is the context? What did the "25-årig volontär från Island" say / write to Assange? What is the complete text, i.e. before and after the incriminating quote? How much stress was Assange under at the time? Has Josefsson ever experienced anything like the stress to which Assange has been subjected and, if not, can he be certain of how he would react under similar conditions? Etc., etc.

If Josefsson were interested in presenting a nuanced picture, he might also have noted that there are still plenty of volunteers slaving away on WikiLeaks (all masochists, perhaps?) and that another Icelander has been loyally and effectively holding the fort during Assange's semi-incarceration.

In short, the purpose of this quote is fairly obvious— to show Assange in the worst possible light, while ignoring the context and the less unsavoury aspects of Assange's personality to which many have attested.

- "Få tycks ha funderat över att han kallar sig filosof. Vilken är filosofin bakom Wikileaks?"

See, for example: "Conversation with Julian Assange" by Hans Ulrich Obrist in e-flux magazine, May 2011: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/232>

In this lengthy interview, Assange tries to explain the broader philosophical basis of his project. Whether or not he succeeds is something for the reader to decide. Among other things, he says: "There have been heroic acts that I have appreciated, or some systems of thought, but I think it's better to say that there are some people I had an intellectual rapport with, such as Werner Heisenberg and Niels Bohr. That comes when you're doing mathematics. The mathematics of Heisenberg and Bohr is a branch of natural philosophy. They developed a system or epistemology for understanding quantum mechanics, but encoded within this intellectual tradition are methods to think clearly about cause and effect."

- "Julian Assange har hjältestatus som kompromisslös granskare av makten. Men maktgranskning är inte något han har hittat på."

As far as I am aware, Assange has never claimed "hjaltestatus" for himself or claimed that "maktgranskning är något han har hittat på." This is the kind of cheap shot that journalistic and other critics typically fire off in lieu of valid argument. It's what is known as "creating a straw man".

- "Avhoppare från Wikileaks konstruerar redan egna system och jag ser fram emot fler viktiga avslöjanden."

Josefsson appears to be much more interested in those who have left the WikiLeaks project than in those who have remained. This is understandable, given the obvious purpose of Josefsson's piece (see above).

The most famous and frequently quoted of the defectors is of course Daniel Domscheit-Berg, whose motives and integrity are highly suspect. See for example "'I Doubt Domscheit-Berg's Integrity': Top German Hacker Slams OpenLeaks Founder", Spiegel Online, 15 Aug. 2011.

But Josefsson is clearly not interested in such aspects of the problem. For his purpose, it is convenient to assume that all those who have left WikiLeaks are correct in their criticisms, and that the only response of which Assange is capable is the nasty quote cited at the start of the article in order to set the stage for what is to follow.

I could go on, but prefer not to waste the time. The foregoing should suffice to convey my impression of Josefsson's attack.

Please note that I am definitely not asserting that Assange is a flawless human being who never makes a mistake. I am, however, mightily impressed by how well he has been able to continue functioning under enormous pressure. I doubt that Dan Josefsson or any other Swedish journalist could do as well. I know I couldn't.

Assange cares for no one but himself

Neither whistleblower nor journalist, the hacker is a menace

*Joan Smith
The Independent
25 September 2011*

Hacking has become one of the biggest stories of 2011, prompting so many arrests, police investigations and public inquiries that it's hard to keep track. The public has cheered on key players, including the actor Hugh Grant and the Labour MP Tom Watson, who have forced the scandal into the open. Strangely, there's another form of hacking, carried out using illegal methods and equally dubious in terms of morality, which millions of people actively support.

It has made an unlikely hero of the man who's become its public face, the Australian hacker Julian Assange, despite copious evidence of his paranoia, misogyny, political incoherence and all-round weirdness. Happily for those of us who have observed this ashen-faced celebrity-magnet with scepticism from the start, Assange has crowned a year of bad-tempered conflicts by falling out with himself and introducing to the language that novelty the "unauthorised autobiography". (I was thinking of writing my own autobiography but I've withdrawn co-operation from myself.)

There's a pleasing irony in the spectacle of someone who wanted to publish so much confidential information trying to suppress a book based on interviews he gave freely to a ghostwriter. But extracts published in *The Independent* reveal a man whose "struggle for justice through access to knowledge" co-exists with total insensitivity to other people and a profoundly irresponsible desire to make mischief. Early in his hacking career, Assange discovered how to get into the computers of vast corporations: "Turn off 20,000 phone lines in Buenos Aires? No problem."

Hugely amusing, no? Perhaps not if you lived in Buenos Aires, had a heart attack and couldn't call the emergency services. But I'm not convinced that consequences have ever been a major concern for Assange, who recently published 250,000 unredacted US diplomatic cables containing the names of confidential informants in Afghanistan and other countries. True to form, Assange blamed *The Guardian*, one of his media "partners" until they had a spectacular quarrel. But the limits of his commitment to human rights and democracy were exposed when he asked WikiLeaks' supporters to vote on Twitter for or against release of the cables. (Coming soon on Twitter, an important vote on whether I should have single or double espresso with my carrot cake.)

Assange's campaign for transparency has always sat oddly with his obsessive need for control. He isn't a whistleblower or a journalist, both of whom have to make fine

judgements (unless they've succumbed to the hacking scourge) about what the public is entitled to know. It's entirely right that abuses by the US military in Iraq, say, should be exposed. But the notion that diplomats should never have a confidential conversation is risible. Democratic governments need inside information about the regimes they deal with; they need secret negotiations to protect human rights activists and their own citizens, using intermediaries who might be at risk if their involvement were known.

Assange's mission to publish everything from diplomatic gossip to unflattering verdicts on foreign governments is no more justifiable, in moral terms, than blanket tabloid intrusion into private life. His claim to be the "good" hacker has been undermined by poor judgement and the monumental ego that emerges when he mocks his opponents in his autobiography: "They needed a villain with silver hair, some kind of cat-stroking nutcase bent on serial seduction and world domination."

Actually, he's right. That's very unfair to Assange. I've never seen a shred of evidence that the super-hacker likes cats.

Julian Assange: The Unauthorised Autobiography — review

An unfinished draft of his life story does the WikiLeaks founder no favours

*David Leigh
The Guardian
26 September 2011*

Marsupials are pouched animals, mostly from Australia, that give birth to their young in an unfinished state. What we have here is a weird marsupial hybrid. It's part Australian WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, and part Scottish novelist and ghostwriter Andrew O'Hagan. This mixed-up creature has given birth to an unfinished draft, dragged out of its pouch and published before its maturity under the wacky title *The Unauthorised Autobiography*. Assange hasn't really been well-served by his publisher's behaviour. It's the result of what seems to be a characteristic Assange imbroglio in which he will neither give back his £412,000 publisher's advance, nor deliver a finally approved manuscript. But the decision by Canongate's Jamie Byng to publish regardless, although understandable, has produced an unsatisfactory book.

The ghostwriter and his subject hadn't yet really gelled by the time of this draft. It's easy to see the fictionalising hand of O'Hagan in an early chapter about Assange's hippy boyhood in northern Queensland. It begins, soulfully: "For most people, childhood is a climate. In my case, it is perfectly hot and humid with nothing above us but blue sky ..." But a later section on the Aussie hacker's souring partnership with the journalists who were to print his leaked US secrets is much more raw. The opening reads like Assange sounding off verbatim on a bad day, in a sentence full of bile and misogyny: "Vanity in a newspaper man is like perfume on a whore: they use it to fend off a dark whiff of themselves." For by the time we reach this second half of the book, O'Hagan's mediating intelligence seems to have retreated, and the digital recorder is doing much of the work. Perhaps the ghost got weary, locked up in a chilly East Anglian winter with his monologuing subject, who is currently confined there on bail, fighting extradition on Swedish sex allegations.

The lack of a final edit does other disservices to Assange's story. The narrative stops too abruptly, before publication in the Guardian and the New York Times of the third and most important set of leaks he had acquired (the state department cables), and the subsequent legal pursuit of Assange on the sex complaints. It's padded out instead with unnecessary chunks of the cables themselves, which can be read elsewhere. The unresolved criminal allegations, inevitably, make him censor a defensive account of sex with two Swedish fans. It's all very well calling a woman "neurotic", but did he deliberately tear a condom as she alleged?

Furthermore, a nervous Canongate libel lawyer, no longer able presumably to rely on Assange as a future witness, appears to have simply chopped out chunks of detail when Assange abuses those he doesn't like. This censorship muddies what could have been a lively, if defamatory, narrative, and pointlessly withholds many of the names. I myself, for example, who clashed with Assange during the Guardian saga, and co-authored a book he didn't care for, am anonymised throughout, transparently enough, as "the news reporter". Yet Bill Keller, then editor of the New York Times and considered presumably to be libel-proof under US free-speech laws, remains relentlessly vituperated against under his own name.

A final fact-check would have removed a crop of stupid errors. It must have been a transcription mistake that turned Heather Brooke into "the 'Independent' journalist" rather than the independent journalist she is. And Oscar Wilde with his rent-boys was not "sleeping with panthers", he was feasting with panthers.

For all its drawbacks, the memoir does add some good detail to the increasingly well-trodden field of Assange studies (it's the fifth book so far). The passage in which he meets his biological father, a bohemian Sydney actor, for the first time in his 20s, is genuinely poignant: "I found myself getting sort of angry ... There on shelf after shelf were the exact same books as those I had bought and read myself ... If I had only known him, I might just have picked his books down from the shelf ... I was forced to make myself up as I went along."

And there's a telling section in which Assange, perhaps unwittingly, reveals why he seeks out unquestioning disciples, and quarrels with so many others: "Opponents past and present have the same essential weakness about them— first they want to use you, then they want to be you, then they want to snuff you out. It's a pattern that stretches in my life from toytown feds to hacks at the Guardian ... Usually it ends with these people enumerating one's personal faults, a shocking, ungrateful, unmanly effort, to be filed under despicable in my book ... I've been meeting [these people] all my life."

This seems to be a cry coming from a truly threatened personality, in fear of being overwhelmed and extinguished. People have criticised Assange for being preposterously grandiose and lashing out at imagined "enemies". Perhaps they should have been kinder, for there is clearly something else at work here.

It's a shame Assange couldn't get on with the Guardian. As he has the grace occasionally to recognise in this book, people there share some of his beliefs— free speech, investigative journalism, standing up to big corporations and murderous governments, the potentially liberating quality of the internet. And his idea for WikiLeaks provided an exhilarating addition to the world's journalistic possibilities. It was a neat tool— as an uncensorable global publisher of last resort, and as an electronic

outlet for leaking the new kinds of huge database the computer age is bringing into existence. But unmediated leaking on a random basis, even of gigabits of purloined documents, cannot ever revolutionise all the world's power relationships. There Assange shows, regrettably, that he is living in a fantasy world.

Behind his high-sounding talk of quantum mechanics and global conspiracies, there lies a more familiar and heartfelt cry: "If only people knew what was really going on, they'd do something about it!" One sympathises. But these very memoirs demonstrate the opposite. Nothing much happened after Assange threw back the curtain to reveal his sensationally leaked Baghdad helicopter gunship video, with US pilots mowing down Reuters employees and young children in a burst of incompetent cannon-fire. As Assange (or O'Hagan) concedes: "It vexes me when the world won't listen."

That was what forced him to accept an offer from some of the world's major newspapers to make sense of the rest of his material, publish it under the authority of their own names and grant him a share of the credibility slowly built up over 190 years of reputable reporting. Thanks to that imaginative transaction, he rocketed briefly to worldwide fame. These marsupial memoirs of his seem unlikely to increase his prospects of becoming the messiah of the information age. Maybe, sadly, even the reverse.



*David Leigh is the co-author of
WikiLeaks: Inside Julian Assange's War on Secrecy (Guardian Books)*

27 September 2011

Alan Rusbridger
Editor-in-Chief
The Guardian

The to-put-it-mildly thoroughly compromised David Leigh has been assigned to do yet another job on Julian Assange ("Julian Assange: The Unauthorised Autobiography", 2011-09-26).

What next— Tony Blair on George Galloway, Hillary Clinton on Hugo Chàvez, Emma Brockes and Nick Cohen on Noam Chomsky? (Oh, right: The last-named impropriety has already been committed.)

You and your ethically challenged associates seem determined to squander *The Guardian's* few remaining shreds of credibility on this issue-- if any in fact remain-- as you have previously done with regard to the Balkan wars, the problem of genocide, etc.

And for what purpose might that be?

Al Burke
Sweden

A Thought Police for the Internet Age: The Dangerous Cult of the Guardian

JONATHAN COOK
CounterPunch
September 28, 2011

There could be no better proof of the revolution— care of the internet— occurring in the accessibility of information and informed commentary than the reaction of our mainstream, corporate media.

For the first time, Western publics— or at least those who can afford a computer— have a way to bypass the gatekeepers of our democracies. Data our leaders once kept tightly under wraps can now be easily searched for, as can the analyses of those not paid to turn a blind eye to the constant and compelling evidence of Western hypocrisy. Wikileaks, in particular, has rapidly eroded the traditional hierarchical systems of information dissemination.

The media— at least the supposedly leftwing component of it— should be cheering on this revolution, if not directly enabling it. And yet, mostly they are trying to co-opt, tame or subvert it. Indeed, progressive broadcasters and writers increasingly use their platforms in the mainstream to discredit and ridicule the harbingers of the new age.

A good case study is the Guardian, considered the most leftwing newspaper in Britain and rapidly acquiring cult status in the United States, where many readers tend to assume they are getting access through its pages to unvarnished truth and the full range of critical thinking on the left.

Certainly, the Guardian includes some fine reporting and occasionally insightful commentary. Possibly because it is farther from the heart of empire, it is able to provide a partial antidote to the craven coverage of the corporate-owned media in the US.

Nonetheless, it would be unwise to believe that the Guardian is therefore a free market in progressive or dissident ideas on the left. In fact, quite the contrary: the paper strictly polices what can be said and who can say it in its pages, for cynical reasons we shall come to.

Until recently, it was quite possible for readers to be blissfully unaware that there were interesting or provocative writers and thinkers who were never mentioned in the

Guardian. And, before papers had online versions, the Guardian could always blame space constraints as grounds for not including a wider range of voices. That, of course, changed with the rise of the internet.

Early on, the Guardian saw the potential, as well as the threat, posed by this revolution. It responded by creating a seemingly free-for-all blog called Comment is Free to harness much of the raw energy unleashed by the internet. It recruited an army of mostly unpaid writers, activists and propagandists on both sides of the Atlantic to help brand itself as the epitome of democratic and pluralistic media.

From the start, however, Comment is Free was never quite as free— except in terms of the financial cost to the Guardian— as it appeared. Significant writers on the left, particularly those who were considered “beyond the pale” in the old media landscape, were denied access to this new “democratic” platform. Others, myself included, quickly found there were severe and seemingly inexplicable limits on what could be said on CiF (unrelated to issues of taste or libel).

None of this should matter. After all, there are many more places than CiF to publish and gain an audience. All over the web dissident writers are offering alternative analyses of current events, and drawing attention to the significance of information often ignored or sidelined by the corporate media. Rather than relish this competition, or resign itself to the emergence of real media pluralism, however, the Guardian reverted to type. It again became the left’s thought police.

This time, however, it could not ensure that the “challenging left” would simply go unheard. The internet rules out the option of silencing by exclusion. So instead, it appears, it is using its pages to smear those writers who, through their own provocative ideas and analyses, suggest the Guardian’s tameness.

The Guardian’s discrediting of the “left”— the left being a concept never defined by the paper’s writers— is far from taking place in a fair battle of ideas. Not least the Guardian is backed by the huge resources of its corporate owners. When it attacks dissident writers, they can rarely, if ever, find a platform of equal prominence to defend themselves. And the Guardian has proved itself more than reluctant to allow a proper right of reply in its pages to those it maligns.

But also, and most noticeably, it almost never engages with these dissident writers’ ideas. In popular terminology, it prefers to play the man, not the ball. Instead it creates labels, from the merely disparaging to the clearly defamatory, that push these writers and thinkers into the territory of the unconscionable.

A typical example of the Guardian’s new strategy was on show this week in an article in the print edition’s comment pages— also available online and a far more prestigious platform than CiF— in which the paper commissioned a socialist writer, Andy Newman, to argue that the Israeli Jewish musician Gilad Atzmon was part of an anti-semitic trend discernible on the left.

Jonathan Freedland, the paper’s star columnist and resident obsessive on anti-semitism, tweeted to his followers that the article was “important” because it was “urging the left to confront antisemitism in its ranks”.

I have no idea whether Atzmon has expressed anti-semitic views— and I am none the wiser after reading Newman’s piece. As is now typical in this new kind of Guardian character assassination, the article makes no effort to prove that Atzmon is anti-semitic or to show that there is any topical or pressing reason to bring up his presumed character flaw. (In passing, the article made a similar accusation of anti-semitism against Alison Weir of *If Americans Knew*, and against the Counterpunch website for publishing an article by her on Israel’s role in organ-trafficking.)

Atzmon has just published a book on Jewish identity, *The Wandering Who?*, that has garnered praise from respected figures such as Richard Falk, an emeritus law professor at Princeton, and John Mearsheimer, a distinguished politics professor at Chicago University. But Newman did not critique the book, nor did he quote from it. In fact, he showed no indication that he had read the book or knew anything about its contents.

Instead Newman began his piece, after praising Atzmon’s musicianship, with an assumptive reference to his “antisemitic writings”. There followed a few old quotes from Atzmon, long enough to be intriguing but too short and out of context to prove his anti-semitism— except presumably to the Guardian’s thought police and its most deferential readers.

The question left in any reasonable person’s mind is why dedicate limited commentary space in the paper to Atzmon? There was no suggestion of a newsworthy angle. And there was no case made to prove that Atzmon is actually anti-semitic. It was simply assumed as a fact.

Atzmon, even by his own reckoning, is a maverick figure who has a tendency to infuriate just about everyone with his provocative, and often ambiguous, pronouncements. But why single him out and then suggest that he represents a discernible and depraved trend among the left?

Nonetheless, the Guardian was happy to offer its imprimatur to Newman’s defamation of Atzmon, who was described as a conspiracy theorist “dripping with contempt for Jews”, despite an absence of substantiating evidence. Truly worthy of Pravda in its heyday.

The Atzmon article appeared on the same day the Guardian carried out a similar hatchet job, this time on Julian Assange, founder of Wikileaks. The paper published a book review of Assange’s “unauthorised autobiography” by the Guardian’s investigations editor, David Leigh.

That Leigh could be considered a reasonable choice for a review of the book— which he shamelessly pilloried— demonstrates quite how little the Guardian is prepared to abide by elementary principles of ethical journalism. Leigh has his own book on the Guardian’s involvement with Wikileaks and Assange currently battling it out for sales in the bookshops. He is hardly a disinterested party.

But also, and more importantly, Leigh is clearly not dispassionate about Assange, any more than the Guardian is. The paper has been waging an all-but-declared war against Wikileaks since the two organizations fell out over their collaboration on publishing Wikileaks’ trove of 250,000 classified US embassy cables. The feud, if the paper’s talkbacks are to be believed, has finally begun to test the patience of even some of the paper’s most loyal readers.

The low point in Leigh's role in this saga is divulging in his own book a complex password Assange had created to protect a digital file containing the original and unedited embassy cables. Each was being carefully redacted before publication by several newspapers, including the Guardian. This act of— in the most generous interpretation of Leigh's behavior— gross stupidity provided the key for every security agency in the world to open the file. Leigh has accused Wikileaks of negligence in allowing a digital copy of the file to be available. Whether true or not, his own role in the affair is far more inexcusable.

Even given his apparent ignorance of the digital world, Leigh is a veteran investigative reporter who must have known that revealing the password was foolhardy in the extreme. Not least, it clearly demonstrated how Assange formulates his passwords, and would provide important clues for hackers trying to open other protected Wikileaks documents. His and the Guardian's recklessness in disclosing the password was compounded by their negligent decision to contact neither Assange nor Wikileaks before publication of Leigh's book to check whether the password was still in use.

After this shabby episode, one of many from the Guardian in relation to Assange, it might have been assumed that Leigh was considered an inappropriate person to comment in the Guardian on matters related to Wikileaks. Not so. Instead the paper has been promulgating Leigh's sel-interested version of the story and regularly impugning Assange's character. In a recent editorial, the paper lambasted the Wikileaks founder as an "information absolutist" who was "flawed, volatile and erratic", arguing that he had chosen to endanger informants named in the US cables by releasing the unredacted cache.

However, the paper made no mention either of Leigh's role in revealing the password or of Wikileaks' point that, following Leigh's incompetence, every security agency and hacker in the world had access to the file's contents. Better, Wikileaks believed, to create a level playing field and allow everyone access to the cables, thereby letting informants know whether they had been named and were in danger.

Leigh's abuse of his position is just one element in a dirty campaign by the Guardian to discredit Assange and, by extension, the Wikileaks project. Some of this clearly reflects a clash of personalities and egos, but it also looks suspiciously like the feud derives from a more profound ideological struggle between the Guardian and Wikileaks about how information should be controlled a generation hence.

The implicit philosophy of Wikileaks is to promote an ever-greater opening up and equalisation of access to information, while the Guardian, following its commercial imperatives, wants to ensure the gatekeepers maintain their control.

At least Assange has the prominent Wikileaks website to make sure his own positions and reasons are hard to overlook. Other targets of the Guardian are less fortunate. George Monbiot, widely considered to be the Guardian's most progressive columnist, has used his slot to attack a disparate group on the "left" who also happen to be harsh critics of the Guardian.

In a column in June he accused Ed Herman, a leading US professor of finance and a collaborator on media criticism with Noam Chomsky, and writer David Peterson of being "genocide deniers" over their research into events in Rwanda and Bosnia. The

evidence was supposedly to be found in their joint book *The Politics of Genocide*, published last year, and in an online volume, *The Srebrenica Massacre*, edited by Herman.

Implying that genocide denial was now a serious problem on the left, Monbiot also laid into journalist John Pilger for endorsing the book and a website called Media Lens that dedicates itself to exposing the failings of the corporate media, including the work of the Guardian and Monbiot. Media Lens' crime was to have argued that Herman and Peterson should be allowed to make their case about Rwanda and Bosnia, rather than be silenced as Monbiot appeared to prefer.

Monbiot also ensnared Chomsky in his criticism, castigating him for writing a foreword to one of the books. Chomsky, it should be remembered, is co-author (with Herman) of *Manufacturing Consent*, a seminal book arguing that it is the role of the corporate media, including liberal media like the Guardian, to distort their readers' understanding of world events to advance the interests of Western elites. In Chomsky's view, even journalists like Monbiot are selected by the media for their ability to manufacture public consent for the maintenance of a system of Western political and economic dominance.

Possibly as a result of these ideas, Chomsky is a *bete noire* of the Guardian and its Sunday sister publication, the Observer. He was famously vilified in 2005 by an up and coming Guardian feature writer, Emma Brockes— again on the issue of Srebrenica. Brockes' report so wilfully mischaracterised Chomsky's views (with quotes she could not substantiate after she apparently taped over her recording of the interview) that the Guardian was forced into a very reluctant "partial apology" under pressure from its readers' editor. Over Chomsky's opposition, the article was also erased from its archives.

Such scurrilous journalism should have ended a young journalist's career at the Guardian. But ridiculing Chomsky is standard fare at the paper, and Brockes' career as celebrity interviewer flourished, both at the Guardian and the New York Times.

Nick Cohen, another star columnist, this time at the Observer, found time to mention Chomsky recently, dismissing him and other prominent critical thinkers such as Tariq Ali, the late Harold Pinter, Arundhati Roy and Diana Johnstone as "west-hating". He blamed liberals and the left for their "Chomskyan self-delusion", and suggested many were "apologists for atrocities".

Monbiot's article followed in the same vein. He appeared to have a minimal grasp of the details of Herman and Peterson's books. Much of his argument that Herman is a "genocide belittler" depends on doubts raised by a variety of experts in the Srebrenica book over the figure of 8,000 reported executions of Bosnian Muslims by Serb forces at Srebrenica. The authors suggest the number is not supported by evidence and might in fact be as low as 800.

Whether or not the case made by Herman and his collaborators is convincing was beside the point in Monbiot's article. He was not interested in exploring their arguments but in creating an intellectual no-go zone from which critical thinkers and researchers were barred— a sacred genocide. And to achieve this end, it was necessary to smear the two writers as genocide deniers and suggest that anyone else on the left who ventured on to the same territory would be similarly stigmatised.

Monbiot treatment of Herman and Peterson's work was so slipshod and cavalier it is hard to believe that he was the one analysing their books. To take just one example, Monbiot somehow appears to be unable to appreciate the careful distinction Herman's book makes between an "execution" and a "death", a vital differentiation in evaluating the Srebrenica massacre.

In the book, experts question whether all or most of the 8,000 Bosnian Muslims disinterred from graves at Srebrenica were victims of a genocidal plan by the Serbs, or casualties of bitter fighting between the two sides, or even some of them victims of a false-flag operation. As the book points out, a post-mortem can do many things but it cannot discern the identities or intentions of those who did the killing in Srebrenica. *[As I recall, only some 2500-3000 bodies have thus far been disinterred; the figure of 8000 is an "estimate" based on highly dubious assumptions, as explained in detail by Herman and Peterson. — A.B.]*

The authors do not doubt that a massacre, or massacres, took place at Srebrenica. However, they believe we should not accept on trust that this was a genocide (a term defined very specifically in international law), or refuse to consider that the numbers may have been inflated to fit a political agenda.

This is not an idle or contrarian argument. As they make clear in their books, piecing together **what really** happened in Rwanda and Bosnia is vital if we are not to be duped by Western leaders into yet more humanitarian interventions whose goals are far from those claimed. The fact that Monbiot discredited Herman and Peterson at a time when the Guardian's reporting was largely cheering on the latest humanitarian intervention, in Libya, was all the more richly ironic.

So why do the Guardian and its writers publish these propaganda articles parading as moral concern about the supposedly degenerate values of the "left"? And why, if the left is in such a debased state, can the Guardian's stable of talented writers not take on their opponents' ideas without resorting to strawman arguments, misdirection and smears.

The writers, thinkers and activists targeted by the Guardian, though all of the left, represent starkly different trends and approaches— and some of them would doubtless vehemently oppose the opinions of others on the list.

But they all share a talent for testing the bounds of permissible thought in creative ways that challenge and undermine established truths and what I have termed elsewhere the "climate of assumptions" the Guardian has helped to create and sustain.

It hardly matters whether all or some of these critical thinkers are right. The danger they pose to the Guardian is in arguing convincingly that the way the world is presented to us is not the way it really is. Their very defiance, faced with the weight of a manufactured consensus, threatens to empower us, the reader, to look outside the restrictive confines of media orthodoxy.

The Guardian, like other mainstream media, is heavily invested— both financially and ideologically— in supporting the current global order. It was once able to exclude and now, in the internet age, must vilify those elements of the left whose ideas risk questioning a system of corporate power and control of which the Guardian is a key institution.

The paper's role, like that of its rightwing cousins, is to significantly limit the imaginative horizons of readers. While there is just enough leftwing debate to make readers believe their paper is pluralistic, the kind of radical perspectives needed to question the very foundations on which the system of Western dominance rests is either unavailable or is ridiculed.

Reading the Guardian, it is possible to believe that one of the biggest problems facing our societies— comparable to our compromised political elites, corrupt police authorities, and depraved financial system— is an array of mainly isolated dissidents and intellectuals on the left.

Is Atzmon and his presumed anti-semitism more significant than AIPAC? Is Herman more of a danger than the military-industrial corporations killing millions of peoples around the globe? And is Assange more of a menace to the planet's future than US President Barack Obama?

Reading the Guardian, you might well think so.

• *Jonathan Cook won the Martha Gellhorn Special Prize for Journalism. His latest books are "Israel and the Clash of Civilisations: Iraq, Iran and the Plan to Remake the Middle East" (Pluto Press) and "Disappearing Palestine: Israel's Experiments in Human Despair" (Zed Books). His website is www.jkcook.net.*

Moment of truth

*Guy Rundle
Sydney Morning Herald
October 2, 2011*

SOMETIME in the next two weeks, the team from Serco will come to Ellingham Hall, a stately home in Norfolk, and there adjust an electronic ankle bracelet attached to the leg of Julian Assange, founder and leader of WikiLeaks.

Thus freed from the limits of the perimeter fence, Assange will travel to the faux-mediaeval Royal Courts of Justice to hear a verdict that may pitch him into less salubrious surroundings— he could be on his way to remand in Sweden, for further questioning about sexual assault allegations, in a country with no bail system, where prisoners accused of sex crimes are held incommunicado. A successful appeal could see him set free almost instantly but also oblige him to leave the UK at once, as his visa has expired. Global nomad once more, or a detainee in IKEA land. Nothing is done by halves in the WikiLeaks world.

Early last month, WikiLeaks released the whole of the "cablegate" archive of US diplomatic communications— a quarter of a million documents, dating from 1966 to the present, sent from dozens of embassies around the world, a sprawling, still substantially unexplored history of the present. The final release put 200,000 cables into the public sphere, together with a new online search facility (cablesearch.org), setting

off a third wave of reports, from the US government's obsession with Venezuela to uproar in Zimbabwe.

But the full release also made WikiLeaks the centre of the story once more, attracting a storm of criticism for its release of cables that had not yet had the names of journalists, informers and US contacts removed, thus opening them to potential harm. The Guardian, a former partner in the "cables" release, immediately issued a condemnation, saying that it "could not defend" the release.

David Leigh, the paper's chief investigative reporter, who had worked with and then bitterly fallen out with Assange, was incensed. "Why has he done it?" Leigh tweeted. 'I despair.'

WikiLeaks countered by arguing that it had no choice but to make a full release of the cables, citing Leigh and The Guardian as the reason why. In WikiLeaks: Inside Julian Assange's War On Secrecy, the insider story of the cablegate release that Leigh had written with Luke Harding, Leigh had included a sub-Le Carre scene in which Assange, who turned 40 in July, had given him the password to the cable archive—then a deeply secret entity—written on a napkin. Assange had then passed on what hackers call "the salt"—a part of the password left out of any written version of it to ensure security.

Most readers with even a vestigial knowledge of computer security assumed the password was a mock-up. It wasn't, and its publication created a problem: copies of the cable archive that had been lodged in various places on the internet were now decryptable.

Six months after the February publication of the password and "salt", former WikiLeaks member Daniel Domscheit-Berg gave an interview with the German magazine *Der Freitag* revealing the existence of numerous copies of the cable archive. Across networks of hackers, and presumably security services, the hunt began to reunite password with file.

WikiLeaks released a statement saying this new widening of access to the file gave them no choice but to make the whole file universally available. A bitter war of words began, with much of the mainstream media initially favouring *The Guardian's* account. Later that week, however, *The Economist* broke ranks, arguing that: "Mr Assange's file management looks sloppy, but Mr Leigh's blunder seems bigger: since digital data is easily copied, safeguarding passwords is more important than secreting files."

This prompted a bizarre series of exchanges between WikiLeaks supporters and David Leigh, culminating with an admission of sorts from Leigh: "Yes, in retrospect, I shouldn't have published the password." He went on to blame himself for trusting Assange.

Whether the unredacted cables had placed anyone in danger was a much-debated question; an audit by the Associated Press of those named showed that none had come to immediate harm. On the other hand, an Ethiopian journalist complained that revelation of his name in passing had forced him to leave, in fear of the country's repressive government.

The release of the cables did not win Assange many friends among the mainstream media, and the release, by publisher Canongate, of an unauthorised "autobiography" based on a first draft and some taped reminiscences, exposed him to a London media feeding frenzy.

More serious for Assange was the looming prospect of a return to Sweden. Though the English-speaking world had lost interest in the details of the accusations against him, furious debate had continued in the country where Assange would be questioned and possibly charged. Much of this was due to the argument Assange's legal team had mounted against extradition— that Sweden's politically appointed judges, in-camera sex crime trials and freewheeling prosecutors were at variance with EU standards, and neither process nor eventual trial was fair.

That line of argument hasn't gone down well in Sweden, where many people are getting tetchy about the country's reputation as an authoritarian madhouse.

Yet by mid-year, the case was increasingly in question. Anna Ardin, one of the complainants, had added an accusation of physical sexual coercion, though she had earlier told a newspaper that Assange was "not violent". Tweets indicating a continued relationship with Assange vanished from the record, and were retrieved by bloggers; a leaked police file had a witness recalling one complainant saying she had been railroaded into making an accusation by the police and others.

When the leaked police report went into wider circulation, it did not take long for people to notice that the name of the initial investigating officer, Irmeli Krans, was familiar from somewhere else. In fact she was one of the links listed on the blogroll of Anna Ardin, the first complainant and organiser of Assange's visit to Sweden in August last year. That was unusual, though of itself not impossible— Stockholm is, in many ways, a small town. But the links rapidly proved beyond coincidence, many of them unearthed by Sweden's libertarian Flashback mega-blog.

Krans and Ardin were not merely connected online, they were both members of the Social Democratic Party and had run together as candidates for the city council elections some months before. Connected through gay and lesbian networks in the party, Krans had visited Club Febber, the fetish nightclub that Ardin set up on Gotland, a residential island off the Swedish coast.

Ardin had also commented on Krans's blog a year earlier, on a post about racism and sexism, criticising "women who claim they're not oppressed and therefore think it's OK to trash feminists". Responding to the post, Krans noted: "Usually I only get negative posts on this blog ... but this post puts its finger on the matter, and speaks for itself."

"Thanks for the props," Ardin replied. "The cultural elite often think it is OK to be a little racist and sexist."

Were such connections sufficient for Krans to recuse herself from the case? There is no record that she raised the matter. Instead, immediately after Ardin and the other complainant, Sofia Wilen, walked into a central Stockholm police station on August 20 last year, Krans conducted an interview with Wilen. Contrary to police guidelines, the interview was neither taped nor transcribed. A half-hour into the interview, police had already consulted the prosecutor's office, and a rape investigation was opened.

Krans was almost immediately removed from the case, but a leaked email reveals she subsequently queried whether rape charges had been laid. Two days later she attempted to access the interview file on the police computer but was refused access. A leaked email exchange between Krans and her superior indicates that she was attempting to revise the summary of Wilen's statement, because she had taken it down incompletely at the time.

By the most generous assessment, the initial handling of the case was a mess. An internal police inquiry would later find that Krans's conduct had not affected the case— even though Krans, a potential witness in any future trial, had subsequently broadcast an extraordinary stream of anti-Assange commentary on her Facebook page and over Twitter, complaining that the official accusation of "minor rape" was insufficient, and cheering on Claes Borgstrom, the complainants' lawyer.

Her Facebook account shows Harald Ullman, a member of the Stockholm police board, logged on to express his disbelief at her conduct. Krans's involvement in the interview with Wilen has certainly complicated its status as evidence— all the more so, since Wilen never verified it as a true record with her signature.

Yet there were also problems with the allegations against Assange by Anna Ardin herself. During her interview, conducted by phone— also against police guidelines on sex crime cases— the day after Wilen's interview, Ardin had given an account of her encounter with Assange, from which two misdemeanour "annoyance" charges were made. That day, the senior prosecutor quashed the rape investigation commenced the day before during Wilen's interview.

Two days later, Claes Borgstrom had become both women's lawyer, and appealed the decision not to prosecute. Two days after that, on August 25, Ardin handed over to police a condom that she claimed had been the one used during her encounter with Assange 10 days earlier. As with everything in this case, the forensic report on this item eventually leaked. For a condom allegedly used in a sex act, it had little to give up, the lab report telling the investigation that no DNA had been recovered from it in an initial series of tests, though they did not rule out the possibility that some might be found. The police had also requested one other test, to see if the rip at the top of the condom was a tear or a blade cut.

The delay in securing a potentially vital piece of evidence remained unexplained, as did the process by which Ardin's accusation changed from a misdemeanour crime of annoyance to a felony, sexual coercion. The question as to why Ardin would have kept a torn condom for a week when she had no initial intention of going to the police also remained unanswered.

The repeated attacks on Swedish life and propriety by Assange's legal team have made it unlikely he would get a sympathetic hearing in that country. But the London media pack has also turned on him en masse as well. His protests at Canongate's publication of an early draft of his book were taken as the ultimate irony. Writer on writer piled on to damn the organisation and the man.

Heather Brooke, the investigative journalist who had attached to WikiLeaks early on, blamed Assange for ruining the "whole digital information revolution", and The

Guardian, taking leave of all editorial practice, had the unauthorised autobiography reviewed by chief investigative reporter David Leigh, who appears extensively throughout the work. All have been united in their belief that WikiLeaks is finished—and with a US grand jury currently empanelled to consider charges of espionage, it seems to many that it is only a question of where Assange will be imprisoned, not if.

Whether WikiLeaks can survive and prosper, indeed reopen for business, will depend not merely on Assange's liberty, but on the organisation's capacity to build a new team that could undertake the main business of the site when it is fully functioning—defending itself from "denial-of-service" attacks from state security organisations. Without such capacity, its ability to distribute new material would be close to nil.

Some say that it may not matter whether WikiLeaks *per se* survives or not, since its formula— combining a secure whistleblower site with mass quantitative leaks and institutional independence— can be replicated.

But what is most remarkable about the past year, as defections and dissent has rocked WikiLeaks, is that no one has. There are plenty of small leaks sites of varying levels of security, but nothing like WikiLeaks has yet been established.

A year after it was announced, Openleaks, the site established by WikiLeaks defector Daniel Domscheit-Berg, is yet to open for business, and has no intention of producing the explosive game-changing leaks that Assange committed WikiLeaks to. Indeed, its proposal to have permanent media partners appears to suggest that it will become a routine part of the media ecology. "Julian was the spirit, we are the engineers," Domscheit-Berg recently told Forbes magazine.

Yet the whole point about WikiLeaks was that it was not simply a part of the global hacking subculture, but something that advanced beyond it by reversing its assumptions. It is not the system that is central to WikiLeaks, but the moral self— the idea that such a site only succeeds if it demonstrates to whistleblowers a determination to confront illegitimate power head-on, thus drawing out greater degrees of courage from those teetering on the edge of dissent, and guaranteeing that their sacrifice will not be in vain.

Whether or not one agrees with Assange's idea of what constitutes illegitimate power, or that his recent conduct communicates such courage, there is no denying its power.

Assange's autobiography and other unpopular memoirs

*The Wikileaks founder's book has, to say the least, failed to fly off the shelves. It's not the first memoir to fall flat on its face [Perhaps because it is **not** his book, as he has made very clear. — A.B.]*

*Nadiya Takolia
The Guardian
28 September 2011*

Julian Assange: The Unauthorised Autobiography has sold just 644 copies during its first three days of being on sale. But he's not the only famous face to discover that a book about them has failed to set the publishing world alight:

- Henry McLeish (former first minister of Scotland), *Scotland First: Truth and Consequences*, sold just 286.
- Oona King (member of the House of Lords), *The Oona King Diaries: House Music*, has sold just 2,218.
- David Blunkett (former home secretary), *The Blunkett Tapes*— despite an advance of £400,000, sold fewer than 4,000 copies.
- Sean Connery (actor), *Being a Scot*.— just 5,000 despite high-profile coverage.
- Ashley Cole (footballer), *My Defence*— just 4,326.

The 'Getting' of Assange And The Smearing Of A Revolution

John Pilger
 October 6, 2011

The High Court in London will soon to decide whether Julian Assange is to be extradited to Sweden to face allegations of sexual misconduct. At the appeal hearing in July, Ben Emmerson QC, counsel for the defence, described the whole saga as "crazy". Sweden's chief prosecutor had dismissed the original arrest warrant, saying there was no case for Assange to answer. Both the women involved said they had consented to have sex. On the facts alleged, no crime would have been committed in Britain.

However, it is not the Swedish judicial system that presents a "grave danger" to Assange, say his lawyers, but a legal device known as a Temporary Surrender, under which he can be sent on from Sweden to the United States secretly and quickly. The founder and editor of WikiLeaks, who published the greatest leak of official documents in history, providing a unique insight into rapacious wars and the lies told by governments, is likely to find himself in a hell hole not dissimilar to the "torturous" dungeon that held Private Bradley Manning, the alleged whistleblower. Manning has not been tried, let alone convicted, yet on 21 April, President Barack Obama declared him guilty with a dismissive "He broke the law".

This Kafka-style justice awaits Assange whether or not Sweden decides to prosecute him. Last December, the Independent disclosed that the US and Sweden had already started talks on Assange's extradition. At the same time, a secret grand jury— a relic of the 18th century long abandoned in this country— has convened just across the river from Washington, in a corner of Virginia that is home to the CIA and most of America's national security establishment. The grand jury is a "fix", a leading legal expert told me: reminiscent of the all-white juries in the South that convicted blacks by rote. A sealed indictment is believed to exist.

Under the US Constitution, which guarantees free speech, Assange should be protected, in theory. When he was running for president, Obama, himself a constitutional lawyer, said, "Whistleblowers are part of a healthy democracy and must be protected from reprisal". His embrace of George W. Bush's "war on terror" has changed all that. Obama has pursued more whistleblowers than any US president. The problem for his administration in "getting" Assange and crushing WikiLeaks is that

military investigators have found no collusion or contact between him and Manning, reports NBC. There is no crime, so one has to be concocted, probably in line with Vice President Joe Biden's absurd description of Assange as a "hi-tech terrorist".

Should Assange win his High Court appeal in London, he could face extradition direct to the United States. In the past, US officials have synchronised extradition warrants with the conclusion of a pending case. Like its predatory military, American jurisdiction recognises few boundaries. As the suffering of Bradley Manning demonstrates, together with the recently executed Troy Davis and the forgotten inmates of Guantanamo, much of the US criminal justice system is corrupt if not lawless.

In a letter addressed to the Australian government, Britain's most distinguished human rights lawyer, Gareth Peirce, who now acts for Assange, wrote, "Given the extent of the public discussion, frequently on the basis of entirely false assumptions... it is very hard to attempt to preserve for him any presumption of innocence. Mr. Assange has now hanging over him not one but two Damocles swords, of potential extradition to two different jurisdictions in turn for two different alleged crimes, neither of which are crimes in his own country, and that his personal safety has become at risk in circumstances that are highly politically charged."

These facts, and the prospect of a grotesque miscarriage of justice, have been drowned in a vituperative campaign against the WikiLeaks founder. Deeply personal, petty, perfidious and inhuman attacks have been aimed at a man not charged with any crime yet held isolated, tagged and under house arrest□ conditions not even meted out to a defendant presently facing extradition on a charge of murdering his wife.

Books have been published, movie deals struck and media careers launched or kick-started on the assumption that he is fair game and too poor to sue. People have made money, often big money, while WikiLeaks has struggled to survive. On 16 June, the publisher of Canongate Books, Jamie Byng, when asked by Assange for an assurance that the rumoured unauthorised publication of his autobiography was not true, said, "No, absolutely not. That is not the position ... Julian, do not worry. My absolute number one desire is to publish a great book which you are happy with." On 22 September, Canongate released what it called Assange's "unauthorised autobiography" without the author's permission or knowledge. It was a first draft of an incomplete, uncorrected manuscript. "They thought I was going to prison and that would have inconvenienced them," he told me. "It's as if I am now a commodity that presents an incentive to any opportunist."

The editor of the Guardian, Alan Rusbridger, has called the WikiLeaks disclosures "one of the greatest journalistic scoops of the last 30 years". Indeed, this is part of his current marketing promotion to justify raising the Guardian's cover price. But the scoop belongs to Assange not the Guardian. Compare the paper's attitude towards Assange with its bold support for the reporter threatened with prosecution under the Official Secrets Act for revealing the iniquities of Hackgate. Editorials and front pages have carried stirring messages of solidarity from even Murdoch's Sunday Times. On 29 September, Carl Bernstein was flown to London to compare all this with his Watergate triumph. Alas, the iconic fellow was not entirely on message. "It's important not to be unfair to Murdoch," he said, because "he's the most far-seeing media entrepreneur of our time" who "put The Simpsons on air" and thereby "showed he could understand the information consumer".

The contrast with the treatment of a genuine pioneer of a revolution in journalism, who dared take on rampant America, providing truth about how great power works, is telling. A drip-feed of hostility runs through the Guardian, making it difficult for readers to interpret the WikiLeaks phenomenon and to assume other than the worst about its founder. David Leigh, the Guardian's "investigations editor", told journalism students at City University that Assange was a "Frankenstein monster" who "didn't use to wash very often" and was "quite deranged". When a puzzled student asked why he said that, Leigh replied, "Because he doesn't understand the parameters of conventional journalism. He and his circle have a profound contempt for what they call the mainstream media".

According to Leigh, these "parameters" were exemplified by Bill Keller when, as editor of the New York Times, he co-published the WikiLeaks disclosures with the Guardian. Keller, said Leigh, was "a seriously thoughtful person in journalism" who had to deal with "some sort of dirty, flaky hacker from Melbourne".

Last November, the "seriously thoughtful" Keller boasted to the BBC that he had taken all WikiLeaks' war logs to the White House so the government could approve and edit them. In the run-up to the Iraq war, the New York Times published a series of now notorious CIA-inspired claims claiming weapons of mass destruction existed. Such are the "parameters" that have made so many people cynical about the so-called mainstream media.

Leigh went as far as to mock the danger that, once extradited to America, Assange would end up wearing "an orange jump suit". These were things "he and his lawyer are saying in order to feed his paranoia". The "paranoia" is shared by the European Court of Human Rights which has frozen "national security" extraditions from the UK to the US because the extreme isolation and long sentences defendants can expect amounts to torture and inhuman treatment.

I asked Leigh why he and the Guardian had adopted a consistently hostile towards Assange since they had parted company. He replied, "Where you, tendentiously, claim to detect a 'hostile tone', others might merely see well-informed objectivity."

It is difficult to find well-informed objectivity in the Guardian's book on Assange, sold lucratively to Hollywood, in which Assange is described gratuitously as a "damaged personality" and "callous". In the book, Leigh revealed the secret password Assange had given the paper. Designed to protect a digital file containing the US embassy cables, its disclosure set off a chain of events that led to the release of all the files. The Guardian denies "utterly" it was responsible for the release. What, then, was the point of publishing the password?

The Guardian's Hackgate exposures were a journalistic *tour de force*; the Murdoch empire may disintegrate as a result. But, with or without Murdoch, a media consensus that echoes, from the BBC to the Sun, a corrupt political, war-mongering establishment. Assange's crime has been to threaten this consensus: those who fix the "parameters" of news and political ideas and whose authority as media commissars is challenged by the revolution of the internet.

The prize-winning former Guardian journalist Jonathan Cook has experience in both worlds. "The media, at least the supposedly left-wing component of it," he writes, "should be cheering on this revolution... And yet, mostly they are trying to co-opt, tame

or subvert it [even] to discredit and ridicule the harbingers of the new age... Some of [campaign against Assange] clearly reflects a clash of personalities and egos, but it also looks suspiciously like the feud derives from a more profound ideological struggle [about] how information should be controlled a generation hence [and] the gatekeepers maintaining their control."

<http://johnpilger.com>



WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange attends a Stop the War rally in Trafalgar Square, central London October 8, 2011. The rally is timed to coincide with this week's tenth anniversary of the start of the war in Afghanistan.

Julian Assange Leads Afghanistan Protest in London

[Agence France-Presse](#)

October 9, 2011

LONDON — WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange and socialite Jemima Khan led a protest in London Saturday against the war in Afghanistan, 10 years after the United States and Britain went to war against the Taliban. Organisers the Stop The War Coalition claimed 5,000 people attended the protest in central London's historic Trafalgar Square. London's Metropolitan Police did not give a figure.

"There comes a moment when you have to ask what is more dangerous, terrorism or counterterrorism," Khan, the former wife of Pakistani cricketer turned politician Imran Khan, told the crowd. "Afghanistan is still the worst place in the world for women to live.... So by any standards, our mission in Afghanistan has failed."

Assange, who is currently under strict bail conditions as he fights extradition from Britain to Sweden on charges of rape, compared journalists and soldiers to war criminals. "When we understand that wars come about as a result of lies, peddled to

the British public and the American public and public all over Europe and other countries, then who are the war criminals? It is not just leaders, it is not just soldiers, it is journalists, journalists are war criminals," said Assange....

Swedish Public TV has taken another cheap shot at Julian Assange, this time with a 5-minute piece on the magazine programme "Agenda" (see home-page announcement above). The narration is in Swedish, of course, but the basic message is conveyed in English by Birgitta Jonsdottir who accuses Julian of "many threats" (but "I can't go into details about that") and Daniel Domscheit-Berg — the only two "authorities" on Assange who are interviewed. It is suggested that Julian's role has not been crucially important, but rather that the real brains of the outfit is an anonymous programmer known as "The Architect". The introductory question by the "Agenda" program leader was: "Is WikiLeaks already history?" — A.B.

Swedish Public TV's home page: 2011-10-23



Headline: "This is where Assange is hiding out"

Link: http://svtplay.se/v/2577063/har_gommer_sig_julian_assange

Julian Assange defiant ahead of extradition ruling

BBC

28 October 2011

Wikileaks founder Julian Assange has described his 10 months under house arrest without charge as "perverse", ahead of a ruling on Wednesday in his High Court bid to block extradition to Sweden.

Mr Assange denies allegations of raping one woman and sexually molesting and coercing another in Stockholm in August last year. He spent eight nights in prison before being released under house arrest in December 2010.

Answering viewer questions on the BBC's World Have Your Say, Mr Assange said the long period of house arrest without charge suggested that the rule of law was "effectively breaking down".

Video at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-15501482>

DN: 2011-11-01



Johanna Koljonen

Koljonen kan vinna journalistpris

Johanna Koljonen och Sofia Mirjamsdotter kan vinna Stora journalistpriset för sitt initiativ till twitterkampanjen "prata om det". De är nominerade i klassen årets förnyare och ställs mot Anette Novak för Norran.se och Johanna Bäckström Lerneby, Linda Kakuli, Peter Bagge, Mikael Pettersson på SVT som alla nominerats för "Fas 3-bloggen"....

DN: 2011-11-01



Foto: Leon Neal / AFP

Onsdagen ödesdag för Julian Assange

► **Glansen har falnat.** Efter månader av väntan meddelar en domstol i London på onsdagen om Julian Assange ska utlämnas till Sverige eller inte.

Wikileaks' Julian Assange loses extradition appeal

BBC

2 Nov. 2011

Wikileaks founder Julian Assange has failed in his appeal against extradition from the UK to Sweden over allegations of rape and sexual assault. Two judges at the High Court in London decided that a previous ruling in favour of extradition must be upheld. Swedish authorities want him to answer accusations of **raping** one woman and sexually molesting and coercing another in Stockholm last year.

Mr Assange's lawyers say they will appeal at the Supreme Court. They have 14 days to bring the case to the highest court in the land, on the grounds that it raises issues of general public importance. However, Mr Assange's legal team will first need to seek permission from the High Court to launch the appeal.

In February, District Judge Howard Riddle ruled that Mr Assange should be extradited to face investigation following a hearing at City of Westminster Magistrates' Court. The 40-year-old Australian denies the allegations and says they are politically motivated.

However, in their ruling the judges, the President of the Queen's Bench Division Sir John Thomas, sitting with Mr Justice Ouseley, said that the issuing of the European arrest warrant (EAW) that led to Mr Assange's arrest and all subsequent proceedings to achieve extradition was "lawful" and "proportionate".

They dismissed Mr Assange's argument that the warrant was invalid because it had been issued by a prosecutor, and not a "judicial authority". They also said the action of the prosecutor was subject to the independent scrutiny of Swedish judges, "which, as judges of another (EU) member state, we must respect".

The judges said: "It is clear that the allegation is that he had sexual intercourse with her when she was not in a position to consent and so he could not have had any reasonable belief that she did."

The court also rejected Assange's assertion that the descriptions of the offences were not a fair and accurate description of the conduct alleged against him.

They added: "This is self evidently not a case relating to a trivial offence, but to serious sexual offences. Assuming proportionality is a requirement, it is difficult to see what real scope there is for the [appeal] argument in circumstances where a Swedish Court of Appeal has taken the view, as part of Swedish procedure, that an arrest is necessary."

Wikileaks has published a mass of leaked diplomatic cables which have embarrassed several governments and international businesses. American soldier Bradley Manning is being held in US custody for allegedly leaking information to the website.

Mr Assange appeared in court wearing a smart suit and Remembrance Day poppy but sat silently through the judgement, said BBC News home affairs correspondent Dominic Casciani.

Upon his arrival, Mr Assange was mobbed and police redirected him away from the crowd who had fixed to the iron railings of the court banners reading "Free Assange! Free Manning! End the wars".

Speaking after the appeal hearing, his supporters outside the court said they were "outraged" by the judges' decision. Ciaran O'Reilly, 51, said: "Assange is probably the most amazing person in recent history who's upset so many powerful people in such a short space of time so it's obviously not a level playing field."

Julian Assange loses appeal against extradition

High court judges rule the WikiLeaks founder should face accusations of rape in Sweden

*Robert Booth
The Guardian
2 November 2011*

The WikiLeaks founder, Julian Assange, has lost his high court appeal against extradition to Sweden to face rape allegations. Lord Justice Thomas and Mr Justice Ouseley on Wednesday handed down their judgment in the 40-year-old Australian's appeal against a European arrest warrant issued by Swedish prosecutors after rape and sexual assault accusations made by two Swedish women following his visit to Stockholm in August 2010.

Assange, who was wearing a navy blue suit, pale blue tie and a Remembrance Day poppy, remains on bail pending a decision on a further appeal. The judges ruled the issuing of the warrant and subsequent proceedings were "proportionate" and dismissed arguments that the warrant had been invalid and descriptions of the alleged offences unfair and inaccurate. Assange gave no sign of emotion as the judges gave reasons for the decision.

Assange's lawyers said they would take 14 days to decide whether to seek the right to appeal to the supreme court and said they would challenge the £19,000 costs against him, indicating he might not have the means to pay.

After the hearing, Assange made a short statement on the steps of the court, saying: "We will be considering our next step." He urged people to turn to a website set up in his support. "No doubt there will be many attempts made to try to spin these proceedings as they occurred today but they were merely technical. So please go to swedenversusassange.com if you wish to know what is really going on in this case." Assange refused to answer shouted media questions as he left.

The judges rejected the appeal on all four grounds made by his legal team, opening up the possibility that Assange could be removed to Sweden by the end of the month. Lord Justice Thomas said a date would be fixed in three weeks' time to hear any case by Assange that he should be allowed to take the case to the supreme court.

To appeal again, Assange must persuade the judges there is a wider issue of "public importance" at stake in the latest decision. If he is successful in persuading the high

court of that, he is likely to remain on conditional bail until a hearing in front of the supreme court. This is unlikely to take place until next year.

If he is denied the right to appeal then British law enforcement officers will be responsible for arranging his removal to Sweden within 10 days.

Earlier Assange was surrounded by a melee of photographers as he arrived to hear the decision. Supporters had fixed banners to railings saying: "Free Assange! Free Manning! End the wars." Bradley Manning is the detained American soldier alleged to have leaked hundreds of thousands of US diplomatic cables to WikiLeaks.

After the decision, supporters outside the court said they were outraged. Ciaran O'Reilly, 51, said: "Assange is probably the most amazing person in recent history who's upset so many powerful people in such a short space of time so it's obviously not a level playing field."

The decision comes three and a half months after the end of an appeal hearing in July, when lawyers for Assange argued the arrest warrant was invalid because of significant discrepancies between its allegations of sexual assault and rape and the testimonies of the two women he allegedly had sex with.

Ben Emmerson QC, for Assange, had claimed the warrant "misstates the conduct and is, by that reason alone, an invalid warrant". He recounted evidence of the encounter on the night of 13 August 2010 between Assange and a woman known as AA, who was hosting Assange at her apartment, during which AA said Assange tried to have sex with her without a condom.

Emmerson said there was no evidence of a lack of consent sufficient for the unlawful coercion allegation contained in the arrest warrant. He argued the court had to decide only on whether the arrest warrant in connection with the events was valid on "strict and narrow" legal grounds.

Acting for the Swedish director of public prosecutions, Clare Montgomery QC said the charges detailed in the warrant were valid allegations and said AA, and another woman, known as SW, had described "circumstances in which they did not freely consent without coercion". She said the definition of an extradition offence "means the conduct complained of. It has nothing to do with the evidence."

In February, when Assange challenged the extradition moves at Westminster magistrates court, his legal team warned their client could be at "real risk" of the death penalty of detention in Guantánamo Bay because they feared the US authorities would request his extradition from Sweden to face charges relating to WikiLeaks obtaining and publishing hundreds of thousands of classified US government documents.

The senior district judge threw out the appeal and ordered his extradition, and a week later Assange appealed to the high court. He changed his legal team and adopted a less vocal strategy.

Assange has in effect been under house arrest at Ellingham Hall in Norfolk since December 2010. He has to sign in at a local police station every day, he wears an electronic tag that monitors his movements and he has to be back inside the house by 10pm each night.

Swedish prosecutors said Assange has been "detained in his absence on probable cause suspected of rape (less severe crime), sexual molestation and unlawful coercion."

Wikileaks founder Julian Assange loses extradition fight

*John Aston and Rosa Silverman
The Independent
2 November 2011*

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange today condemned the European arrest warrant system that has led to moves to extradite him to Sweden over sex crime allegations. Assange hit out after losing his High Court battle to block his extradition.

"I have not been charged with any crime in any country," said Mr Assange outside London's High Court. "The European arrest warrant (EAW) is so restrictive that it prevents UK courts from considering the facts of a case, as judges have made clear here today."

He added: "We will be considering our next step in the days ahead.... No doubt there will be many attempts made to try and spin these proceedings as they occur today but they are merely technical."

The Swedish authorities want Assange to answer accusations of "raping" one woman and "sexually molesting and coercing" another in Stockholm in August last year. Assange denies the allegations and says they are politically motivated.

Today, two judges rejected his lawyers' claims that extraditing the 40-year-old Australian would be "unfair and unlawful". They upheld a ruling by District Judge Howard Riddle at Belmarsh Magistrates' Court in south London in February that the computer expert should be extradited to face investigation.

The decision, awaited by press and media worldwide, was made by President of the Queen's Bench Division Sir John Thomas, sitting with Mr Justice Ouseley. Sir John described the case as "technical and complex" and gave Assange time to consider whether to apply to take his case to the Supreme Court for a final ruling.

For that to happen, his lawyers will have to persuade the judges to certify that his case raises issues of general public importance which should be considered by the highest court in the land.

Assange showed no emotion and made notes while Sir John read out a summary of the court's reasons for its ruling. Dressed in a sharp, navy blue suit and wearing a Remembrance Day poppy, the world's most famous whistleblower was earlier mobbed as he approached the Royal Courts of Justice and police had to redirect him away from the crowd. Assange nodded and smiled at his supporters, who broke into a round of applause as he passed.

The judges ruled that the issuing of the European arrest warrant that led to Assange's arrest and all subsequent proceedings to achieve extradition were "proportionate". They dismissed Assange's argument that the warrant was invalid because it had been issued by a prosecutor, and not a "judicial authority".

The judges held that the action of the prosecutor was subject to the independent scrutiny of Swedish judges, "which, as judges of another (EU) member state, we must respect". The court also rejected Assange's assertion that the descriptions of the offences were not a fair and accurate description of the conduct alleged against him.

ASSANGE-FALLET



"Kvinnorna är lättade"

▸ [Advokat Borgström nöjd men inte förvånad över Assange-beskedet](#) Kvinnorna som kan ha utsatts för sexbrott ser fram emot slut på historien: "Överlämning till Sverige är oundviklig." 🗨️

Assange: "Ska överväga vårt nästa drag"

▸ [Wikileaks grundare Julian Assange gav en kort kommentar](#) till beslutet att han kan utlämnas till Sverige. 🗨️

LEDARE [Inte Wikileaks som anklagas för sexbrott](#) "Få tror att han i längden kan undvika den svenska rättvisan" 🗨️

PLUS DOKUMENT [Det här har hänt i Assange-affären](#) Så blev Julian Assanges Sverigebesök en världsnöhet

AB: 2011-11-02

"Kvinnorna är lättade"

De två kvinnor som ska ha utsatts för sexbrott av Assange är lättade efter beslutet att Julian Assange ska utlämnas till Sverige, enligt deras advokat Claes Borgström till Aftonbladet.

Han tillägger att processen börjar likna en fars.

– Assange och hans advokater har påstått allt möjligt dumt. Jag frågar mig vad de håller på med.

När Aftonbladet pratar med advokaten är han nöjd med High Courts beslut, men inte förvånad.

– Det var väntat, eftersom den europeiska arresteringsordern är väldigt tydlig. Julian Assange är häktad av Svea hovrätt misstänkt för fyra brott, däribland våldtäkt och ska överlämnas hit, säger Claes Borgström.

När han fick beskedet kontaktade han de båda kvinnorna.

– De är lättade över beslutet och börjar väl så smått se ett slut, vilket de ser fram emot. Det har varit en mycket lång påfrestning för dem, det här är brott som inträffade i augusti förra året, säger han.
"Rent nonsens"

Claes Borgström säger till Aftonbladet att han inte kan förstå varför Assange fortsätter att överklaga, då han menar att en överlämning till Sverige är oundviklig.

– Jag har frågat mig själv flera gånger vad de håller på med. Han, eller hans advokater, har lagt fram ett flertal helt meningslösa argument, rent nosens, säger han.

I en tidigare överklagan hade Assange flera punkter som han listade, bland annat att överåklagaren Marianne Ny skulle vara något liknande en manshatare.

– De har påstått allt möjligt dumt. Det om Marianne Ny, mig har de påstått annat om, och sedan hela det här att det skulle vara CIA som ligger bakom, säger Claes Borgström.

Nu, i High Court, hade Julian Assange och hans advokater framfört fyra argument mot en utlämning.

1. Att den europeiska arresteringsordern inte var giltig eftersom den utfärdats av en åklagare och inte en domstol.

Det avfärdade den brittiska domstolen som anser att ordern har granskats av oberoende rättsliga instanser i Sverige.

2. Att de brott han anklagas för i Sverige inte skulle hålla för rättslig prövning i England och att det skulle krävas dubbel straffbarhet. Även detta avfärdar domstolen och skriver att våldtäkt är ett brott som inte kräver dubbel straffbarhet.

3. Assange ifrågasatte också huruvida arresteringsordern ens var giltig då han inte åtalats i Sverige utan bara efterlysts för förhör. Domstolen avvisade detta med hänvisning till att Assange hade åtalats ifall han hade gjort samma sak i England.

4. Slutligen hävdade Assange att arresteringsordern var oproportionerlig. Även det avvisade domstolen.

– Det känns helt enkelt som att han griper efter varenda hårstrå som finns, säger Claes Borgström.

När tror du att Julian Assange är i Sverige?

– Det beror på om Supreme Court tar upp fallet. Tidigt nästa år skulle jag tro, men möjligtvis redan i slutet av det här året. Det är väldigt svårt att upphäva en europeisk arresteringsorder.

• *Carina Bergfeldt*

AB: 2011-11-02

Inte Wikileaks som anklagas för sexbrott

Det är bra att Julian Assange kan utlämnas till Sverige. Det är dock osäkert om han kommer att lämna sin herrgårdsarrest i östra England redan om några veckor. Julian Assange kan välja att överklaga till den brittiska högsta domstolen, Supreme Court.

Få tror dock att han i längden kan **undvika den svenska rättvisan. Det är bra.** Måste skilja på Wikileaks och rättvisan i det här fallet. Det är inte företeelsen Wikileaks som anklagas för sexbrott, det är mannen Julian Assange.

Wikileaks har avslöjat världsnyheter från krigen i Iran och Afghanistan. Sajten har publicerat 250 000 meddelanden från amerikanska ambassader över hela världen. Wikileaks har avslöjat stora nyheter, men kan också ha bidragit till att den amerikanske soldaten Bradley E Manning isolerades anklagad för landsförräderi.

Det var under den stora hypen kring Wikileaks som Julian Assange kom till Sverige och träffade två unga kvinnor han hade sex med. De anklagade honom inte för våldtäkt utan gick till polisen för att få veta om man kunde tvinga Julian Assange att ta ett hiv-test.

Julian Assange åkte till England [*med åklagarens samtycke, efter att förgäves ha stannat kvar i landet i fem veckor för att bli intervjua.* — A.B.], åklagaren begärde honom utlämnad och han svarade med rasande aggressivitet: "Sverige är feminismens Saudiarabien. Jag föll in i ett getingbo av revolutionär feminism."

Det är inte säkert att Julian Assange själv inser skillnaden mellan den världsomstörtande sajten och sin egen person. Den svenska rättvisan kommer att göra det.

• *Eva Franchell*

Kommentarer

Frida Håkansson · Nacka

Varför det är dåligt? Det borde inte behövas svaras på om du har läst artikeln. En politisk ledarartikel av en veteran inom området som är besudlad med faktafel, grammatiskt vidriga formuleringar och som till synes inte är korrekturläst ens en enda gång. Dessutom är den substanslös till absurdum, allt som skrivs är redan skrivet och ledarens politiska åsikter i frågan skiner med sin frånvaro. Det enda Eva lyckats med är att förlöjliga Aftonbladet genom att publicera något som skulle ha fått massiv kritik även i ett så outvecklat forum som ett högstadielklassrum.

Marcus Hedsten · Arbetar på Dunken.se

Fredrik von Feilitzen Tror inte det behövs någon förklaring i detta fallet. Bara att kalla något för "svenska rättvisan" som om det vore något bra är att gräva sin egna grav. Sverige är absolut inte rättvist! Domstolar styrs av pengar och Sveriges regering håller för ögonen eller vänder ryggen till folket när USA ber dom om det..

Adnan Kobaslija · Toppkommentator

Vilken ironi att man i artikeln nedan kan läsa om den svenska rättsstatens paranoia när det gäller sexbrottsanklagelser.

Björn Hellström · Jobbar på Strängnäs Kommun

Helt otroligt fjantigt. Om inte Assange var den han är så hade inget av detta skett...

Christian Magnusson · Drifttekniker på Vattenfall AB

svensk rättvisa??????

Joakim Sundström · Toppkommentator · John Bauergymnasiet, Sundsvall

Nej... inte Wikileaks. Utan Assange? Wikileaks maskot/språkrör. Få folk vet hur denna rättsprocess har gått till och med tanke på hur den har gått till (brutit mot flera flera flera flera regler för hur dom ska gå till) så finns det inte en chans i helvetet att Assange kan bli fälld för det dom påstår att han har gjort. Dessa fruntimmer skrev på sina bloggar hur dom tänkte hämnar osv vilket dom tog bort snabbare än ögat men fanns kvar under cachad version ett bra tag.

Om Assange kommer till Sverige och blir fälld så kan man lugnt säga att vårt rättssystem är direkt hotat, om han sedan blir utlämnad till USA så är det ju konfirmerat att Sverige bara är ännu ett utav USAs marionettländer. Och nu... Aftonbladet. Varför tar ni inte ställning till denna journalist? Varför skyddar ni inte honom såsom ni går i god för dessa två i Etiopien som dom faktiskt har bevisat att dom begått brott? Assange publicerade våra kära "ledares" rätta ansikten och hur dom faktiskt agerar. Om någon som ska hyllas så är det Assange och Wikileaks.

Tommy Gröndahl · Toppkommentator · Strömbackaskolan

Aftonbladet hänger folk vid blotta antydning till att ens ha haft vanlig sex så vad gäller eventuell rättvisa så lämnas det till domstolen. Det är snaskiga anklagelser som säljer och givetvis måste det finnas en känd person med i bilden då blir allt tillåtet att vinkla så att det säljer.

Jan Erik Jönsson · Toppkommentator

Nåja, frånsatt att en del kommentatorer idkar svenskundervisning så tycker jag att Assangehistorien är något underlig. De flesta av oss har inte en aning om Assange som person, utan grundar våra åsikter på de avslöjanden som Wikileaks gjort. Utan tvekan så har Wikileaks gjort en hel del nytta, men också en del skada för enskilda personer. Personligen så anser jag att avslöjanden om USA:s krig har varit bra och skulle gärna sett de avslöjanden som Assange utlovade om finansvärlden. Jag antar att de avslöjandena får vi titta i stjärnorna efter.

Eva Franchell säger troligtvis att den svenska rättvisan kan skilja på Wikileaks och Assange, vilket säger mer om Eva, än om verkliga förhållanden. Jag är inte på minsta vis imponerad av den svenska rättvisan, ty väldigt ofta så verkar det som om den spelar med märkta tärningar. Assange kanske är en skitstövel men USA och deras olika säkerhetstjänster är betydligt professionellare skitstövlar, vilket det finns otaliga bevis för. Oavsett svensk "rättvisa", så svävar en viss unken stank över hela denna historia. Unken, så till vida att det verkar som en hel del ovidkommande personer tagit tillfället i akt att skjuta två tjejer framför sig, för att få skylta i media för sina, högst egoistiska, intressen.

Sofie Hultman-Collin · 27 år

Så dessa tjejer ska inte tas på allvar överhuvudtaget? kan man inte leka med tanken på att han faktiskt kan vara skyldig? hur kan vi veta?

Tommy Gröndahl · Toppkommentator · Strömbackaskolan

Sofie Hultman-Collin Om du tycker så så bör du nog oroa dig för att någon av dina partners skulle vilja anklaga dig. Visserligen är du kvinna och slipper säkert att gripas men skulle samma lag gälla alla så vore det fritt fram...

Sofie Hultman-Collin · 27 år

Tommy Gröndahl— vadå "tycker så", vad är det jag tycker? jag ifrågasätter påståendet att han bortom allt tvivel skulle vara oskyldig. ingen av oss vet så därför ska han väl förhöras precis som andra som anklagas för brott.

Karin Olsson

"De anklagade honom inte för våldtäkt utan gick till polisen för att få veta om man kunde tvinga Julian Assange att ta ett hiv-test." De två unga kvinnorna anklagade dock senare Assange för våldtäkt-- deras juridiska ombud överklagade ju åklagarens beslut att lägga ned åtalet. Om de hade ansett att det ej varit ett sexuellt övergrepp så hade de ju ej överklagat beslutet.

Så jag anser att det är fel att antyda att kvinnorna är offer för ett övernitiskt rättssystem. De har själva varit pådrivande i processen. Inget fel i det om man blivit utsatt för brott, naturligtvis. Då strävar man förhoppningsvis som dem efter upprättelse.

Själv anser jag att det var fel av hovrätten att utfärda en EAW, om mindre ingripande tvångsmedel fanns som kunde användas. Proportionalitetsprincipen kräver att det minst ingripande tvångsmedlet ska användas först.

Sedan kan man fråga sig om någon utövade påtryckningar på kvinnorna att fortsätta driva ärendet? Var det ett helt självständigt beslut eller hade någon förutom de själva intresse i att de överklagade nedläggningsbeslutet? Jag vet inte, men man kan ju spekulera...

Patrik Sjögren

Även om kvinnorna driver eller inte driver ärendet så bara det faktum att de företräds av Claes Borgström gör ju att det blir svårt att inte få en politisk stämpel på detta. Mannen är ju inte bara politiker utan dessutom partner med Herr Bodström som ju tidigare nämnts i sammanhangen att gå i USAs koppel med Egyptenutvisningarna. Så jag kan nog tycka att Assange fruktan för det Svenska rättssystemet inte är helt ogrundad i sammanhanget. Gör det enkelt, förhör honom i England och begär honom utlämnad om det kommer till domstolen...

Johan Fantomen Ellström · Toppkommentator · Mediaproducent KY

"Undvika den Svenska rättvisan" Är man inte oskyldig till motsatsen är bevisad? Och i detta fall tror jag det kan bli svårt.

Michael Hartmann · Jobbar på United Nations

Once again, we have a tempest in a cup of tea. Two women have had an intimate relationship with Mr Assange. Evidently, following this adventure, the two women wondered if perhaps Mr Assange was carrier of a dangerous sexually transmitted virus.

The first prosecutor they contacted refused their case on the grounds that no evidence was present for sexual harassment much less rape. Then another prosecutor gets involved with the case, possibly encouraged by some sort of gender based political correctness. Result, Mr Assange has to spend more than a year in the UK suspected of RAPE.

Mr Assange has been exposed to an outrage of misunderstood justice. The Swedish Government should have discretely stepped in long ago and brought an end to this pantomime of two jilted women.

Karin Olsson

The GoS has made its standpoint clear in this case, so I would not put my trust in them to make an end to this circus. The GoS has its own reasons to dislike JA and Wikileaks. Why would they interfere in order to rescue Assange? If they wanted to they would have stepped in long ago, but the GoS probably enjoy having him neutralized. And the

GoS sadly do not to care about how this affect the perception of Sweden abroad-- the main priority is obviously to be the loyal 51th state. And Aftonbladet plays along...

Mattias Sundström · Märsta, Sweden

Ibland är man ju inte direkt stolt över att vara svensk... USA måste tycka att det är rätt praktiskt att ha Sverige som springer ärenden åt dom. Egyptierna som man lämnade över i CIA:s varma händer var ju också skurkar. Eller inte...

Alexander Sjöström · Toppkommentator · Risbroskolan

Varför skulle han sätta på tjejerna från första början? Det är bara han och tjejerna som vet vad som hände på rummet den natten. Är han skyldig till brott så är han skyldig och diverse. Låt den svenska domstolen döma!

Jan El Angelito Andersson · Toppkommentator · Skribent på Gripen BK

Vad ÅR han rädd för?!

Stefan Formgren · Toppkommentator · Västermalms skola

Skulle inte du vara rädd? om du träffar två trevliga tjejer och ni har sex, och sen hittar dom på att du våldtagit dom bara för att du inte går med på att testa dig för smitta?.. och i hans fall rädd för att det är usa som rycker i trådarna :)

Juhani Palm · Toppkommentator

Den medelstora hunden med en för stor kostym [*Carl Bildt*] har varken etik, moral eller empati. Han har brutit mot mänskligheten förut och gör det säkert gärna igen. Så om han skickar Assange till USA så blir vi ett legitimt mål för terrorister och hatade i alla länder förutom i USA och Australien.

Patrik Sjögren

As he is only wanted for questioning, which he allegedly was willing to undergo before he allegedly asked if he could leave the country, and as he has also, allegedly, said to be prepared to answer any questions the prosecutor, who allegedly said he could leave, would ask him, but that she then would have to come to England, I personally think Assange has been more then helpful in the matter. If it was a question about actually holding a trial I think matters would be different...

Karl-Gunnar Hultland · Toppkommentator · Jobbar på Emric Operations

The irony is that Julian Assange by fighting the extradition probably have spent more time in custody and house arrest than he will get after a trial for the crimes he is accused of. It is very unlikely that he will get convicted in the end, remember he is only wanted for questioning so it isn't even sure he will end up in court.

Kerstin Hallert · Paris, France

Det handlar om att knäcka i det kileaks W

Daniel Klasson · The Hague

"Den svenska rättvisan". Vilket jävla skämt.

Neon Vassago · Toppkommentator

Svenska rättvisan! Hah! Här I Sverige kan en tjej gå och anmäla sin pojkvän som är en snäll person för 30 våldtäkter som hon har hittat på och sen blir han dömd för 3 som låter sannolika! Det är 2 års fängelse. Vet ni vilka män som klarar sig undan sånt här?

Jo dom som är så jävla farliga att tjejerna hamnar i rullstol för resten av livet ifall dom knystar något dåligt om dom. Det borde säga allt om den svenska rättvisan! dom snälla blir dömda dom elaka klarar sig. Men det är väl så regeringen vill ha det?

Assange 'won't get a fair trial' in Sweden: lawyer

AFP/The Local

3 Nov. 11

Lawyers and the mother of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange on Thursday ramped up pressure on the Australian government to intervene over his extradition to Sweden, saying he will not get a fair trial.

Assange, who is Australian, on Wednesday lost a bitter legal battle to block his being sent from Britain to Sweden to face questioning over allegations of rape and sexual assault.

Two judges at the High Court in London rejected arguments by the 40-year-old, whose anti-secrecy website has enraged governments around the world, that his extradition would be unlawful.

Assange, a former computer hacker, now has 14 days to take the case to the Supreme Court, the highest legal authority in Britain. His legal counsel Geoffrey Robertson called on the Australian government to step in. "I think Canberra may have to do something about it," he told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

"It's got a duty to help Australians in peril in foreign courts. It didn't do anything for David Hicks and that was something of a disgrace," he added, referring to the Australian formerly detained at Guantanamo Bay. "As far as Julian Assange is concerned, Sweden doesn't have bail, doesn't have money bail for foreigners, so he's likely to be held in custody."

Robertson added that he does not believe the WikiLeaks founder, who has previously blasted Canberra for not doing enough to protect him amid the fallout from the leaks, will face a fair trial in Sweden. "He's going to be tried in secret, and this is outrageous by our standards and by any standards," he said.

Assange has strongly denied the rape allegations, claiming they are politically motivated and linked to the activities of WikiLeaks. He has been under virtual house arrest since he was first detained in December.

He has expressed fears that his extradition to Sweden would lead to his transfer to the United States to face charges of spying linked to the leaking of classified military documents by US soldier Bradley Manning.

"We are, I think, most concerned to put at rest his danger of going to America and facing charges under the Espionage Act that could take years in prison," said Robertson, a renowned human rights campaigner.

Assange's mother told Australian media she believes her son would go to Sweden voluntarily to fight the charges provided the Australian government brokered a deal to ensure he will not be extradited to the US.

Christine Assange said Canberra should follow its own diplomatic and legal advice that her son was in "clear and present danger" and seek written guarantees he would not be sent on to the US. "If that was to take place I believe Julian would go to Sweden and not resist it. His concern is that he'll be rendered on," she said.

She added that her son had been "crucified for doing what he was brought up to do. I brought my son up to tell the truth, to believe in justice. He was brought up to believe he lived in a democracy and to right any wrongs that he saw.... Now I believe that's not true."

A spokesman for Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd told AFP the government would continue to provide Assange with full consular support. He added: "The government has made it clear to the UK and Swedish government our expectation of due process, but Australia cannot directly intervene in legal processes of other countries."

Assange's mother slams Swedish legal system

AFP/The Local
2 Nov. 11

A London High Court decision upholding Julian Assange's extradition to Sweden makes it more likely he will be sent to the United States and even tortured, his mother was quoted as saying on Wednesday.

Christine Assange called on Australians to put pressure on the government to secure guarantees that her son would not be extradited to the United States, fearing for his safety, the Australian Associated Press reported.

"Now Julian's even closer to a US extradition or rendition," Assange told AAP. "It's now up to the (Australian) people to use their democracy or lose it. If they don't stand up for Julian, he will go to the US and he will be tortured. And he is the person who stood up for the world to expose the truth."

She said she further feared that her son, if extradited to Sweden, could be held indefinitely without charge and without access to visitors, including lawyers, and that any trial could be conducted behind closed doors.

"People think that because Sweden is a Western country that they have a legal system the same as ours, that's completely untrue," she told AAP. "From the time he hits Sweden, he is going to be lost to any kind of observation from anybody to understand if his human rights are being breached."

But Petter Asp, a professor of criminal law at Stockholm University, said that claims by Assange's mother were off base. "That's a clear misunderstanding," he told The Local.

While he acknowledged that Sweden's legal system has certain shortcomings, he said that they were no more severe than shortcomings in any other country governed by the rule of law. According to Asp, much of the criticism directed at the Swedish legal system is unfounded and that Assange would "definitely" receive a fair trial in Sweden.

"One reason for people questioning the Swedish legal system is that a lot of people have sympathy with what he's done in other parts of his life," said Asp. "But what is quite clear is that even people who do good things can also do bad things." *[Self-evidently true. But the main reason that many people are critical of the Swedish legal system in sex-related cases is that the shortcomings noted by Assange's mother and attorneys are well-documented and acknowledged by Swedish legal experts who are not Petter Asp. — A.B.]*

Earlier on Wednesday, two judges at the High Court in London rejected arguments by the 40-year-old Australian, whose anti-secrecy website has enraged governments around the world, that his extradition would be unlawful.

Assange said he would consult his lawyers about whether to make a further appeal to England's Supreme Court, but doing so would be difficult as judges must first decide that the case is of special public interest.

While Asp refused to pass judgement on the merits of the case or speculate on how long prosecutors may need to pursue their investigation once Assange lands in Sweden, he didn't expect the extradition order to be reversed. "I can't see how it would be overturned," he said.

Assange has strongly denied the allegations, claiming they are politically motivated and linked to the activities of WikiLeaks. He has been under virtual house arrest since he was first detained in December. His mother called for Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard to do more for Assange, who she said had done nothing more than speak the truth.

"Julia Gillard should be standing up to the US and saying 'not this time. You're not going to take one of our countrymen and torture them just because they told the truth'," she told AAP.

"He's been crucified for doing what he was brought up to do," she added. "I brought my son up to tell the truth, to believe in justice. He was brought up to believe he lived in a democracy and to right any wrongs that he saw... Now I believe that's not true."

Assange now has 14 days to decide whether he will try to take the case to the Supreme Court of England and Wales. But leave to appeal can only be granted by either the High Court or the Supreme Court, and then only if it there is a point of law of general public importance.

Accusers 'relieved' over Assange ruling: lawyer

The Local
2 Nov. 11

Two women who accused Julian Assange of rape and sexual assault are "relieved" by a London court ruling Wednesday ordering the WikiLeaks founder's extradition to Sweden for questioning, their lawyer said.

"They feel a certain degree of relief," lawyer Claes Borgström told the TT news agency shortly after Assange lost a bitter legal battle to block his extradition to Sweden. "It has been very trying for them to live with this uncertainty, especially since they themselves have found themselves attacked," he said, referring to allegations spread especially on social media that the women's accusations were motivated by secret agendas aimed at bringing down WikiLeaks. *[Far more significant is the abundant evidence, including their accounts in police interviews, that Assange has committed no crime against them. —A.B.]*

Two judges at the High Court in London rejected Wednesday arguments by the 40-year-old Australian, whose anti-secrecy website has enraged governments around the world, that his extradition would be unlawful.

Swedish prosecutors want to question Assange on suspicion of two counts of sexual molestation and an accusation of rape made by Borgström's clients in August 2010.

"He has really been grabbing at every straw, and frankly I don't understand why he is acting like this. Maybe he has had bad advisors," Borgström suggested of Assange's refusal until now to return to Sweden for questioning. *[Borgström is a scandalously incompetent and negligent lawyer who clearly has his own agenda in this matter, one that has nothing to do with "justice". —A.B.]*

Assange's Swedish lawyer Björn Hurtig meanwhile said he was not surprised by Wednesday's verdict. "This was not unexpected, but it was of course bad news for Assange," he told TT, adding he did not yet know if his client would appeal the verdict to Britain's Supreme Court.

Assange has 14 days to decide whether he will try to take the case to the highest legal authority in Britain. Hurtig meanwhile insisted that Assange had never been unwilling to travel to Sweden, but that "he doesn't want to be taken into custody." He also brushed aside vocal criticism since the case came to light of the Swedish judicial system, insisting it "generally holds a very high standard." *[Yes, but not in sex-related cases, which Hurtig doubtless understands quite well. His reassuring statement most likely has more to do with public relations than with judicial reality. —A.B.]*

Petter Asp, a professor of criminal law at Stockholm University, agreed that most criticism of the Swedish legal system was based on a "misunderstanding" adding that Assange would "definitely" receive a fair trial should charges be filed.

"Lots of the discussion about Sweden's legal system has been based on misleading information," he told The Local in reference to claims made by Assange supporters that the criminal probe is simply a result of overly broad sex crime statutes in Sweden.

"We do have a concept of rape which is perhaps wider than the label applied in other countries," he said. "But it's not a question of criminality. The offence would simply be called something else, be it assault, molestation or some other classification." *[Largely irrelevant in the present context. "Rape" is the term used in countless media reports, not least because it is the label selected by the Swedish prosecutor on the European Arrest Warrant that is under dispute in the British courts. A web search today with "Assange" and "rape" yielded 30.5 million hits. — A.B.]*

Julian Assange: from hero to zero

A year ago we Swedes hailed Assange as a James Bond of the net. Now he's seen as a pitiable, paranoid figure

*Karin Olsson, Stockholm
The Guardian
2 November 2011*

The Swedish view of Julian Assange, who lost his appeal against extradition to face sex allegations on Wednesday, has changed in a year from the James Bond of the internet to a paranoid chauvinist pig. The man who has been holed up in an English country house instead of allowing himself to be questioned here about an alleged rape cuts an increasingly pitiable figure.

His attempts to depict Sweden as a banana republic that would ship him on to the US is another sign of how desperate Assange has become. You can blame Sweden for lots of things—filthy weather, overrated crime novels, Ikea furniture—but to claim this country is the CIA's accomplice, with an extremist law on sex crimes, irritates even his most loyal fans, of whom there are still a few.

WikiLeaks really was a historic moment in the history of journalism, but little is left of Assange's kingdom now.

It is ironic that Sweden, the country Assange once admired because of laws that shield our freedom of expression and of the press, should have been the place where his sun began to set. In the spring of 2010, when the Collateral Damage video had just been released, he announced that he wanted to move central parts of the WikiLeaks operation to Stockholm. This happened with the help of the Pirate Party, a grouping which opposed surveillance on the net and intellectual property rights.

Ours is one of the most wired-up countries in the world, and a culture of illegal downloading and net activism is strong here. Perhaps that's why the love affair between Assange and Sweden started so strongly. Even among those who would never use their computers for anything but Google and email, the remains of the anti-Americanism of the radical left of the 70s produced a certain admiration for the man.

Last April the freelance journalist Johannes Wahlström conducted a grovelling interview in the leftwing culture pages of the Stockholm tabloid Aftonbladet, in which his hero appeared almost supernatural: "To meet Julian Assange is a bit like meeting

James Bond. The man behind WikiLeaks has no public background. His name is spelled in different ways. His age is uncertain. He has no fixed address. No one has seen him in the hotel where he is staying, and when we finally meet he suddenly appears half a metre in front of me."

The journalist who wrote this later became the WikiLeaks representative in Sweden and Norway, while his father—the notorious antisemitic propagandist Israel Shamir—ran the site's dealings with Russia. Assange has subsequently called Sweden "the Saudi Arabia of feminism"; Shamir had earlier talked about "the CIA feminism" that he claimed lay behind the two women who had reported Assange to the police.

Assange-the-hero vanished somewhere in that antisemitic and antifeminist slime. Sweden's relatively high measure of sexual equality and consciousness in gender questions is a matter of national pride. That a dodgy hacker from Australia started knocking it was not popular.

Last Tuesday two women journalists who started a Twitter campaign against Assange's contemptuous remarks about Swedish women were nominated for the most prestigious prize in Swedish journalism. The "Let's Talk About It" campaign got thousands of people openly discussing the grey areas of sexual conduct, and was copied in many countries.

Not even the culture pages of Aftonbladet, which kept up their uncritical admiration for Assange longer than anyone else, can keep it up now. The noted leftwing commentator Dan Josefsson admitted recently that Assange was not the radical hero he had supposed, but "a solitary and shabby libertarian who wants to tear down democratic societies". [*See above, at 2011-09-24, for comments on Josefsson's article: "Samhällets fiende" — A.B.*]

It's probably too late for Assange to recover his former glory. But if he could give up his futile struggle against extradition and show a little respect to the Swedish justice system, that would at least be a first, necessary step.

[*Ms. Olsson's Expressen is generally the more despicable of the two major Swedish tabloids—although, as indicated by the reference to Josefsson's attack on Assange, Aftonbladet is fast catching up in that regard. — A.B.*]

Candypig & Humpty Dumpty

rixstep.com
4 Nov. 2011

Karin Olsson— how could they forget her? That's what the investigators at Flashback are asking themselves today.

They know all about her boss Thomas 'Humpty Dumpty' Mattsson, the dictator of the smelly rag Expressen. There's been a drain of writers from that organisation of late, people who've abandoned a permanent job and a steady pay cheque because they can't stand the man and his autocratic policies. Karin Olsson didn't quit— she's sitting very

prettily, thank you. But lots of others have quit, disillusioned at how low even a filthy tabloid like Expressen can go. This much has been thoroughly discussed at Flashback. But not Karin Olsson. Somehow they missed her. But no longer.

Karin is known to her friends as 'Gottegrisen'— 'Candypig'. She particularly likes *geléhallon* sweets. And she particularly dislikes Julian Assange. Karin has other dislikes too— this in accordance with her current position as 'culture editor' of Expressen. As Expressen is owned by the powerful Bonnier empire with tentacles in US and German publishing as well as the Swedish government (they have an ambassador in Tel Aviv and are staunchly zionist) and as the Bonniers have been Sweden's fiercest opponents of file sharing, Rick Falkvinge, and the Swedish Pirate Party, and as Julian Assange came to Stockholm a year ago to seal a deal with Rick's Pirate Party for WikiLeaks web server support, then WikiLeaks and Julian Assange must also of needs become an enemy as well and be attacked incessantly in their poison pen op-eds.

Given too that the Bonniers even own the German publishing house which released Daniel Domscheit-Berg's ridiculous book, and given that they hold the world rights to that 'adventure book' as it was called elsewhere in the Swedish media, then Karin Olsson must of course come out in full support of Daniel Domscheit-Berg's book. Done deal. Steady pay cheque.

But Candypig went even further to please Humpty Dumpty. Speaking about a book that's otherwise universally laughed at, she used the opportunity to not only praise it but also to once again rail against WikiLeaks and Julian Assange, stating there was a bad smell about the both and claiming it had to do with Julian's bathing habits.

Candypig has an irrepressible urge to lash out rudely at people, only thereafter to creep into her corner and claim innocence. She also has an extremely myopic view of what's going on in her country. And finally she has an agenda handed to her by her editor: destroy file sharing, Rick Falkvinge, the Pirate Party, and WikiLeaks.

The Bonnier empire with its investments in Popular Mechanics, Swedish cinemas, book of the month clubs and Swedish publishing in general: they can't risk someone getting one of their fine products for free. And as WikiLeaks might accidentally expose some of their high stakes political intrigues, they can't tolerate WikiLeaks either. That other bit about Sweden's outrageous social climate today, what with the rabid state feminists, a situation so out of control that only the likes of Karl Rove would be smiling— that's all secondary. Money matters most.

Fair Trial?

The judges handing down the High Court extradition verdict this past week would like people to believe Julian Assange would have a fair trial in Sweden, if things ever get that far. Perhaps being old and wizened and not really informed can be an excuse, but as anyone who's taken the time to look into the matter can attest, a fair trial is something that's not even remotely possible in Sweden— not for Julian Assange, not for anyone.

But the danger doesn't stop there. For it's the media climate that's the worst. And now, as clockwork, as soon as the verdict is handed down: Julian's old friends at the Grauniad [*Guardian*] publish a piece by Candypig.

Candypig's article was a hit piece. There's no other way to describe it. And it reeks of the handiwork of David Leigh. It's David Leigh's style: hide the falsehoods in the unwelcome adjectives. Candypig's piece reeks of this. And together they commit about every journalistic crime in the book.

And it doesn't stop there. For Candypig's sleaze was for the international audience—outside the Swedish duck pond. And as anyone familiar with Swedish culture knows, the Swedish people will never venture far beyond its limits. There's another article that's necessary in such case, an article for the ducks in the pond. Candypig's editor Thomas 'Humpty Dumpty' Mattsson wrote that one. Mattsson writes about as well as former New York Times editor Bill Keller [*Keller*] (they're soul mates too). But Mattsson pulls off the pomp and circumstance for the local suckers and takes the opportunity to sneak in a few lies and slurs of his own.

The next chapter in this exciting saga is the fact that Candypig's piece in the Grauniad's been syndicated to the Lucky Country where it appeared today in the Canberra Times. There are a lot of people out there frothing at the mouth, intent on taking this opportunity to destroy Julian Assange and WikiLeaks, but unfortunately for them the masses— whether it be the Swedish ducks or the international readership— are having none of it this time around.

The Grauniad initially didn't allow comments on Candypig's article. Perhaps there'd been an outcry, for now they're allowing them. But as per usual, as has been discovered and discussed so many times before, they're cherry-picking the ones they like and making all the rest quietly disappear. What remains are mostly superficial mutterings from people obviously not all that familiar with WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, and the case in Sweden. [*See Jonathan Cook's critique, above at September 28, 2011: "The Dangerous Cult of the Guardian". — A.B.*]

The Swedish reaction to Candypig's article— as published online— is much more critical. Suddenly those ducks are revolting. They're not at all kind towards Candypig, they see through what Mattsson and Olsson are up to. And the comments coming in from down under are even worse.

The ultimate effect of the attack by the Grauniad and Expressen's dynamic duo Olsson/Mattsson has been more to reveal to the world outside the duck pond just how twisted those Swedes can be.

Sweden's veteran news anchor Olle Andersson outed the vile Karin Olsson this past February in a piece that really got legs. Andersson really went to town on poor Candypig and exposed her style of attack and propaganda.

Or what do you think about this: Karin Olsson demanded that WikiLeaks— in the name of transparency, mind you— should reveal all their whistleblower sources! Yes you read that right. Even David Aaronovitch wasn't that stupid.

Olle takes two swipes in the same graph, the second at the zionism that's a cornerstone of Expressen's editorial policy:

But Karin Olsson at Expressen? You who in an op-ed wanted WikiLeaks to reveal their sources so they could be hailed as the real heroes: how is your own

transparency? What were you thinking when you hung out WikiLeaks' Russian representative as an anti-semitic and then refused to publish his reply? What editorial decisions were behind that? You should have answered at the debate.

And hey— why stop there? Candypig commands the culture desk at Expressen, doing the job Humpty Dumpty wants. What do people outside the Marieberg offices have to say about that?

What about the all more stubborn rumours about what Expressen is systematically doing with comments asking for a more nuanced debate about Swedish sex crime legislation? How do you choose the material you publish? Who decides what goes in the dust bin— you? Or someone else? If I come visit you at your department at Expressen and want to know how it turns out that some things end up in your newspaper and others don't, do you promise to turn on the 100 watt bulbs on your desk?

Olle Andersson ends with the following.

These are the answers your readers want, Karin Olsson. They want complete transparency. Clear facts. If you have hidden agendas— then out with them! You should demand of yourself whatever you demand of others. Nothing else will do, Karin— otherwise you're just a hypocrite.

The hypocrisy of Expressen is thick and it's not going away soon. Expressen's first headline about Julian Assange, blasted across the globe by their scavenger reporters who fought and cheated to get credit for the scoop, claimed the WikiLeaks leader was being 'hunted' on the streets of Stockholm for 'two counts of rape'. A serial rapist in other words. A deranged person who somehow had eluded justice on several continents for years, a veritable Mr Hyde.

That's what Expressen went with. Hunted for double rape. They also boasted they had the police protocols— something that police investigator Mats Gehlin expressly told Julian Assange would never happen. They published a scan of one of the pages the very day after Gehlin's 'solemn promise'. So why didn't Candypig and Humpty Dumpty publish them? It was perfectly legal and it made more sense than blasting out a headline about a crazed serial rapist being hunted in the streets of the capital.

Olle Andersson again.

The dilemma is that not a single Swedish news organisation has dared relate the sequence of events. That is: what the two women and Assange have said in their interrogations with the police. What we common news consumers have had access to are redacted excerpts from these interrogations, most often blatantly stolen from the British media. Looking at the facts, with the cat out of the bag, it's easy to see the redacting's been done to benefit the claimants and no one else.

The short version? 'Rape' + 'hunted on the streets' sells newspapers. Showing the nation and the world around that it's all so much nonsense makes the rag— and the nation— look stupid. It's counterproductive. It deflates the issue. It doesn't sell shit. And don't forget there's the agenda of the powerful Bonnier empire to uphold.

Olle Andersson: "There are no established media to trust when more and more new information is met by more and more compact silence. The culture pages send up sparklers."

If you want to learn even more about Candypig and Humpty Dumpty, then read more coverage by Olle Andersson here (<http://rixstep.com/2/1/20101122,00.shtml>). And note that this article was written before the so-called 'Assange case' and note that it describes Karin Olsson and her Candypig friends before that event. So much for Candypig's claim she somehow 'soured' over the year gone by.

<http://rixstep.com/1/1/0/20111104,00.shtml>



Kulturchefen skriver i The Guardian

Resume.se

2011-11-03

Expressens kulturchef Karin Olsson skriver om Julian Assange i dagens The Guardian.

– Tanken på att Assange själv kanske kommer att läsa artikeln är speciell, säger hon.

"Julian Assange: from hero to zero". Så lyder rubriksättningen när Expressens kulturchef Karin Olsson skriver kulturartikel i The Guardian om Wikileaks förgestalt Julian Assange.

– Jag blev uppriggad av Andrew Brown på tidningen, som är tidigare Sverigeredaktör. Expressen har skrivit mycket om Assange och Wikileaks tidigare, så det var naturligt att tacka ja, säger Karin Olsson till Resume.se.

Expressens läsarunderlag till trots— som The Guardian-skribent fick Karin Olsson uppleva en mycket större publik. I går kom beskedet från High Court i London att Assange ska utlämnas till Sverige.

– Artikeln publicerades på nätet i går kväll, och direkt strömmade det till Wikileaks-supportrar, säger hon och fortsätter:

– Tanken på att Assange själv kanske kommer att läsa artikeln är speciell.

Det har hänt tidigare att någon av Expressens kulturskribenter fått sitt material publicerat i The Guardian, men då har det rört sig om översättningar om material som redan varit publicerat. Den här artikeln är skriven specifikt för just The Guardian.

– Vi har haft en bra bevakning av Wikileaks tidigare. Men självklart vill vi också vara en stark röst i debatten. Och naturligtvis vill man nå ut till så många som möjligt, säger Karin Olsson.

• *Emanuel Videla*

— — — —

SvD: 2011-11-02

Claes Borgström: Väntat besked

Det var väntat att High Court i London skulle avslå Julian Assanges överklagan mot utlämning till Sverige. Det säger advokat Claes Borgström som företräder de två kvinnor som anklagar Wikileaks grundare för sexuella övergrepp.

http://www.svd.se/nyheter/inrikes/claes-borgstrom-vantat-besked_6604850.svd

Överdrift enligt Assanges advokat

High Court i London beslutade att Wikileaks grundare Julian Assange ska utlämnas till Sverige. Ett beslut som hans svenske advokat Björn Hurtig anser är överdrivet.

http://www.svd.se/nyheter/inrikes/overdrift-enligt-assanges-advokat_6604020.svd

—————
SvD: 2 november 2011

Wikileaks förtjänar ett Nobelpris

Kolumn: Stig Fredrikson

Det blev inget Nobelpris åt de sociala medierna, inte i år i varje fall. Inte till någon av bloggarna som i Tunisien och Egypten startade den arabiska våren. Fast en tredjedel av fredspriset gick till Tawakkul Karman i Jemen, och det var välförtjänt. Och hon är ju bland mycket annat även bloggare.

Wikileaks och Julian Assange kommer aldrig att få något fredspris. Personen Assange är alldeles för kontroversiell för det, och etablissemangen, i form av banker och kortföretag, vill krossa Wikileaks.

Men man kan argumentera för att det som Wikileaks har åstadkommit hittills är en viktig insats för att främja demokrati, öppenhet och delaktighet för medborgarna i linje med den definition av fredsarbete som den norska Nobelkommittén har belönat på senare år.

Genom att offentliggöra framför allt hemligstämplade diplomatrapporter har Wikileaks gett oss insikt i resonemangen bland beslutsfattare i en rad länder. Den öppenheten och insikten är till gagn för medborgarna i dessa länder, inte till skada. Argumentet att läckorna skadar känsliga mellanstatliga relationer tror jag inte mycket på. För de verkligt viktiga budskapen mellan diplomaterna och hemma-basen finns det säkert sätt att kommunicera som inte ens Wikileaks kommer åt.

Så här i efterhand framstår amerikanska ambassaden i Moskva som både insiktsfull och framsynt. Att likna förhållandet mellan Putin och Medvedev vid relationen Läderlappen och Robin visade sig vara på pricken, nu när denna dynamiska duo på nytt tänker inta posten som president och premiärminister.

I andra läckta dokument gavs en dyster analys av tillståndet i Ryssland. En spansk åklagare hade utrett kopplingar mellan organiserad brottslighet, säkerhetstjänst och politiska makthavare i Ryssland, och amerikanska diplomater beskrev Ryssland som genomkorrumperat, från regering och nedåt. Den bilden är knappast ljusare i dag.

Men läckorna från Wikileaks har retat upp mäktiga män i både Washington och Moskva. Daniel Domscheit-Berg var närmaste medarbetare till Julian Assange, tills det skar sig. Om man ska tro Domscheit-Berg, har Assange alltid varit besatt av tanken att han är förföljd och skuggad. Julian Assange fann en själsfrände i författaren och Nobelpristagaren Alexander Solzjenitsyn som han identifierade sig med.

Enligt Domscheit-Berg såg Julian Assange likheter mellan sitt eget öde och det som hände Solzjenitsyn, som dömdes till åtta år i Gulag-arkipelagen för sin kritik av Stalins Sovjetunionen. Särskilt Solzjenitsyns roman I den första kretsen tilltalade Julian Assange.

Romanen handlar om en sovjetisk diplomat som 1949 försöker läcka information om den sovjetiska atombomben till USA. I ett specialfängelse sitter dömda vetenskapsmän och försöker uppfinna en apparat som kan spåra den person som var läckan.

Det är inte så svårt att förstå att just Julian Assange kunde identifiera sig med händelserna i Solzjenitsyns roman, eftersom han tror sig vara förföljd. Samtidigt måste man invända att dagens Ryssland är ett helt annat land än det övervakningssamhälle som Solzjenitsyn skildrar. Men Julian Assange är övertygad om att Storebror fortfarande ser dig, både i USA och i Ryssland.

- Stig Fredrikson är journalist och författare. Han var i många år utrikeskommentator på SVT:s Aktuellt, där han tidigare varit chef. På senare år har han skrivit uppmärksammade böcker om Ryssland. Under tidigt 1970-tal hjälpte han nobelpristagaren Aleksander Solzjenitsyn att smugla ut dennes manus ur Sovjetunionen, en historia som han berättar om i boken "Alexanders kurir", som i år gavs ut i en ny, utökad upplaga (Carlssons förlag). Han var i flera år ordförande för Publicistklubben.

SvD: 2 november 2011

Konspirationsteorierna slår tillbaka mot Wikileaks

Martin Jönsson

Året efter sexbrottsanklagelserna mot Julian Assange har varit ett annus horribilis för Wikileaks. Till stor del dock självförvållat: istället för att hålla isär rättsprocessen mot honom och organisationens verksamhet har man underblåst vilda konspirationsteorier som fått allt att fästa vid varandra.

Strax innan våldtäktsaffären briserade, när Assange anhölls i sin frånvaro den 20 augusti 2010, var Wikileaks en av de viktigaste aktörerna på den internationella nyhetsscenen. Bakom det låg framför allt tre saker: Assanges karisma, tyngden i de avslöjanden som tagits fram det gångna året och beslutet att samarbeta med några av världens största nyhetsredaktioner.

Det senare var sannolikt det viktigaste av allt. Genom att låta medier som Guardian och New York Times granska det material som läckt till Wikileaks fick organisationen partners med publicistisk tyngd och trovärdighet. Istället för att allt lades ut togs aktiva publiceringsbeslut, för att värdera och bekräfta materialet och för att skydda utsatta källor. Även SvD ingick i gruppen av medier som fick tillgång till material via Wikileaks— och har med det som utgångspunkt publicerat en rad tunga avslöjanden.

I dag är en stor del av de medierrelationerna förstörda, framför allt med Guardian. Wikileaks hamnade också i bråk med norska Aftenposten, efter att allt material i Cablegate, med 250 000 ambassadelegram, läckt från Wikileaks till tidningen. Julian Assange ondgjorde sig över läckorna och ville stoppa publiceringen; en ironi som inte gick någon förbi. För två månader sedan publicerade slutligen Wikileaks samtliga telegram själva, vilket ledde till kritik mot att personer i materialet utsattes för stora risker. [*The Guardian's David Leigh hade gjort materialet tillgängligt flera månader innan dess., och andra publikationer hade sedan följt efter. — A.B.*]

Men det senaste året har också präglats av en finansiell kris, efter att flera finansieringsföretag blockerat donationer till sajten, och interna stridigheter och splittring. Mitt i detta sitter Julian Assange i sin husarrest på Ellington Hall, upptagen med en rättsprocess som i grunden inte har något med Wikileaks att göra, utan som gäller honom som privatperson, i en relation med två svenska kvinnor.

Både Assange och hans anhängare har dock gjort allt för att koppla processen till Wikileaks verksamhet och avslöjanden. Det började på morgonen efter anhållningsbeslutet, då Assange twittrade "Vi har blivit varnade för 'dirty tricks'. Nu ser vi det första". Efter det har bland annat Assanges advokat Mark Stephens talat om CIA-operationer, 'honungsfällor' och jämfört överåklagaren Marianne Ny med den sovjetiske säkerhetstjänstchefen Beria. Samtidigt har Wikileaks och dess anhängare fört ett intensivt ordkrig med Sverige. I Wikileaks officiella twitterflöde finns hundratals inlägg där Sveriges utpekats som amerikansk lydstat och som "Nordens Israel". Konspirerandet kan bara beskrivas som bisarrt.

På så sätt har en rättsprocess som rimligen kunnat vara avförd från agendan för länge sedan limmat sig fast vid Wikileaks, som en kvarnsten. Det har i hög grad bidragit till att organisationen i dag i princip inte har någon verksamhet längre.

Att vända detta kräver mer än att misstankar mot Assange avskrivs. Wikileaks måste än en gång bevisa sin relevans som avslöjare av makten. Det blir svårt, i ett läge där man lägger all tid på juridik, finansiering och bittra nätkommentarer.

Kommentarer

Trofinios

Om USA inte varit så måna att stänga ned WikiLeaks och åtala Assange för spioneri så hade väl Assange aldrig uttryckt en sådan stark motvilja till att bli utlämnad till Sverige. Flera amerikanska proffstyckare och politiker har förespråkat att Assange bör likvideras. Vidare försöker man komma åt Assange och WikiLeaks genom försöka påvisa att Assange uppmanade Bradley Manning att översända hemligstämplat material till WikiLeaks, trots att WikiLeaks själva huvudidé är ett system som gör det omöjligt att spåra whistle-blowers. Och det var påtryckningar från den amerikanska regeringen som ledde till att flera finansieringsföretag började blockera donationer till WikiLeaks. Det är också högst sannolikt att det var den amerikanska underrättelse-tjänsten som låg bakom angreppet på Wikileaks hemsida, och fick den nedstängd under flera dagars tid. Dessutom finns det åtskilliga exempel på hur Wikileaks medarbetare övervakats, samt blivit utfrågade och fått datorer och mobiler beslagtagna vid inresa till USA.

Eftersom Assange bedömer sannolikheten att bli utlämnad från Sverige större än från England, så är det inte obegripligt att han gör allt i sin makt för att hindra utlämningen till Sverige. Ty om Assange blir utlämnad till USA så är det högst sannolikt att han kommer bli frihetsberövad en mycket, mycket lång tid framöver. Att möta den amerikanska rättvisan som terrorist- eller spionanklagad är en garanterad mardröm, det vittnar bl a behandlingen av Guantanamo-fångarna om.

Det är beklagligt att Martin Jönsson underlåter att sätta in Assanges agerande mot ovan givna kontext, ty utan den blir det genast svårare att förstå somliga av hans handlingar. Att kraftigt ifrågasätta det svenska rättsväsendet, och sprida "lögner" om det, blir helt enkelt en taktik för försöka uppnå målet att till alla pris undvika att hamna i jänkarnas händer, ändamålet helgar medlen.

HandsomeHank

Den europeiska arresteringsordern måste omedelbart skrotas. Att inte det utlämnande landet sakligt kan pröva utlämningen strider mot de mänskliga rättigheterna. I det nuvarande EU och speciellt med dess senare medlemmar som knappleligen kan kallas rättstater, kan vem som helst utsättas för en deportation från sitt land där man har sin hemvist till ett korrupt land för att en korrupt domare sagt så. Detta är orimligt. Att tant gredelin sa att hon litar på alla andra EU länder innebär inte att vi andra gör det. Att Sverige på senare tid vägrat att utlämna asylsökande till Grekland med stöd av att Grekland inte har en rättssäker process fastän Grekland varit första asylland gör det ännu orimligare att en svensk skulle utlämnas dit. Vi svenskar har m.a.o. sämre rättsäkerhet i Sverige än en asylsökande som inta skall vara här. Detta är orimligt.

adalbert

Jörgen Sangsta , du har missförstod den hela , "i Sverige ock resten av Europa", du skriver följande— "Och min slutsats har i många år varit att vi är just en lydstat till USA". du har tydligen varit borta vid historiska lektioner , annars skulle ha skrivit att USA varit en skydd stat för Sverige ock Europa— men en kort historik ang. Amerikas

roll i ditt ock mitt liv— USA har offrat sina pojkar ock flickor för att rädda Europa från nazismen , kommunismen , ock efter kriget hjälpte Europas återuppbyggnad med Marshalplanen, dvs. många många milliarder dollar, ock vad är tacken för allt detta? den vänstervridna , media , socialister & kommunister med total okunskap om historien, alternativt full kunskap om historien men ilsken över att USA lyckats vinna över kommunismen ock därför spyr all dynga över dem som räddade oss från de ovannämnda diktaturer, ock som nu är i frontlinje i kampen mot terrorismen, detta kan inte den nästan 100% vänster vridna media, inte undantaget TV, förlåta den stora ock generösa landet, USA.

El_Camino, svar till adalbert

Vi kan väl konstatera att varken USA eller resten av världen är som den en gång var, inte ens Sverige. Detta har ju framkommit väldigt tydligt i de dokument som Wikileaks publicerat. När man i hemlighet struntar i rätt och sanning genom att undvika skriftliga avtal för att undanhålla information från Sveriges riksdag och därmed alla medborgare, så tycker i alla fall jag att Wikileaks offentliggörande av detta förtjänar både stående ovationer och åtgärder från Riksdagens sida mot de ansvariga. Det är väl inte så konstigt att de som sysslar med verksamhet som inte tål dagsljus gör allt för att begränsa Wikileaks möjligheter att verka (t.ex. genom att utan lagstöd vägra att förmedla donationer), samtidigt som man hurrar för t.ex. den arabiska våren som kanske inte blivit av om inte innevånarna i de länderna fått veta hur det gick till bakom kulisserna i deras länder genom de dokument Wikileaks publicerade. "Avslöja gärna andras hemligheter, bara du inte rör mina" Snacka om hyckleri, och värst är det att inget media i Sverige bryr sig (eller törs man inte?).

Ture Sjölander

Det nya etablissemanget i världen är vår tids Gestapos! De internationella västmaktspolitikerna har etablerat sig som en sekt eller cult. Sveriges politiska obegåvningar halkade in på ett banaskal. Svensken bara sväljer sina ledares dårskap och tiger av rädsla i sina burar.

JonasB1

Obergripligt att 99% av sveriges så kallade journalister ägnar sig åt att försöka karaktärsmörda Julian Assange före en eventuell rättegång med hjälp av uppenbara lögner. Skäms!

DQZ 1

"Konspirerandet kan bara beskrivas som bisarrt." HA! Jag längtar efter den nya "baltutlämning" som kommer att ske när Assange blir utlämnad till Sverige. Kommer även bli intressant att se Herr Jönssons försvar till denna utlämning.

DrKrastapopolos

"Wikileaks granskande roll" . En gång i tiden trodde jag att svensk massmedia hade en roll i att granska makten. Det är en skrämmande upplevelse när man med egna ögon får se och lära sig att så inte är fallet. Det är ännu värre när man inser vilken roll MSM i själva verket har. Men med dina lögner och med din enfaldighet väcker du några till insikt, även idag. Men historien kommer att bevaras. Historikerna kommer inte att vara nådiga.

DrKrastapopolos

Artiklar som denna belyser behovet av wikileaks mer än något annat. Är det något vi fått lära oss mer än annat är i vilket uselt skick MSM befinner sig i. SvD är inget undantag. "Att vända detta kräver mer än att misstankar mot Assange avskrivs." Alla misstankar avskrevs omedelbart efter några timmar av åklagare Eva Finne. Bevisläget är inte annorlunda. Brottsmisstankarna avskrevs med motiveringen "inget brott har begåtts" (det skall inte föväxlas med "brott kan ej styrkas"). Våldtäktsanklagelserna kommer inte från kvinnan (singularis!) utan ifrån Claes Borgström. Historierna av vinklat och vridits till oigenkännerlighet av MSM (inkl SvD).

"Även SvD ingick i gruppen av medier som fick tillgång till material via Wikileaks— och har med det som utgångspunkt publicerat en rad tunga avslöjanden." BULLSHIT ni är ett hån mot journalism.

"Vi har blivit varnade för 'dirty tricks'. Nu ser vi det första". Tveklöst helt sant. (Här har vi ytterligare ett exempel) "Julian Assange ondgjorde sig över läckorna och ville stoppa publiceringen; en ironi som inte gick någon förbi. För två månader sedan publicerade slutligen Wikileaks samtliga telegram själva, vilket ledde till kritik mot att personer i materialet utsattes för stora risker."

Ett vansinnigt sätt att förvrida händelseförloppet. "IRONIN" låg i att WL under ett års tid skötte publiceringen på ett sätt där källor skyddades och impact maximerades. Det löfte man givit Bradley Manning. En infiltrator (och CIA-informatör) stal och läckte filerna (och utförde annat sabotage) och DAVID LEIGH på THE GUARDIAN läckte sedan krypteringslösenordet i sin bok (påstå inte att ni inte kände till detta).

"Mitt i detta sitter Julian Assange i sin husarrest på Ellington Hall, upptagen med en rättsprocess som i grunden inte har något med Wikileaks att göra" BullShit.

Wikileaks måste än en gång bevisa sin relevans som avslöjare av makten. Man har nu även avslöjat SvD.

cb9

Filmer där amerikanska soldater dödar irakiska civila helt i onödan. USA's utrikesminister beordrar amerikansk ambassadpersonal att spionera i utlandet. Saudiarabien pressar USA att anfälla Iran och resten av spelet i mellanöstern. Kremls kontakter med maffian. Kina blundar när Nordkorea exporterar vapen till terrorister osv.

Det är inga små nyheter som Wikileaks gett till oss. Just avslöjandena om USA's smutsiga spel i världen borde fått kritik från övriga västvärlden, men vi har visat att vi inte är konsekventa helt enkelt. Varför måste Wikileaks i denna stund bevisa något? Precis som Jönsson påpekar så har inte rättsfallet mot Assange något att göra med Wikileaks. Assange är nuförtiden en hårt pressad person, han har alltid varit kontroversiell, så även om Assange själv vill se rättsfallet som en konspirationsteori så vet vi andra bättre, eller hur? Wikileaks är idag ingen välfungerande organisation, och har antagligen spelat ut sin roll bland medier i framtiden. Men det spelar inte heller någon roll. Varför fortsätter media/SvD/Jönsson att kommentera Wikileaks apropå Assange och cirkusen runt rättsfallet?

Faktum kvarstår att det cyniska politiska spel och övergreppen i de Afghanska och Irakiska krigerna som har avslöjats inte fick de logiska konsekvenser som det borde ha fått. De hårda fördömandena uteblev. Demokratin och öppenheten utvecklades inte framåt som den borde ha gjort. Eller så har den det på något sätt ändå får man hoppas, men varför vänder inte media sina artiklar i den riktningen istället för att fortsätta prata ner Wikileaks och därmed legitimera USA's och Kinas och alla andra länders kritik mot Wikileaks? Det var ledarna i dessa länder mfl som inte ville att den obekväma sanningen skulle komma ut, men vi har Wikileaks att tacka för dessa

sanningar, så låt inte historien om Wikileaks i efterhand att fokusera på Assange och rättsfallen utan på kampen för demokrati och framförallt öppenhet i medier.

Jörgen Sangsta

"Sveriges utpekade som amerikansk lydstat".... och ser det ut som något annat?? Varför är vi annars i Afghanistan och Libyen? Det neutrala Sverige... Varför fick CIA rendera två personer från Svenskt territorium till Egypten för tortyr 2001? Varför får Nato träna i Norrland....? Ja, frågorna är många! Och min slutsats har i många år varit att vi är just en lydstat till USA.

Annacath

De resurser som lagts ner på att lagföra Julian Assange är långt ifrån proportionella till de påstådda gärningarnas straffvärde. Så det vore naivt att tro att rättvisan står i förgrunden..

billybobson

Wikileaks vara eller inte vara spelar ingen roll. Det som borde spela roll är allt snusk som förekommer bakom ridåer av ambassader, utrikesdepartement för att värna om det egna folkets politik, makt över andra och välbefinnande. Det kommer alltid att finnas människor med intresse av att gräva fram och föra ut "statshemligheter" om manipulation och övergrepp mot mänskligheten. Vem som tog fram informationen eller vad det stod på "etiketten" är ej heller speciellt intressant. Däremot finns det ett värde i att veta vem det är som manipulerar och vem som skapar lidande för vanliga människor runt om i vår vida värld.

HandsomeHank

Motståndarsidan har laddat med det tyngsta artilleriet som finns tillgängligt när det gäller att få någon oskyldigt dömd och helt åsidosätta människors rättigheter. Claes Borgström

Daniel Hansson

Jag undrar hur det senaste året hade artat sig om inte åklagarna i Sverige hade drivit ett icke-ärende långt över vad som påbjuds. Oavsett ifall de avsedde att fördärva för Wikileaks eller ej, så har inte så stora rubriker kunnat skapas som om Assange hade varit fri. Nu blev istället fokuset om han trädde på en kondom eller ej med kvinnor som medgivit att de frivilligt haft sex med honom, men ångrat sig, och ifall detta ska räknas som våldtäkt. Viktig fråga, men tar helt fokuset från wikileaks arbete.

jagigen

"I Wikileaks officiella twitterflöde finns hundratals inlägg där Sveriges utpekade som amerikansk lydstat och som 'Nordens Israel.' Konspirerandet kan bara beskrivas som bisarrt." Handen på hjärtat— med tanke på vad som framkommit om hur USA dikterat sina krav på Sverige när det gäller allt från upphovsrätt till äckliga och olagliga renditions och hur vi snabbt böjt oss framåt och tagit emot och fullföljt kraven så kan väl ingen påstå att vi stått starka mot USA. Vi har agerat som lydstat. Om vi sedan är en eller om vi bara är bedrövligt fega utan karaktär kan man se som en petitess.

Wowa, svar till jagigen

Man stämplar mycket ofta faktabaserat material som konspirationsteorier och sätter en foliehatt på utpekade konspirationsteoretikernas huvud. Vi lever i Fablernas värld där media sysslar med "nothing to tell but a lot to sell".

HandsomeHank

Han kommer att komma hit och sedan läggs förundersökningen ned. Skadan är skedd i likhet med den nedlagda utredningen mot Dominique Strauss-Kahn , Mission Accomplished

Folkbira, svar till HandsomeHank

"Skadan" skedde när rockstjärnelivsstilen [???] gick för långt. Vi som har träffat Julian på datanördsträffar i flera år innan han blev känd är knappast förvånade över hans beteende. Det är få människor som jag har träffat som jag inte blir försvånad om dom blir polisanmälda för sådant, men han var definitivt en av dom. "Hybris" kallas det.

Wowa, svar till Folkbira

Assange är en narcissist och en känslökall person. Skadan skedde i barndomen; en sekt, LSD och otrugg miljö.

HandsomeHank, svar till Folkbira

Två religiösa kvinnor (groupies för att anknyta till ditt rocksack) som frivilligt haft sex med honom, men när de fick vetskap om varandra kände de sig utnyttjade och kränkta. Kondom snacket kommer innebära om det får rättsligt fäste att alla män som gjort kvinnor som påstått att de åt p-piller med barn har blivit våldtagna av kvinnorna då det saknades samtycke till samlag utan p-piller. Give me a break

Jonh Lennitz

Wikileaks har gör saker som er lilla tidning aldrig kommer att göra. Ni varken klarar det eller har modet att göra det. Var glad att Wikileaks finns. Sexanklagelserna är bara ett sätt att tysta det. Man får inte säga sanningen i det här sjuka välden Vi lever i

Folkbira 2

Det vore verkligen HELT SJUKT om Sverige inte ens höll förhör med folk som blir anmälda för sexualbrott. Självklart ska han på förhör om det finns en polisutredning— allt annat vore helt sjukt. Och ärligt talat, Sverige är inte ens med i NATO. Varför skulle han bli utlämnad till USA från Sverige om inte England lämnar ut honom!? Tänk innan du öppnar munnen nästa gång.

Medborgare X, svar till Folkbira

Ja, varför förhördes inte Assange när han var i Sverige? Han stannade kvar i nästan 2 månader i väntan på att få bli förhörd. När hans uppehållstillstånd började närma sig utgången åkta han till England efter att via sin advokat ha frågat åklagare Marianne Ny om det var OK att han lämnade landet. När han fått OK och åkt till England ändrar sig plötsligt Marianne Ny och vill få till ett förhör. Assange erbjuder ett par datum då det passar honom att komma tillbaka till Sverige för ett förhör, men få då nej från Marianne Ny. Hon vill bestämt att det ska ske vid en annan tidpunkt. Assange erbjuder då förhör via telefon eller videolänk, men det accepterar inte Marianne Ny (trots att de till exempel flera av förhören med målsäganden har skett via telefon). Inte heller vill Marianne Ny skicka polis och förhørsledare till London för att hålla förhör, trots att även det är ett vanligt förekommande sätt att hålla förhör.

Det är knappast Assange som har motsatt sig att bli förhörd. Det är det svenska rättsväsendet som har gjort allt för att sätta käppar i hjulen för hela utredningen och få Assange att framstå i så dålg dager som möjligt. Tyvärr är detta precis så som rättsväsendet brukar behandla män som misstänks för sexbrott. OM de inte kan dömas på formella grunder så ska de istället smutskastas offentligt.

Daniel Jönsson, svar till Folkbira

Ja det är konstigt att folk inte förhörs för sexualbrott? Varför gjordes inget förhör när Assange faktiskt befann sig i Sverige? Men ok. Låt oss anta att han nu inte ens varit i Sverige. Varför görs då inte detta förhör över telefon t.ex.? Det var ju inget problem för motparterna.

Sen har NATO eller inte ingenting att göra med huruvida han skulle bli utlämnad eller inte. Faktumet är att blir han utlämnad till Sverige så KAN han bli överlämnad till USA, utan någon rättegång eller försvar mot den utlämningen. England har inget sådant avtal med USA utan de måste gå den vanliga vägen genom rättssystemet för att få honom utlämnad, där han har rätt att försvara sig mot utlämningen precis så som han gör mot utlämningen till Sverige.

Sannolikheten är väl inte allt för stor att Sverige faktiskt gör det då de ju nog inte gärna vill ha den publiciteten på ett så pass uppmärksammat fall, men samtidigt finns risken, och den ökar när svenska riksdagen och regeringen vägrar ens lova att inte göra det.

<http://blog.svd.se/redaktionschefsbloggen/2011/11/02/konspirationsteorierna-slar-tillbaka-mot-wikileaks/>

Overlooked evidence in the Assange trial

Submitted by Anonymous
Authored by Bella Magnani
WL Central
2011-11-04

Since the 100-page Swedish police protocol file leaked onto the internet in February 2011, it has been widely known that the SKL (Sweden's national forensic laboratory) failed to find any chromosomal DNA— either male or female— on the torn, used condom that Complainant AA gave to police 12 days after the event as evidence of her allegations. For anyone who doubts this fact, it's on page 77 of the police protocol....

Now, at that point— 25 October, 2010— one would hope that a competent and impartial investigations team would turn toward investigating how this forensic finding came about. Sweden takes very seriously the issue of making false claims or presenting false evidence in sex crime cases, which is punishable with a 2-year prison sentence. In this particular case, however, the lead investigation officer, Mats Gehlin, simply asked the SKL to run the test again (page 81 of the FUP). In fairness, the first result does mention a tiny speck that might be "something," which a second test later found to be a very small sample of mitochondrial DNA.

This is significant for two reasons: first, mitochondrial DNA is not uniquely identifying in the same way as chromosomal DNA; and, more importantly, a sample which contains mitochondrial DNA but no chromosomal DNA can only come from hair and nails. And, of course, a used condom should be awash with chromosomal DNA from both participants— but this one has none.

Its second significance— and far more important to Julian Assange's battle against extradition to Sweden— is that Marianne Ny, the Swedish prosecutor, was in

possession of these forensic facts (which could bring into question the credibility of AA's testimony and, perhaps, by extension the testimony of Complainant SW, given that it was AA's close personal friend and political colleague Irmeli Krans who wrote SW's witness statement) for some time before she issued the Interpol Red Notice and the European Arrest Warrant seeking Assange's surrender. Yet here is how Ny describes allegation 2, the "deliberately torn" condom incident, on the face of the European Arrest Warrant (EAW):

2. Sexual molestation — On 13-14 August 2010, in the home of the injured party [AA] in Stockholm, Assange deliberately molested the injured party by acting in a manner designed to violate her sexual integrity. Assange, who was aware that it was the expressed wish of the injured party and a prerequisite of sexual intercourse that a condom be used, consummated unprotected sexual intercourse with her without her knowledge.

In view of the forensic evidence, this could be construed as deliberate misrepresentation on someone's part, and one might ask whether Marianne Ny ought herself to be the subject of some sort of investigation into abuse of legal process. But who is asking that question? Not the Swedish authorities, nor the British courts (this is an EAW case, so they are not allowed to), and not a single UK mainstream newspaper or journalist—supposedly the people holding power to account on our behalf—has even mentioned this lack of DNA evidence or its implications for the case. Honourable exception: The Telegraph, once, back in February; since then, nothing.

So what's going on? The case being heard by the British courts is solely about the legal technicalities of the extradition request. The UK judges are prevented by the EAW system from even considering the evidence behind an EAW, except in wholly exceptional circumstances (and Assange's case, we are told, isn't exceptional); all of that is to be left for the courts of the requesting Member State to deal with. Surely, then, there's no question of contempt of court if the UK media discuss the facts of a case which may or may not be brought to trial in a foreign jurisdiction at some point in the future?

Isn't that what journalists are meant to do—investigate and present the truth to their readers? When was it decided that the restrictions placed upon our judges by the EAW system should also extend to our press? This matters because, even when UK courts do give the underlying evidence behind an extradition request some cursory scrutiny, there's an overwhelming imperative towards mutual recognition of disparate judicial systems built into the Framework Directive. The full High Court judgment handed down this week states that: *"The evidence in the file showed that the condom was examined by the Swedish National Laboratory of Forensic Science. The conclusion of the expert was that there was nothing to indicate that a tool had been used, but that the damage to the condom was created by the wear and tear of the condom"* (para 94), but this gets lost in the middle of a long and complex explanation of various legal authorities regarding "deception" in rape cases and how the conduct described on the face of the EAW therefore meets the requirement of dual criminality (paras 79-96). If judges' hands are tied so that they can only examine the legal niceties of the warrant procedure in this way, who then is to provide the scrutiny a Europe-wide fast-track extradition system needs, if not the press?

And such scrutiny is now doubly urgent. Given the other conclusions reached by this High Court judgment, does it set a dangerous precedent making it much more likely that EAWs will be used purely on the say-so of the police or an investigating prosecutor from now on?

And yet the *omerta* that has descended over the forensic findings of the Assange extradition case is total— almost global; try Googling for any news story anywhere that mentions the lack of DNA on the torn, used condom with which Assange is alleged to have sexually molested AA. Honourable exception No. 2: Guy Rundle in the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

Reading through the full High Court ruling makes one thing crystal-clear: the EAW system is designed to place mutual recognition and trust in the ability of other Member states' justice systems to reach a fair result— above any consideration of the facts in individual cases. Is this what we are all meant to do from now on: simply trust that those who administer the law as it is enshrined in our bright, shiny new EU Framework Directive are always right, and therefore beyond question and scrutiny?

<http://wlccentral.org/category/content-topics/julian-assange>



Harald Ullman och Julian Assange.

Assange kommer till Sverige-- anlitar Ullman PR

Dagens Media
2011-11-11

Dagensmedia.se kan avslöja att Julian Assange kommer till Sverige, senast den 6 december— och att han har anlitat Ullman PR för att hjälpa till med pr-arbetet inför förhöret med åklagaren. Enligt uppgift till dagensmedia.se har Julian Assange beslutat att komma till Sverige senast den 6 december i år.

Harald Ullman, som driver pr-byrån Ullman PR, har anlitats av den sexbrottsmisstänkte Wikileaks-grundaren, för att sköta all pr i Sverige. Harald Ullman ska även hjälpa Julian Assange och hans sällskap på sex personer att hitta gratis boende i Stockholm. Detta eftersom Wikileaks är en ideell organisation utan kostnader.

– Oj, har detta läckt? Ja, jag kan bekräfta att vi hjälper Julian Assange och att ta uppdraget var ett enkelt beslut eftersom han är helt oskyldig till våldtäkt, säger Harald Ullman till dagensmedia.se, och tillägger:

– Några ytterligare kommentarer har jag inte.

Harald Ullman har tidigare uttryckt stöd för Julian Assange på sin Facebook-sida, där han skrivit att "det svenska åklagarväsendet agerar på ett ytterst tveksam sätt" i fallet Assange. Han är även vice ordförande i City polisenämnd i Stockholm, ett uppdrag han fått genom Socialdemokraterna.

Den 2 november meddelade High Court i London att Julian Assange skulle utvisas till Sverige. Julian Assange misstänks för sexbrott mot två kvinnor.

Fredrik Svedjetun Av: Fredrik Svedjetun
Mejla reportern
Följ reportern på Twitter
08-545 222 05

Martin Schori Av: Martin Schori
Mejla reportern
Följ reportern på Twitter
08-545 222 16

Expressen: 2011-11-11

Julian Assange kommer till Sverige

Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange har beslutat att komma till Sverige och låta sig förhöras. Det uppger hans nyutsedda svenska PR-byrå.

- När han kommer till Sverige är inte jag säker på. Bara att han kommer till Sverige, säger Harald Ullman.

Uppgifterna kommer från början från Dagensmedia.se, som skriver att PR-byrån Ullman PR utsetts till Julian Assanges svenska mediekontakt. Uppgifterna bekräftas av Harald Ullman, som dock inte vet exakt datum när Assange kommer till Sverige.

- Jag kan bara säga att vi har i uppgift att hjälpa Assange med mediekontakter.

Enligt Dagens Media kommer Assange till landet tisdag den 6 december.

Varför väljer ni att företräda Assange?

- Han är helt oskyldig till våldtäkt, jag har läst polisförhören och han är oskyldig. Han har rätt att få hjälp i den här hårda medievärlden. Och jag tror att åklagaren kommer att lägga ner det här åtalet, säger Harald Ullman.

Om Assange delar den uppfattningen-- varför har han då inte valt att komma hit tidigare?

- För att han är rädd för att bli utlämnad till USA, säger Harald Ullman.

• *Hans L. Olofsson*

AB: 2011-11-11

Assange kommer till Sverige

Julian Assange kommer till Sverige innan den 6 december, rapporterar Dagens Media. Wikileaks grundare ska också ha anlitat en svensk pr-byrå.

Julian Assange misstänks för sexbrott mot två kvinnor. Förra veckan meddelade High Court i London att Assange ska utvisas till Sverige. Direkt efteråt höll Assange en presskonferens där han vägrade lämna besked huruvida han skulle överklaga beslutet eller ej.

Nu rapporterar Dagens Media att Assange bestämt sig för att komma till Sverige. Senast 6 december ska 40-åringen vara på plats.

Assange ska också ha anlitat pr-mannen Harald Ullman att sköta all pr.

– Ja, jag kan bekräfta att vi hjälper Julian Assange, säger Harald Ullman till Dagens Media.

• *Camilla Sundell*

[Obs! Ingenting om Haralds påstående om att Assange är oskyldig. --A.B.]

DN: 2011-11-11

Assange får svenskt pr-stöd

Julian Assange har anlitat en svensk pr-byrå, vars vd Harald Ullman hävdar att Wikileaks grundare kommer till Stockholm inom kort. För Assanges advokat här var detta en nyhet.

High Court (motsvarande hovrätten) i London avslag i förra veckan Assanges överklagan mot utlämning till Sverige på alla punkter. Hans advokater har till nästa vecka på sig att begära tillstånd för en prövning i Högsta domstolen. Assange är häktad i sin utevaro i Sverige därför att polisen vill förhöra honom de sexbrott han misstänks för.

Enligt Dagens Media har Assange anlitat Ullman PR inför det väntande förhöret. Ägaren Harald Ullman bekräftar uppgiften för TT och berättar att Assange kommer "inom närtid".

– Det har jag ingen aning om och kan varken bekräfta eller förneka uppgiften, säger advokat Björn Hurtig till TT — och tycker att resplanen låter lite märklig.

Efter ett eventuellt beslut om utlämning kommer Assange antingen att transporteras med brittisk eller svensk eskort. Stockholmspolisen kommer att mörka både tidpunkt och plats för hans ankomst.

Troligen kommer han att släppas fri efter förhör. Många tvivlar på att det kommer att bli något åtal eftersom ord kommer att stå mot ord.

Hur kan Assange bara åka hit, han har ju fotboja i Storbritannien?

– Jag har inga kommentarer till det, jag vet faktiskt inte, svarar Ullman.

• *Lars Pedersen/TT*

Assange hires Swedish PR company

The Local
November 12, 2011

Wikileaks founder Julian Assange is planning his return to Sweden to be questioned over rape and sexual assault allegations, Swedish PR firm Ullman said on Friday, claiming they have been hired by him to handle media pressure.

"I can say that he will be coming to Sweden soon, but I can't say when," Ullman PR chief executive Harald Ullman told AFP. "We will be helping him handle the media pressure," he explained, saying his company would begin its work while Assange was still in Britain.

The founder of whistleblower website WikiLeaks lost a bitter legal battle last week when London's High Court ruled he could be extradited from Britain to Sweden, but he still has until November 16th to appeal the ruling to the Supreme Court.

Ullman would not say if the preparations he had been hired to handle meant the 40-year-old Australian had decided to drop the final appeal.

Assange's Swedish lawyer Björn Hurtig meanwhile told AFP he had not been informed that his client had hired a PR company. "I haven't heard anything about that at all," he said.

Swedish prosecutors want to question Assange on suspicion of two counts of sexual molestation and an accusation of rape made by two Swedish women in August 2010.

Rendering Assange: Hillary Clinton's revenge?

Submitted by GMason
W.L. Central
12 Nov. 2011

While speculating about the fate of Julian Assange— in the face of U.S. wrath over the massive WikiLeaks disclosures of politically-sensitive diplomatic materials— most media reports have focused on the likelihood of Assange's extradition to the U.S. to face criminal charges. **Less discussed, however,** is the possibility of irregular rendition, which could pose a far greater threat to Assange's life and safety. Unfortunately for

Assange, the key to his fate lies in the hands of his political foil U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Indications abound that the U.S. may prosecute Assange and others for the public release of thousands of secret diplomatic cables. Confirming media reports, late last year U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder said that he had authorized "significant" actions in furtherance of a criminal investigation against Assange and his associates "involved in the breaking of American law." CNN's senior legal analyst Jeffrey Toobin has suggested that prosecutors have a sealed warrant for Assange's arrest, potentially on charges that the WikiLeaks leader jeopardized national security. "It's certainly my belief based on what the attorney general said that they have already got an arrest warrant for him and they are just waiting for the appropriate moment in the appropriate country," Toobin said. A State Department spokesman acknowledged the existence of an ongoing criminal investigation, adding that the U.S. would "hold those responsible fully accountable." And "with a US grand jury currently empanelled to consider charges of espionage," noted the Sydney Morning Herald, "it seems to many that it is only a question of where Assange will be imprisoned, not if."

Characterizing the WikiLeaks's disclosures as "worse even than a physical attack on Americans," Congressman Peter King called Assange an "enemy combatant"; King suggested prosecuting Assange for espionage, designating WikiLeaks as a terrorist organization, and freezing the group's assets. Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee called for the execution of those responsible for the leaks, while former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin said Assange "should be hunted down just like al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders." Some have theorized that such statements raise the possibility of conspiracy and/or espionage charges; reportedly, the Pentagon and Department of Justice have considered charging Assange under the Espionage Act, which could carry a decades-long prison sentence.

The possibility of criminal charges against Assange and other WikiLeaks associates became more concrete early this week, when a federal court ruled that the Justice Department could subpoena records of the Twitter accounts used by Assange, Bradley Manning, and other WikiLeaks associates targeted in a criminal investigation. Google and at least one internet service provider have allegedly received similar subpoenas. This spectre of possible U.S. criminal charges looms as a U.K. court has also ruled that Assange may soon face extradition for questioning regarding alleged sex violations in Sweden, where Assange could be held indefinitely without charge and without access to visitors, lawyers, or the media.

Assange and his legal team have contested his extradition to Sweden partly on grounds that he might then be extradited to the U.S., and there face torture or the death penalty. However, the European Court of Human Rights has ruled that extradition of a suspect to the U.S. to face capital charges would violate the European Convention on Human Rights; consequently, most European countries refuse to extradite to the U.S. unless they are assured that suspects will not be subject to the death penalty. In part because of his celebrity, Assange is unlikely to be an exception to this rule. Moreover, laws prohibit torture and other inhumane treatment within the United States and in U.S.-controlled facilities (although the rights of prisoners at Guantanamo remain somewhat questionable).

However, the options of U.S. officials are not limited to extradition. Indeed, a far greater threat to Assange's safety would be posed by the relatively recent U.S. practice

of extraordinary rendition. Generally reserved for suspected terrorists, "extraordinary" or "irregular" rendition involves the extra-legal abduction of a suspect from a non-U.S. host country to another country (such as Egypt, Morocco, or Jordan) known to employ harsh interrogation tactics that may constitute torture. Rendered detainees may be held indefinitely, incommunicado, and without access to attorneys.

As an Australian national currently located outside the U.S., Assange would appear to be a potential candidate for such rendition. A Congressional Research Service report on extraordinary rendition states:

"Little publicly available information from government sources exists regarding the nature and frequency of U.S. renditions to countries believed to practice torture, or the nature of any assurances obtained from them before rendering persons to their custody. It appears that most, if not all, cases in which the United States has irregularly rendered persons have involved the transfer of non-citizens seized outside the United States, perhaps because persons within the United States (and U.S. citizens outside the country) are provided procedural protections against being summarily transferred to another country under federal statute and the Constitution. The legal limitations against the rendition of non-citizens seized outside the United States are much more limited."

Authorized under Reagan, implemented by Clinton, and widely deemed an illegal practice, the irregular rendition program is used to circumvent laws in the U.S. and other countries that have adopted the United Nations Conventions Against Torture (CAT). A 2007 report by the European Parliament indicated that the CIA had conducted at least 1,000 irregular renditions to countries where suspects might face torture. Sweden has, in the past, participated in this type of rendition; one such instance is the case of Ahmed Agiza and Mohammed al-Zery, who were rendered from Sweden to Egypt and allegedly tortured. Just days after taking office, President Obama issued an Executive Order opposing rendition torture and promising to shut down the CIA's secret torture prisons. However, this may be complicated by the fact that most such prisons are reportedly temporary, and thus difficult to detect. Additionally, some have averred the use of "floating" prison ships to conceal detainees.

CAT Article 3 prohibits any country from extraditing an individual to another country "where there are substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture." Therefore, prior to transferring suspects to receiving countries, the U.S. allegedly receives promises that detainees won't be tortured upon arrival. However, the U.S. Congress has passed regulations that exclude certain aliens from CAT's protections, including any suspect who is deemed "a danger to the community of the United States" or "is believed, on the basis of reasonable grounds, to be a danger to the security of the United States."

The above-cited comments by King and other government officials in the U.S. suggest that some may try to apply this exception to Assange, thus depriving him of international protections against acts of torture. One could imagine a scenario in which Assange might be rendered from Sweden to another country, forced to "confess" under duress of "enhanced interrogation," and then extradited to the U.S., there to contend with federal prosecutors armed with the details of any "confession" (whether genuine or false) obtained during torture.

Whether Assange faces U.S. extradition, irregular rendition, or both, one additional fact may work against him. Requests for U.S. extradition come from the Department of State, which has discretion and jurisdiction over the proceedings. Statements in the media by Assange and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton would tend to indicate an absence of mutual affection. Assange, for instance, has said:

- "... the law is not what, not simply what, powerful people would want others to believe it is ... the law is not what Hillary Clinton says it is."
- "... the U.S. State Department ... acts not ... in the interest of the U.S. people but in the interest of the State Department."
- "[Clinton] should resign if it can be shown that she was responsible for ordering U.S. diplomatic figures to engage in espionage in the United Nations, in violation of the international covenants to which the U.S. has signed up. Yes, she should resign over that."

Clinton, for her part, has called the Wikileaks disclosures "an attack on the international community" that "puts people's lives in danger, threatens our national security and undermines our efforts to work with other countries." Stating that WikiLeaks has committed criminal acts that "tear at the fabric" of responsible government, Clinton asserted that the U.S. has been taking "aggressive steps to hold responsible those who stole this information."

The State Department rejected a request by WikiLeaks to cooperate in redacting the diplomatic cables before their release. Publicly humiliated by the WikiLeaks disclosure of sensitive details regarding the functioning of the agency under her command, Clinton now holds the power of office to take revenge against Assange by having him extradited, abducted, and tortured ... or even eliminated.

<http://wlccentral.org/node/2342>

DN: 2011-11-17

Assange byter advokater

Julian Assange har utsett advokaterna Per E Samuelson och Thomas Olsson till nya försvarare i stället för Björn Hurtig. Detta har i dag anmälts till Stockholms tingsrätt.

Advokat Thomas Olsson säger till TT att han bara haft kontakt med Assange under en kortare tid.

– Motivet till att han byter försvarare får han uttala sig själv om, säger Olsson till TT.

Olsson har precis börjat läsa in sig på rättsfallet— de sexualbrott som Assange är misstänkt för— och kommer att ge sin syn på det i början av nästa vecka. Han vill inte säga om försvararbytet på något sätt hänger ihop med att Assange eventuellt har planer på att komma till Sverige.

Så sent som i tisdags överklagade Assange High Courts (motsvarande hovrätt) beslut att utlämna honom till Sverige till Storbritanniens högsta domstol.

Advokat Björn Hurtig säger att det "absolut inte" ligger någon konflikt mellan honom och Assange bakom advokatbytet.

– Varför han valt att byta får du fråga honom om. Men det är inte ovanligt att man byter advokat och han har valt två ypperliga nya företrädare. Jag önskar dem lycka till, säger Hurtig till TT.

Inte heller Hurtig känner till om advokatbytet förebådar att Assange kommer tidigare till Sverige än man tidigare trott, det vill säga först efter beslut i Storbritanniens högsta domstol, som väntas komma den 5 december.

TT

AB: 19 nov 2011

S-kvinna stal böcker— avgår

Var framtidslöfte inom partiet: "Helt idiotiskt"

Hon spåddes bli en av Socialdemokraternas framtida ledare. Nu åtalas den unga kvinnan, misstänkt för att ha stulit böcker i en bokhandel.

– Det var helt idiotiskt och omdömeslöst— jag har nu lämnat alla politiska uppdrag, säger hon till Aftonbladet.

Kvinnan, som är i 30-årsåldern, har länge ansetts vara ett av Socialdemokraternas stora framtidsnamn. Hon har redan haft flera betydelsefulla uppdrag i partiet och arbetat nära partistyrelsen.

För en dryg vecka sedan gick hon in på en bokhandel. Hon plockade ner flera böcker från butikshyllorna och började ta bort prislapparna. Sedan stoppade hon diskret ner böckerna i en tygkasse.

Kvinnan gick därefter snabbt ut ur butiken, förbi larmbågarna och ut på gatan. Men personalen hade sett hela förloppet och en butiksanställd gjorde ett så kallat envarsgripande, höll kvar henne och larmade polisen. När polisen kom sa kvinnan att hon önskade att hon inte stulit böckerna.

– Jag vet att det inte är en ursäkt, men det är inte lätt att leva på ett halvt studiestöd från CSN, sa hon till poliserna.

Till Aftonbladet säger kvinnan att hon har mått dåligt en längre tid.

– Det är ett privat misslyckande, jag insåg direkt hur idiotiskt det var och jag har hanterat de politiska konsekvenserna genom att lämna mina uppdrag.

När kvinnan greps fanns fem böcker i tygkassen till ett värde av drygt 1600 kronor. Kvinnan åtalas nu för stöld, vilket hon erkänner. Rättegången hålls i början av nästa år.

Det här tog hon från bokhandeln

”Politics and the Environment” av James Connelly, Graham Smith med flera.
En bok om miljöfrågor, och hur de hanteras politiskt.

”Omstridd natur” av Camilla Sandström, Tor Arnesen med flera.
En bok om trender och utmaningar i nordisk naturförvaltning.

”Trettiotvå poeter tjugohundraelva” av Johannes Anyuru, Ida Börjel med flera.
En ”öppnande, inbjudande och igångsättande” poesiantologi med poesi från det gångna årtiondet.

”Välkommen till den här världen” av Amanda Svensson.
En roman som handlar om tre människor som vantrivs i kulturen. Tre vilsna människor som alla är i lika stort behov av att bli förstådda, att någon ska förstå något som de själva aldrig fått grepp om.

”En kärleksförklaring” av Jenny Sahlin och Jimmy Ekman.
En fyll i-bok för par, där känslor och tankar kring förhållandet står i fokus. Källa: Bokus.com

• *Eric Tagesson*

<http://mobil.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article13957453.ab>

[Obs! Boktjuven heter Kajsa Borgnäs, vän till Anna Ardin och en av polisens vittnen i Assange-fallet. —A.B.]

Svaga resonemang i domen om överlämnandet av Assange

Brita Sundberg-Weitman
Newsmill
2011-11-20

Den 2 november i år offentliggjorde engelska High Court sin dom som fastställde att Julian Assange ska överlämnas till Sverige enligt den europeiska arresteringsorder som överåklagaren Marianne Ny utfärdat. Domskälen är omfattande. Domen består av 160 punkter. Som jag skrev i en tidigare artikel var det fyra frågor som domstolen hade att besvara (här i den ordning de behandlats av High Court):

- Den engelska lag som reglerar utfärdande av europeisk arresteringsorder föreskriver att en sådan ska vara utfärdad av en ”judicial authority”. Marianne Ny är åklagare. Kan hon i England anses vara en ”judicial authority”?
- Är de gärningar som beskrivs i arresteringsordern en rättvisande (fair and accurate) beskrivning av vad de båda målsägandena sagt enligt polisrapporten?
- En europeisk arresteringsorder måste enligt den engelska lagen riktas mot någon som är anklagad och ha till syfte att åtala denne (accused and for the purpose of being prosecuted). Är denna förutsättning uppfylld trots att det inte finns något beslut att åtala Assange?
- Är arresteringsordern förenlig med proportionalitetsprincipen (inte mera tvång än nöden kräver)?

I punkterna 8-19 anger High Court, bestående av Sir John Thomas och Mr Justice Ouseley, sina allmänna utgångspunkter. Den engelska lagen måste i fråga om europeisk arresteringsorder läsas i ljuset av EU's rambeslut och så långt möjligt tolkas i harmoni med rambeslutet. Detta beslut vilar på grundtanken om samarbete mellan medlemsstaterna på rättsområdet och på principen om ömsesidigt erkännande av domstolsbeslut, dock utan avkall på rättssäkerheten. Hur långtgående granskning som en europeisk arresteringsorder ska underkastas måste bedömas med hänsyn till omständigheterna i det enskilda fallet.

1. Judicial authority

Frågan om en åklagare kan anses vara en "judicial authority" behandlas under punkterna 20-54. Den besvaras jakande med hänvisning till EU's rambeslut, som överlåtit åt varje medlemsstat att bestämma vilka eller vilket organ som omfattas i den staten.

2. Är arresteringsorderns beskrivningar av de brott Assange misstänks för rättvisande?

Domskälen är i den här frågan mycket utförliga, punkterna 55-127. Utgångspunkten är vad Marianne Ny påstår i arresteringsordern (preciserat i början av domen, punkt 3):

OLAGA TVÅNG: Assange har den 13-14 augusti 2010 i målsäganden AA's bostad i Stockholm genom våld tvingat henne att tåla att han hindrat hennes rörelsefrihet. Våldet har bestått i att han hållit fast hennes armar och tvingat isär hennes ben samt liggande över henne med sin kroppstyngd betvingat henne och därigenom hindrat henne från att röra sig eller förflytta sig.

SEXUELLT OFREDANDE: Assange har den 13-14 augusti 2010 i målsäganden AA's bostad i Stockholm uppsåtligen i handling ofredat henne på sätt som varit ägnat att kränka hennes sexuella integritet. Assange, som varit medveten om att användande av skydd vid samlag i form av kondom varit målsägandens uttryckliga vilja och förutsättning för det sexuella umgänget, har utan hennes vetskap genomfört ett fullbordat oskyddat samlag med henne.

SEXUELLT OFREDANDE: Assange har den 18 augusti 2010 eller dagarna däromkring, i målsäganden AA's bostad i Stockholm uppsåtligen ofredat målsäganden på sätt som varit ägnat att kränka hennes sexuella integritet genom att lägga sig intill henne och pressa sin nakna erigerade penis mot hennes kropp.

VÅLDTÅKT: Assange har den 17 augusti 2010 i målsäganden SW's bostad i Enköping uppsåtligen genomfört ett samlag med henne genom att otillbörligt utnyttja att hon på grund av sömn befunnit sig i ett hjälplöst tillstånd. En försvårande omständighet vid gärningen är att Assange, som varit medveten om att användande av skydd vid samlag i form av kondom varit målsägandens uttryckliga vilja och förutsättning för sexuellt umgänge, trots detta har genomfört ett fullbordat oskyddat samlag med henne. Den sexuella handlingen har varit ägnad att kränka målsägandens sexuella integritet.

High Court finner att domstolen egentligen inte behöver gå in på vad som sagts enligt polisrapporten, detta med hänsyn bl a till att Svea hovrätt förklarar Assange häktad såsom på sannolika skäl misstänkt för de brott som anges i arresteringsordern. Där-

efter följer emellertid en genomgång av målsägandenas utsagor enligt polisrapporten, "de bene esse" (kan kanske här översättas med "för alla eventualiteter").

Enligt polisrapporten har AA sagt att Assange inledde med att smeka hennes ben, vilket hon "väkomnade", att de lade sig nakna på hennes säng, hon på rygg och han ovanpå, att hon hindrade honom från att penetrera henne eftersom hon inte ville ha samlag utan kondom, och att Assange frågade varför hon knep ihop benen och efter hennes förklaring tog på sig en kondom, varpå de hade samlag med hennes samtycke.

High Court fann att den i den europeiska arresteringsordern beskrivna gärningen motsvarade de av AA beskrivna händelserna och alltså var "fair and accurate".

Visserligen skulle man, säger domstolen, kunna invända att han släppte sitt grepp om henne när hon uttalat sitt krav på kondom och att de därefter hade ett av båda samtyckt samlag. Men, framhåller domstolen, om man begränsar sig till den tidpunkt när han hindrade hennes rörelsefrihet stämmer Marianne Ny's gärningsbeskrivning med vad AA sagt enligt polisrapporten, och gärningen skulle ha varit brottslig även i England.

Sådär fortsätter domstolen med omständlig prövning av om den europeiska arresteringsordern har stöd i målsägandenas berättelser enligt polisrapporten. Att den i arresteringsordern beskrivna våldtäkten skedde när målsäganden "på grund av sömn befunnit sig i ett hjälplöst tillstånd", trots att målsäganden själv sagt att hon "halvsov" (efter flera ömsesidigt samtyckta samlag med Assange) är en omständig-het som enligt High Court blir högst relevant vid en kommande rättegång men som saknar betydelse för den prövning om överlämnande som High Court har att göra.

3. Är Assange anklagad och eftersökt för åtal?

Frågan behandlas under punkterna 128-154. Domstolen konstaterar först att en europeisk arresteringsorder inte är tillåten för utredning eller i syfte att samla bevis mot någon för eventuellt åtal. Texten i den av Marianne Ny utfärdade arresteringsordern anger emellertid att Assange söks "för lagföring", vilket i den engelska versionen motsvaras av "for the purpose of being prosecuted".

Assanges jurister framhöll att Marianne Ny i Sverige vid flera tillfällen offentligt uttalat att Assange endast är misstänkt och att det är en öppen fråga om han kommer att åtalas.

Här kommer High Court på litet snåriga vägar fram till slutsatsen att Assange är "accused" och att arresteringsordern har till syfte att åtala honom. Motiveringen: Arresteringsordern anger vilka gärningar Assange är misstänkt för, och de båda kvinnornas utsagor enligt polisrapporten ger klart uttryck för vad han sägs ha gjort. Så med fokus enbart på fakta är han klart anklagad. ("On the basis of intense focus on the facts he is plainly accused.")

Enligt High Court har brottmålsprocessen därmed inletts. Ty i svensk rätt får åtal inte beslutas innan den misstänkte har hörts och fått ta del av vad som förekommit under förundersökningen. I England och Wales fattas beslut om åtal på ett mycket tidigt stadium, och om det Assange gjort skulle ha hänt i England eller Wales skulle en brottmålsprocess mot honom redan ha inletts ("There can be no doubt that if what Mr Assange had done had been done in England and the Wales, he would have been charged and thus criminal proceedings have been commenced.")

Om det skulle anses att inledningen av ett brottmålsförfarande är beroende av åtal, skulle det innebära att se på den svenska processen genom trångsynta common-law-ögon. ("If the commencement of criminal proceedings were to be viewed as dependent on whether a person has been charged, it would be to look at Swedish procedure through the narrowest of common law eyes.") [*Perhaps. But that is an expressly stated condition for a European Arrest Warrant. --A.B.*]

4. Proportionalitetsprincipen

Det här är enligt min mening en verkligt svag punkt i domen. Proportionalitetsprincipen — som innebär att ett tvångsmedel inte får användas om ändamålet med åtgärden kan uppnås på ett för den enskilde mindre ingripande sätt — är av fundamental betydelse i den praxis som utvecklats i såväl EU-domstolen som Europadomstolen för mänskliga rättigheter. Principen ger ett handfast och relativt lättillämpat skydd mot sådant maktmissbruk som består i att en myndighet använder sin makt på ett formellt oantastligt sätt men när ändamålet med åtgärden kunde ha uppnåtts med mindre tvång. Poängen med proportionalitetsprincipen är att den drabbade inte behöver bevisa ont uppsåt hos myndighetspersonen (vilket i praktiken är omöjligt). Myndigheten tvingas att ange syftet med sin åtgärd, varefter frågan om detta syfte kunnat uppnås på ett mindre ingripande sätt kan besvaras relativt enkelt.

Assanges argumentering på den här punkten var att Marianne Ny kunde ha slutfört förundersökningen genom att höra honom i England enligt regler om ömsesidig rättslig hjälp i Sverige och utomlands. Det finns ett svenskt rättsfall från 2007, där Högsta domstolen ansåg att en för grova skattebrott misstänkt man bosatt i Dubai inte fick häktas innan man först försökt höra honom på telefon eller genom skriftväxling.

High Court avfärdar emellertid proportionalitetsprincipen i några ynka stycken på slutet av domen. Motiveringen är respekt för Svea hovrätt ("the respect this court should accord the decision of the Court of Appeal of Svea").

Svea hovrätts beslut innehåller förvisso att "Skälen för häktning uppväger det intrång eller men i övrigt som åtgärden innebär för Julian Assange eller för något annat motstående intresse", men det är en fras kopierad från rättegångsbalken och säger ingenting om hur (eller överhuvudtaget om) hovrätten resonerat.

Själv betvivlar jag starkt att det i detta fall ligger några verkliga överväganden bakom frasen. Hovrätten har för övrigt inte haft att ta ställning till utfärdande av europeisk arresteringsorder, och även om den skulle ha haft det så innehåller förordning (2003:1178) om överlämnandet till Sverige enligt en europeisk arresteringsorder bara en intetsägande "konkretisering" av proportionalitetsprincipen: "En svensk arresteringsorder får utfärdas endast om det med beaktande av det men för den enskilde samt den tidsutdräkt och de kostnader som kan antas uppkomma i ärendet framstår som motiverat med hänsyn till brottets art och svårighetsgrad samt övriga omständigheter."

Enligt EU-rätten ska proportionalitetsprincipen iaktas vid tillämpning av all EU-rätt, vare sig tillämparen är ett EU-organ eller en medlemsstat. Således har den engelska domstolen, som ju tillämpat rambeslutet om en europeisk arresteringsorder, enligt min mening varit skyldig att på eget ansvar överväga om Marianne Nys arresteringsorder är förenlig med proportionalitetsprincipen. Det har inte skett.

<http://www.newsmill.se/artikel/2011/11/20/svaga-resonemang-i-domen-om-verl-mnandet-av-assange>

The Guardian's Vendetta Against Julian Assange

Submitted by Jaraparilla

W.L. Central

11/25/2011

Ever since Britain's The Guardian newspaper co-operated with WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange to publish the greatest document leaks in history, they have pursued a relentless smear campaign against him. As Assange's likely extradition to Sweden looms, this campaign has now ramped up to a point where it has jumped the shark.

Since March 2010, The Guardian has published over a dozen articles criticising Assange (with only a small fraction of that number published in support). There is a singular lack of substance to these *ad hominem* attacks, which originate from a small circle of closely-connected journalists. And curiously, nearly every one of these critical stories includes the words "anti-Semite" and/or "Holocaust denier".

So does The Guardian believe Assange is an anti-Semite? Surprise, surprise, the allegation is never made. Rather, Assange is smeared by a tenuous association with an obscure journalist named Israel Shamir, just one of several hundred journalists with whom WikiLeaks has worked in recent years.

Such a co-ordinated campaign of character assassination amounts to shamefully abusive behaviour for a major media outlet. It's time those involved were held to account...

THE MAIN CHARACTERS

Alan Rusbridger

As the Guardian's editor-in-chief, Rusbridger directs editorial policy and has the final say on publication. If the Guardian is pursuing an agenda, Rusbridger is behind it. From Wikipedia: "He is a member of the board of Guardian News and Media, of the main board of the Guardian Media Group and of the Scott Trust, which owns The Guardian and The Observer, of which he is executive editor. Rusbridger received £471,000 in pay and benefits in 2008/9."

Given the nature of these allegations, perhaps it's worth noting that Rusbridger's wife is Jewish and his daughter was involved in an anti-Semitic controversy while working as a Guardian comments moderator.

David Leigh

Rusbridger's wife's brother David Leigh is editor in charge of The Guardian's Investigations Team. An attitude of hissing contempt for Assange runs throughout his book "Wikileaks— Inside Julian Assange's War on Secrecy", which Leigh published with Guardian colleague Luke Harding. In that book, Leigh published the password to the CableGate files (plus the "salt") although the Guardian has ever since blamed Assange for the unredacted cables' release.

Leigh has never properly explained what Assange did to deserve such visceral treatment. He frequently refers to a secretive meeting where Leigh claims the Australian wanted to release US cables unredacted because "informants deserve to die".

Assange claims he never made such a comment, and WikiLeaks has always worked hard to redact leaked documents. But even if he had said it, would that single comment justify a never-ending campaign of hate from a supposedly respectable newspaper?

James Ball

Now employed as a full-time journalist under David Leigh, the youthful James Ball is a former Wikileaks staffer who apparently took a few things with him when he left. He has made a career writing about his dissatisfaction with Assange, and his "insider" experiences have formed the basis for most of the Guardian's reporting. Ball claims to support the principles of WikiLeaks, "but not the principals". He previously worked as a researcher for Heather Brooke, the woman who passed the CableGate file to the New York Times and then wrote her own WikiLeaks book slamming Assange's character. Ball is now publishing a WikiLeaks book of his own. Ka-ching!?

Israel Shamir

The man whom the Guardian regularly labels a "notorious anti-Semite and Holocaust denier" was born to Jewish parents and served with the Israeli Defence Forces before moving abroad and converting to Orthodox Christianity. An independent journalist who claims to have worked with the BBC and Haaretz, Shamir has adopted a variety of aliases while reporting from various locations in post-Soviet Eastern Europe. Is he an anti-Semite? Even some informed anti-Zionist campaigners believe so. Perhaps you should make up your own mind. Here's Shamir's own explanation of his controversial views.

But here's the thing. Even if you DO believe that Shamir is an anti-Semite, how does that justify The Guardian's vendetta against Julian Assange? Assange claims to have only met Shamir twice; Shamir was given the same level of access to a restricted set of WikiLeaks cables as dozens of other journalists around the world; and WikiLeaks has ridiculed The Guardian's claims that Shamir was paid for his services.

So what's the real agenda behind this Guardian campaign of smear by association?

THE STORIES

17th Dec 2010

Andrew Brown's Guardian blog begins: "WikiLeaks's spokesperson and conduit in Russia has been exposed in the Swedish media as an anti-semite and Holocaust denier..." The Swedish media source he cites is Expressen, which is part of a right-wing media group owned by the Jewish Bonnier family.

31st Jan 2011

A Guardian extract from the Leigh/Harding book is titled: "Holocaust denier in charge of handling Moscow cables". The extract quotes "one staffer" and "one insider"—both of whom appear to be James Ball. It also describes "internal WikiLeaks documents, seen by the Guardian" without revealing Ball as the source.

5th Feb 2011

Writing in The Guardian, self-styled Web guru Evgeny Mozorov, pre-emptively declares Assange finished. He throws in an obligatory Shamir reference, albeit fairly recognising him as "a stranger" to WikiLeaks.

16th Feb 2011

Assange contacts Private Eye magazine to complain about an article linking him with Shamir, including leaked emails suggesting Assange does not find Shamir's writing anti-Semitic. Liberal Conspiracy, "the UK's most popular left-of-centre politics blog", gives a Hat Tip to James Ball for the story. Hmn, I wonder where Private Eye got those leaked emails?

NB: Private Eye, which was "frequently anti-Semitic" until the 1980s, is not always so concerned about anti-Semitism.

24th Feb 2011

David Leigh tries to put the boot into Assange. In an article titled "It's Julian Assange's own 'tizzy' that bamboozles", he ridicules Assange's complaints, casts aspersions on his lawyers, and then (bizzarrrely) lectures him about keeping his private life out of the media.

1st March 2011

A week after a judge rules that Assange should be extradited to Sweden, Private Eye's Ian Hislop opens fire in The Guardian. Assange responds: "Hislop has distorted, invented or misremembered almost every significant claim and phrase. In particular, 'Jewish conspiracy' is completely false, in spirit and in word."

3rd March 2011

John Kampfner, CEO of Index on Censorship, cites Israel Shamir as his central reason for not supporting WikiLeaks.

9th April 2011

Esther Addley writes in The Guardian: "Douglas Murray, director of the centre for social cohesion, challenged Assange over the website's sources of funding, its staffing and connections with the Holocaust denier Israel Shamir, who has worked with the site."

2nd Sept 2011

A Guardian editorial blames Assange for releasing the unredacted Cablegate files: "[WikiLeaks] has dwindled to being the vehicle of one flawed individual... occasionally brilliant, but increasingly volatile and erratic." There is no mention of David Leigh's password gaffe, nor of disgruntled ex-WikiLeaks staffer Daniel Domscheit-Berg, whose comments to German media triggered the public exposure of the files.

2nd Sept 2011

Former WikiLeaks insider James Ball writes: Why I Had To Leave WikiLeaks. In this article, Ball cites Shamir as his reason for leaving WikiLeaks, although he also says "the last straw" was Assange's decision to publish the full, unredacted CableGate file (never mind it was his new editors at The Guardian who published the password). Ball also claims that he was worried that after the most important cables had been redacted, "a large volume of cables would remain, of little interest to any media organisation." And yet, when the unredacted cables were released, Ball took no further interest in them. He nonchalantly Tweeted that the media had "had their turn" with the cables, and it was the public's turn now.

18th Sept 2011

Nick Cohen goes to town with a disgusting smear piece in The Guardian: "The treachery of Julian Assange". Cohen claims that the Shamir allegations render anything Assange ever says or does meaningless: "One can say with certainty, however, that Assange's involvement with Shamir is enough to discredit his claim that he published the documents in full because my colleagues on the Guardian inadvertently revealed a link to a site he was meant to have taken down."

26th Sept 2011

Ignoring basic media principles, David Leigh reviews the "unauthorised autobiography" of Assange: "It's a shame Assange couldn't get on with the Guardian... Assange shows, regrettably, that he is living in a fantasy world."

2nd Oct 2011

Karin Olsson, Culture Editor at Sweden's Expressen, is invited by a Guardian editor to write another substance-free smear piece: "Julian Assange: from hero to zero". She calls Assange "a paranoid chauvinist pig [who] cuts an increasingly pitiable figure". As with the Nick Cohen article, this smear is widely reprinted in newspapers around the world, including Australia's Fairfax media. Once again, Assange's over-hyped association with Shamir is the central pillar of the attack. And as usual with these Guardian smear pieces, readers' comments are overwhelmingly disgusted at the author.

8th Nov 2011

James Ball wades back into the fray, ostensibly in protection of women's rights: Israel Shamir and Julian Assange's cult of machismo. While slammimg both men as misogynists, Ball repeats tired claims that Shamir gave unredacted US cables to the President of Belarus. Readers comments— including mine— are again overwhelmingly hostile to the author.

CONCLUSION

The stories above are by no means a conclusive list of Guardian attacks on Assange. And of course WikiLeaks has been unfairly treated in many other media outlets— particularly in the USA— although curiously the Shamir controversy is generally ignored elsewhere.

So why is The Guardian, of all papers, pursuing such a petty, unprofessional, and unsubstantiated smear attack on Julian Assange? Is his barely noteworthy association with an obscure journalist really cause for so much fuss? Is this an embarrassingly unprofessional editorial grudge born from personality differences? Or can it all be about maintaining control of target audiences in the newly digitised media world?

Wikileaks has laid bare the naked corruption of our ruling elites and their media enablers. So what is The Guardian's agenda here? Who is driving this vendetta and why? Alan Rusbridger has some explaining to do.

PS: Anyone wanting to discuss this further is welcome to do so at my blog:
<http://jaraparilla.blogspot.com/2011/11/guardians-vendetta-against-julian.html>

UPDATE 1: An interesting timeline from the comments at my blog:

17/12/10, 4pm— Andrew Brown publishes blog with all source links still in Swedish language. Obviously a rush job as they didn't even bother to translate these sources. Brown even apologises for this at the end of the article. As well as smearing Israel Shamir it also seeks to smear his son, Johann Walstrom— Witness E in the Swedish case and a favourable witness for Assange— by association with his father.

17/12/10, 7pm— The Guardian writes 3 articles on the Belarus cables and 3 on the Cuba cables. It then uploads all its redacted Belarus and Cuba cables to Wikileaks. Some are very heavily— and apparently unnecessarily— redacted. Bear in mind that Israel Shamir was the first journalist to write about the Guardian "cable cooking".

17/12/10, 9pm— Nick Davies publishes the notorious "10 Days in Sweden" hit piece, which shamelessly distorted the leaked police protocol, kicking off the personal smear attacks against Assange in the English-speaking media.

UPDATE 2: Andrew Brown is the religious ("belief") editor at the Comment Is Free (CIF) section of Guardian. He lived in Sweden previously and still writes about it regularly. He invited Karin Olsson to write the Assange smear, as she admits here.

UPDATE 3: Following Channel 4's "WikiLeaks: Secrets and Lies" smear-filled TV documentary, wikileaks.org has published full details of the Guardian's involvement and producer's correspondence: <http://www.wikileaks.org/Guardian-s-WikiLeaks-Secrets-and.html>

My friend is not a rapist

A close friend of Julian Assange argues that the Wikileaks honcho has been the victim of an agenda

*Gavin MacFadyen
27 November 2011*

My take on Julian Assange's recent extradition ruling in the UK is that the judges failed to sufficiently analyse the evidence. They only looked at the demands of the law, and the way it was structured, which meant the European arrest warrant was a box-ticking exercise for both sides of the case.

The only thing they raised questions about were a number of legal procedures. On many grounds, the judges said themselves, they weren't able to look at evidence, all they were concerned about was whether what they did met obligations under the UK-Sweden treaty, that allows for extradition without consent from the UK or minimum tests.

What about the evidence, though? We can look at, for example, the voracity of the claims made against Julian— some of the 'facts' of the case were quite arcane, some even amusing. I'm sure that in any court, in most other countries, the claim to have Julian arrested and deported would beg the question of sufficient justification.

Remember that each day in court, he's accruing significant legal costs, and as he doesn't have a pot it's a very awkward situation. Money's being held from him by Visa and others— and that's left him without any resources. In addition, he was ill-advised by his original lawyers who said it was not practical for him to claim defence purchased by the state, probably ill-conceived advice. It meant they could earn in the region of £600,000 pounds, despite a commitment by them to do it *pro bono*. That's not been widely reported but it's true.

It had been suggested to WikiLeaks that they should employ a high-powered lawyer. However, the difficulty was they promised to do it *pro bono*, they then turned around and said they'd charge. By that point you don't change your case— you have to carry on. Then they were hit with this enormous bill, four times legitimate costs, because they knew he was desperate to have a proper defence. The client must know what the estimated bills will be, but this information was never provided. The first bills came through in the hundreds of thousands, and people's mouths fell open and hit the floor.

It was really shocking and disturbing— as a client you want to feel comfortable, you don't want feel like you're being used by what is an extremely wealthy law firm. That was a significant problem for Julian.

One thing that Julian told me in the early days of these court appearances was that everybody would want a piece of him, and that was very accurate advice. I've chaired major public meetings and press conferences where there were hundreds (in one case six hundred) of reporters from all around the world, there were only three questions— all about the controversies. They all wanted pictures, to say they'd seen him like some sort of movie star.

He got up to a board with a pointer and began explaining to the conference about how the site was constructed— no-one was interested. Julian's publicity has often been very bad, most importantly by the press itself, who were interested in his personality, not WikiLeaks' journalism. Suddenly he became the story— being called an egomaniac— I don't think he asked for any of the publicity he's had. That's mostly a tabloid idea. Here they can call him names, denounce him and much worse, reporting events selectively which makes him look bad or unpleasant. Only three weeks ago there were stories about his financial problems implying, ironically, that he was opaque.

Suddenly you can understand why, for example, journalists were suspicious of the rape allegations— they came a week after the major disclosure of certain documents by WikiLeaks. I thought to myself how convenient these charges were, suddenly emerging in this cluttered landscape. Knowing the man as I do, I see these charges as almost inconceivable. I regard him as a friend, and I don't have any friends who are rapists. I find the idea repulsive, and he's certainly not that type of guy. All of us who get to know him know that. He's been transparent with the legal allegations, offering to make a full testimony on Skype, which was turned down by the other side of the case.

There are many who despise WikiLeaks, people who are finding ways to shut it down. If that means putting someone in jail, then I'm sure they'd be glad to do it. He may now be forced to go a country where he doesn't have any real protection.

• *Gavin MacFadyen is director of the Centre for Investigative Journalism and a personal friend of Julian Assange, editor-in-chief of WikiLeaks*

Dagensmedia: 2011-11-28

Ullmans hemliga grupp ska rentvå Assange

Dagensmedia.se kan avslöja att ett svenskt nätverk arbetar för att få Wikileaks-grundaren Julian Assange frikänd från anklagelserna om sexbrott. Assanges pr-representant i Sverige, Harald Ullman, är med i gruppen— som även har kontakter utomlands.

Enligt uppgifter till dagensmedia.se har ett nätverk bildats i Sverige, med målet att få Julian Assange frikänd. Förutom Assanges svenska pr-representant Harald Ullman, vd på Ullman PR, ingår psykoanalytikern och debattören Rigmor Robért och Al Burke, som driver Nordic News Network. Nätverket ska även ha varit i kontakt med den kände journalisten John Pilger, som vid flera tillfällen uttryckt sin övertygelse över Julian Assanges oskuld.

När dagensmedia.se kontaktar Harald Ullman om uppgifterna vill han varken bekräfta eller dementera.

– Jag har ett professionellt pr-uppdrag för Julian Assange och det är den enda kommentar jag har, säger han.

Harald Ullman ska även ha undersökt möjligheten att starta ett donationskonto för Wikileaks i Sverige. Inte heller det vill Harald Ullman kommentera.

Både Rigmor Robért och Harald Ullman ska ha deltagit på Julian Assanges 40-årsfest i somras, som hölls i hans hem i brittiska staden Norfolk, där Julian Assange satt i husarrest. I slutet av förra veckan åkte Harald Ullman till London för att träffa Julian Assange och hans team. Wikileaks-grundarens två nyutsedda svenska advokater ska ha varit med på resan.

Julian Assange är misstänkt för sexbrott mot två kvinnor i Sverige. Han har begärts utlämnad från Storbritannien och ska enligt uppgifter till dagensmedia.se komma till Sverige i december.

Dagensmedia.se har även sökt Rigmor Robért och Al Burke. *[Obs! Jag känner inte till något försök att kontakta mig. Om man hade gjort det, hade jag kunnat förklara att jag inte ingår i något "nätverket" eller "hemlig grupp" för att "rentvå Assange". A.B.]*

• *Kristin Djerf & Martin Schori*

Guardian's "WikiLeaks: Secrets and Lies" Documentary

Guardian hacks continue PR war against WikiLeaks

*WikiLeaks
30 November 2011*

The Guardian has continued its war on WikiLeaks with three new attacks over 48 hours— five days before Julian Assange's final extradition appeal judgement in the High Court and a UK Parliamentary debate and vote on extradition abuses (both Monday, December 5).

While it is often counter-productive to divert resources to dealing with PR attacks head-on, we provide here a revealing window into the behind-the-scenes realities that WikiLeaks has to deal with every day as a result of its high profile. While many attacks come from "traditional" enemies — the organizations WikiLeaks has exposed — others come from opportunists trying to work an easy socio-political sector — apparently saying what they believe these powerful enemies would like to be said, in the hope of preferment or relief in other areas. Others still, in fear of their reputations or the legal process, seek to whitewash past opportunism before natural moral or legal redress.

It should be noted that while WikiLeaks has many supporters among Guardian journalists, the editor (Alan Rusbridger)'s brother in law, David Leigh, cannot in practice be prevented from abusing the Guardian's resources and reputation.

1. On November 29, 2011: 'The Guardian Documentary' — 'WikiLeaks: Secrets and Lies'

The documentary aired yesterday is known to film makers in the industry as "The Guardian Documentary".

The director, Patrick Forbes, has admitted that chief Guardian antagonist David Leigh was a consultant for the film, and did "timetabling" and "fact checking". Leigh has been on a year long offensive against WikiLeaks in order to save himself from being sued over deliberately breaching every security condition of the Cablegate contract. In a letter to WikiLeaks Patrick Forbes stated that the audience would not be told of David Leigh's role. The film avoids mentioning the contract or the ongoing legal dispute.

The Guardian has been paid for participating in the film in an exclusive deal. WikiLeaks has not. In a letter to WikiLeaks Patrick Forbes stated that "These are matters [payment to the Guardian, Leigh's production involvement] that are simply not relevant for the audience to know."

The Guardian was given preview privileges for the documentary whereas WikiLeaks was refused such access to fact-check.

The documentary interviews eight WikiLeaks critics— five from the Guardian, but only one person from WikiLeaks, and none from over 90 other organizations who have worked with WikiLeaks, with the exception of two brief interviews with Der Spiegel.

Content

The documentary was presented to WikiLeaks as focusing on the WikiLeaks material, its impact, and Bradley Manning. WikiLeaks' participation was premised on this being the case. The promo by contrast did not name Bradley Manning, and claimed to be 'The definitive account of the 'wiki-saga', featuring the first major television interview with Wikileaks founder Julian Assange. The film unites all the major protagonists for the first time'. Julian Assange made a five-hour long interview. We were not given viewing privileges, despite requesting it. But the Guardian was. Luke Harding from the Guardian previewed it on 27 November 2011 and said on Twitter "Just watched new Channel 4 documentary on #Wikileaks. It's lucid, engrossing and balanced. Recommend. via @C4Press", and James Ball from the Guardian tweeted that he had seen it on the 27th of November 2011.

WikiLeaks was misled as to the true purpose of the Guardian documentary. Contrary to its stated purpose, the documentary:

Completely blacks out crucial facts, such as the fact that WikiLeaks suspended publications due to an unlawful arbitrary banking blockade that prevents donors from supporting the organisation. The banking blockade is not even mentioned, neither is the ongoing, documented in the public record, legal harassment of WikiLeaks volunteers by US authorities.

In aggregate, the documentary features Julian Assange speaking for 8 minutes 50 seconds (including a 20 second silence on camera), whereas The Guardian's five employees are given 29 minutes and 30 seconds. This does not include the time given to three other WikiLeaks critics. No WikiLeaks supporting interviews are aired.

Contrary to what director Patrick Forbes told Julian Assange over the telephone, the film does not explain that David Leigh broke a written agreement and revealed a secret decryption key, which led to the publishing of the unredacted cables. Patrick Forbes said over telephone that the interview was made prior to the "fuss over the password". Instead, David Leigh holds up the paper, calls it a "souvenir" and reads it out to the camera.

Gives Julian Assange no right to reply to libelous statements such as "Afghan informers deserve to die". Nick Davies was not present at the conversation described, and John Goertz and Holger Stark from Der Spiegel can attest that they have no notes or recollection of Julian Assange saying this and would have recalled if he had claimed such a position.

Completely obscures the fact that David Leigh was responsible for the publication of the unredacted cables, and says that this was an incomprehensible and reprehensible decision made by WikiLeaks.

Does not disclose that David Leigh violated a written legal agreement between WikiLeaks and The Guardian that the material would not be passed to third parties (The New York Times), published before the publishing date, or be kept in an insecure manner. David Leigh has admitted that he deliberately went behind the editor (and his brother-in-law) Alan Rusbridger's back to break the agreement, in order to try to avoid liability for breach of contract, in a case study by Columbia University:
<http://jrnetsolserver.shorensteince...>

Nick Davies makes extraordinary allegations about Julian Assange. He says that he is untruthful but does not say with reference to what. He also makes extraordinary allegations about the Swedish investigation, suggesting that Julian Assange has lied—this in the context of an ongoing criminal investigation, with reference to events in which Nick Davies was not present and does not explain. Julian Assange is unable to speak about the legal investigation against him. The allegations Davies refers to about US involvement are taken entirely out of context: Julian Assange was talking about the irregularities relating to the investigation in Sweden. David Leigh also makes tasteless comments about Mr. Assange, calling his sexual behaviour "incontinent".

Is unethical and prejudicial to Julian Assange because it spends an inordinate amount of time on an ongoing criminal investigation without interviewing anyone with the authority to provide a background, explain or discuss the controversy in Sweden. From

all the lawyers, prosecutors and experts involved in the case, from both sides, not a single one was interviewed. Instead, pathetically, the documentary shows a video of the accused dancing in Iceland while a journalist who was not there claims Julian Assange has been untruthful.

Incorrectly describes Daniel Domscheit-Berg as WikiLeaks spokesperson. WikiLeaks' representative is Mr. Kristinn Hrafnsson, who the director did not even request to interview. Domscheit-Berg was suspended in 2010, and was a volunteer assistant and sometimes spokesperson for WikiLeaks Germany, particularly during 2009. He was not, ever, as the documentary claims, a programmer.

Daniel Domscheit-Berg is interviewed as a critic of WikiLeaks, but no attention is given to the role he has played in a) stealing funds, sabotaging the organisation b) deleting (according to his account) thousands of submissions revealing war crimes and corruption in finance institutions, profiteering and unleashing the chain of events that led to the publishing of the unredacted diplomatic cables.

Ten days before the documentary aired, and as a result of WikiLeaks receiving information from various friends in the industry that a 'Guardian documentary was being made', Julian Assange phoned Patrick Forbes, the director of the documentary, to seek reassurances that this was not the case. The promo text falsely stated that Sweden was Julian Assange's home country. Julian Assange was told that the promo text was a Channel 4 PR product, and that it was misleading. During the course of the conversation with Patrick Forbes and the correspondence that followed, it became clear that the documentary did not comply with the conditions that were set out by Patrick Forbes when WikiLeaks was approached. David Leigh promoted the documentary on Twitter on 18 November 2010 "Lies exposed? First major #Assange documentary to air on C4 this month is called "#Wikileaks: secrets and lies".

In a letter to Patrick Forbes written the day after the telephone conversation, Julian Assange writes:

"The collaboration offered to you, and the footage that arises from it, which we provided to you, and the interview between myself and you, was granted only under the terms you proffered, chiefly:

'We are setting out to make a definitive factual account of the WikiLeaks affair. It will focus on the core of the story, the substance, contact and impact of the Iraq, Afghan and diplomatic [c]ables, rather than the way in which the media and others have handled them, or any unrelated legal proceedings.... We are also closely following Manning's treatment, his case and how it is being handled, assessing whether he is or will be able to have a fair trial or is being treated in a humane way during his confinement.'

"It was on this basis that I agreed to entertain collaboration with your film project for free. This collaboration, taken at market rates, is worth between fifty [and] three hundred thousand pounds. However your promises as to what the documentary was to be about are at odds with the Channel 4 promotional description of the film. The natural reading of this, given the only partial correction of the statement, is that the Channel 4 summary is an accurate description of the film, and that you have deceptively described it to me and Sunshine Press Productions to gain our involvement and access to me and to footage at below market rates.

“In the pre-interview meeting with you and Tilly, for which we have second by second contemporaneous notes, you reconfirmed this statement, saying you were looking at the US assassination squad I discovered, Task Force 373, and were trying to locate its members, that the film would not cover Sweden, that the film was "more on the effect of publishing than on the production", and so on.

“These promises are also at odds with the promo text issued by Channel 4.”

Julian Assange suspended his collaboration and expressed his wish to not feature in the documentary given what he had learned from the phone conversation. The letter and the response are attached. Julian Assange writes: "During our telephone call yesterday, you made the following admissions:

- a. That David Leigh, a reporter from the Guardian, was made an adviser to the film, by you and that this fact was not disclosed to me. As you are aware this organisation, and myself personally, are locked into various disputes with Leigh, who, as you are aware, deliberately and secretly broke our Cablegate contract, and who, as you are aware, has engaged in a great many tawdry plots and libels in an attempt to destroy WikiLeaks.
- b. That David Leigh and other hostile Guardian personalities, such as Nick Davies and Alan Rusbridger were paid monies, directly, or indirectly, by you, for their "involvement".
- c. That these facts would not be revealed to the audience.

“In making these statements, it is clear you are caught on the horns of a dilemma. Namely, that either Leigh *et al.* were paid members of the production, in which case the the film has no credibility, or that you paid for their interviews through slight of hand, in which case you have engaged in chequebook journalism. A third possibility is that you funnelled production money to senior people in the Guardian hierarchy to maintain patronage. Regardless, to intentionally conceal these payments and associations from the audience is a disgrace. Additionally, David Leigh, James Ball, Alan Rusbridger, and other Guardian personalities are either selling or have sold libellous books, life rights or film options about me and/or WikiLeaks. Have these and other pecuniary interests and legal conflicts been detailed to the audience?

“I note that despite the film revolving around my work, which now suffers an unlawful banking blockade by US financial companies, no payments were made to me, by you. This asymmetry, where the worst type of opportunists are paid, by you, and where the people who have actually taken most of the risks and done most of the work, are not, is striking.

“As a result, until I can be assured that the film, and the Channel 4 promo, is accurate and meets terms under which my agreement and the agreement of Sunshine Press Productions was given, namely that, ‘We are setting out to make a definitive factual account of the wikileaks affair. It will focus on the core of the story, the substance, contact and impact of the Iraq, Afghan and diplomatic [c]ables, rather than the way in which the media and others have handled them, or any unrelated legal proceedings.... We are also closely following Manning’s treatment, his case and how it is being

handled, assessing whether he is or will be able to have a fair trial or is being treated in a humane way during his confinement.' I must suspend all agreements."

2. On November 29 2011: At the Leveson inquiry which is investigating the phone hacking scandal, Nick Davies from The Guardian spoke to The Leveson inquiry about ethics and the media. He opportunistically used this platform to attack WikiLeaks with false, second-hand information about a conversation in which he was not present. He says Julian Assange said that Afghan informers deserved to die. Two other journalists who were present, John Goertz and Holger Stark from Der Spiegel, can attest that this is not what was said. For reportage on what Nick Davies told the Leveson inquiry, see the transcript (<http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Transcript-of-Morning-Hearing-29-November-2011.pdf>).

3. On November 30 2011: New Guardian book. David Leigh's student and close friend (James Ball), was seconded to WikiLeaks from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism for two months (Dec 2010, Jan 2011). He did not return to the Bureau, but rather, accepted a job assisting Leigh at the Guardian (offer made during Dec 2010). Leigh's assistant will publish yet another book about our organization on Nov 30. After starting work for Leigh, the assistant has written numerous hostile, false, articles which often seem to directed at saving Leigh's reputation.

The original C4 documentary promo write-up

WikiLeaks: Secrets and Lies

The definitive account of the 'wiki-saga', featuring the first major television interview with Wikileaks founder Julian Assange. The film unites all the major protagonists for the first time, including Assange's erstwhile partner Daniel Domscheit Berg, and the editorial teams at the Guardian, Der Spiegel and New York Times newspapers, as well as the US state department spokesperson who had to deal with the leaks. When Assange launched his whistle-blower website he was heralded as a hero, bravely publishing classified material to highlight government wrongdoings to its peoples.

He won awards around the world and was credited with creating a historic moment for journalism. But the story took a dark twist when Assange was accused of rape and sexual assault in his home country of Sweden. Award-winning film-maker Patrick Forbes presents the story of Wikileaks, using the words of people at the heart of the story, and on both sides of the fence.

This is the story of Wikileaks told by the people involved: sulphurous, personal and moving, it documents history in the making and the frontier of new technology and journalism. It's also a story of human emotions clashing with the advent of new technologies, summed up in the words of Guardian journalist Nick Davies as 'a Greek tragedy... as triumph was turned into disaster through the actions of one man.' True Stories commissions and showcases the best international feature documentaries.

Contemporaneous notes from phone conversation between Julian Assange and Patrick Forbes, director of Channel 4's documentary "WikiLeaks: Secrets and Lies" (16 November 2011):

J: I see Channel 4 now has a promo up for your documentary, "Secrets and Lies".

P: Yep.

J: Yes, I think you have some explaining to do.

P: Umm... No. I don't think so. I haven't actually seen what they have said.

J: They say 'This is the definitive account of the Wiki saga', etcetera. They say " It is the story of human emotions clashing with the event of new technology, summed up..."

P: (Laughs) sounds like PR speak to me.

J: ... summed up in the words of Guardian journalist Nick Davies as " A Greek tragedy, a triumph was turned into a disaster through the actions of one man.

P: ... Oh well, it sounds like PR speak to me.

P: Sounds like PR speak to me.

J: And it says that the story took a dark twist when Assange was accused of rape and sexual assault in his home country of Sweden.

P: Home country! Is that what it says? Fucking Brilliant! That's good! Oh wow... I think we need to change that ! (Laughs)

J: And I see that David Leigh...

P: How do you feel as an honorary Swede?

J: Pissed off.

P: Well you shouldn't. That's a mistake.

J: This comes out on November 29 and my final hearing is on December 5.

P: December 5, yes.

J: I note from the meeting that we'd had between you and Tilly there is a list of things that were going to be done and not done in the documentary for example no narrator...

P: Well we don't do... absolutely do not do narrate things for you...

J: ... and one of those is no Sweden.

P: Well I don't think you can remove Sweden from it. We don't do the substance of Sweden at all.

J: I'm not saying what I would do or not do I'm saying what you stated in our meeting.

P: Yeah well we don't do— I don't do a sort of what happened thing there. So still— it's within the boundaries of that.

J: So this description by Channel 4 is completely erroneous-- I also don't see any mention of Manning in there.

P: Yeah well that's in the documentary ...

J: Your writing says we tell the story of the leaks...

P: It sounds like PR

J: Your letter to me says to me says it will retell the story of the leaks, their handling and their impact, as the first narrative, the second narrative will be assessing the treatment and trial of Bradley Manning in the lead up to the case

P: That's exactly what it does. Exactly.

J: Well that is exactly what this promo does not do. And many more people, once it is turned into a visual promo, many more people will see the promo than will see the documentary, including the judges who will decide on my case on December 5, just 6 days after this airs, together with all the media publicity in that leading up week...

P: Well... I will talk to them about it. You know... The program is exactly as I described to you and it stays as such... You know...There are two strains: one Wiki, two Manning. And that's exactly what it is.

J: So Nick Davies didn't say "A Greek tragedy..."

P: Yeah yeah he does say that, that's a completely accurate quote.

J: So why haven't I had an opportunity to respond?

P: You do. In the program you respond to that. You absolutely respond to it. You get the last word in the programme, you always... absolutely every time, the sequence cuts to you in the end, pretty much without fail, so you do— every time. I mean you do you know... there is no point not giving you the last word...

J: And why is David Leigh promoting it on his twitter?

P: Umm... because he is in it and that's how it goes.

J: So he's not a consultant on the film?

P: No, I don't think he is but anyway...

J: You don't think he was? Surely you would know, if he was a consultant or not. Was David Leigh a consultant on the film or not?

P: Yeah... If he wants to call himself a consultant then that's up to him.

J: Was he a... has he seen the film?

P: No.

J: So was he paid any money to consult on the film?

P: The Guardian was paid some money.

J: The Guardian was paid money...

P: Yep!

J: I see— and I was not paid any money, correct?

P: No, you were not.

J: And you will be stating the Guardian was paid money in the film?

P: No, **I don't think we do.**

J: And who else had a job on the film from the Guardian?

P: Nobody had a job, nobody had a job— the team was Tilly and I

J: Then why were they paid money?

P: Because they've got rights in the situation with DreamWorks anyway... the curse of the modern world.

J: And was James Ball involved?

P: No. What? Given a job? Certainly not.

J: But was he interviewed?

P: Yeah, he has one 2 second... one 20 second bit where he describes Iraq and the content of the Iraqi cables and that's it and it's just as you know, play and push.

J: And so the, so David Leigh didn't have a formal title.

P: No he doesn't have a formal... no the credits don't say "Consultant: David Leigh" or anything like that.

J: OK, but does he, the agreement with him was simply that he would give an interview?

P: No it's all about their documentary. It's all about their rights.

J: He would give advice... or he would do what exactly?

P: You know he would...everybody involved is exactly the same. There is no

preferential treatment or anything like that

J: Except that they were paid money?

P: Yeah, that's right which is part of the curse of the the modern world for someone making documentaries.

J: How much money were they paid?

P: Not a huge amount. He is not going to be building a wing on... Let's put it like this because I can't fucking tell you, but it's not, you know, we are talking a small amount of money, a really small amount of money.

J: Why can't you say how much money they were paid?

P: Because that is the terms of the bloody deal and I don't reveal, you know I don't tell anyone's pay packet. So umm, you know, you're not going to be seeing about him buying another home on the back of it. I don't think he could buy another kitchen implements on the back of it.

J: Do you know how much money they are being paid by DreamWorks and that they've earned from the book.

P: I don't know. Have you heard? I mean I think it's fucking...it's huge sums of money I think. It's just absurd... anyway. My understanding is you know, certainly in the 6 figure region if not more. Extraordinarily for Hollywood it is money paid upfront rather than, I understand, nobody has confirmed this to me, but my understanding is that unlike most motion picture deals, they have paid it up front rather than at the.... but anyway, you are going to know this better than I, but in essence...

J: Usually both is done... you get paid...

P: Yeah well you do... you pay a tiny amount upfront and then you pay a substantial amount when it goes into production but my understanding is... well as you know as I've said I have not managed to have a direct conversation with anyone on this particular subject but they have paid huge sums upfront...

J: Does the film reveal that Leigh revealed the password in his book?

P: Does what?

J: Does the film reveal...

P: Does the DreamWorks film?

J: No does your film reveal that David Leigh reveals the password in his book.

P: Yeah yeah, no it has him talking about it, it does. Yes, it is in the thing, because it was prior to, the interview was prior to any fuss over the password but the password is in it.

J: OK, Right so can you please go to Channel 4 and get that corrected and also they will be making a promo out of this. I know you have the ability to control the promo that—

P: Yeah of course I can. Normally I don't get to see it but of course I will call the Promos and say, but of course, don't worry, I will give them a call

J: Because we had a similar situation in Australia with Fowler who produced a...

P: Who is that?

J: Fowler who has written a book and works for Foreign Correspondent and works for the ABC [in Australia]. And he did a programme about a year ago and another one one year later

P: And what's it like?

J: One year later, catching up with everyone interviewing Domscheit who he told me personally he had found had lied in all sorts of ways. But it's...

P: What? Programme and promo are rather two different pieces is what you're saying.

J: There are all bad things in the programme that shouldn't have been there that were not fact checked and were very very unhelpful but the promo then took for example Jonsdottir and the questions being put to her, "how did he abuse you and her saying 'Oh, I can't go into that'"

P: Bloody hell!

J: ... in relation to me...

P.: And no one know what that question is

J: Completely ungrounded and without any facts behind it at all... but Kristinn and I know what is being got at which is that she was told should apologize at what she had done and there was a heated argument online.... but in relation to me being extradited for allegations about abusing women....

P: That's extraordinarily disgusting...

J: That was the leading thing in the promo... it then aired again and again and again on Australian TV because it was part of the promo, and then Swedish state TV picked it up— and Swedish TV just took those sections to the state broadcaster and aired it. So it's/..

P: The abusive thing?

J: Yes. And I imagine that... given the salacious way that this description by the Channel 4 website 'Wikileaks: Secrets and Lies' has been done... I mean the "major protagonists Domscheit Berg" this wasn't a major figure... he wasn't even involved in the cables at all!

P: Yeah I know exactly, he's out....

Letter from Julian Assange to Patrick Forbes detailing complaints (17 Nov. 2011)

From: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Sent: 17 November 2011 14:29 To: Patrick Forbes Cc: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Subject: Channel 4

Dear Patrick

I follow up our conversation from yesterday where I spoke about the differences between your promises to me and Sunshine Press Productions on the nature of the documentary "WikiLeaks: Secrets and lies" compared to the promo statement released by Channel 4.

As a result, until I can be assured that the film, and the Channel 4 promo, is accurate and meets terms under which my agreement and the agreement of Sunshine Press Productions was given, namely that, "We are setting out to make a definitive factual account of the WikiLeaks affair. It will focus on the core of the story, the substance, contact and impact of the Iraq, Afghan and diplomatic aables, rather than the way in which the media and others have handled them, or any unrelated legal proceedings.... We are also closely following Manning's treatment, his case and how it is being handled, assessing whether he is or will be able to have a fair trial or is being treated in a humane way during his confinement.", I and Sunshine Press Productions demand that, until further notice:

No material acquired as a result of our collaboration is to be used by you or any other party. This includes all interview footage of me and footage of the grounds of Ellingham Hall.

No footage provided by Sunshine Press Productions to you, is to be used by any party. This includes all the footage we generously quoted at AP rates.

That you not use, or permit to be used, the WikiLeaks or Julian Assange trademarks, which are registered EU-wide, both in word and in form, in the title or the promotion or in any other way which might suggest that your film is a result of WikiLeaks, endorsed by WikiLeaks or otherwise associated with WikiLeaks.

Unless we can be quickly assured of the accuracy and faithfulness of the Channel 4 promo and film to that description promised by you to me and Sunshine Press, we shall be forced to explain these and other matters to Channel 4, the films distributors and the UK public in order to mitigate against the damage inaccuracies or biases in the film and the promo may do to myself and my cause.

You may reassure us that the film is and promo are faithful to the collaboration promises you made by providing a copy of the promo and the film before it is broadcast.

Please arrange to do so by 5pm GMT Friday November 18, 2011.

For reference I include the statement by Channel 4 here followed by my rationale.

Wikileaks: Secrets and Lies: Julian Assange

The definitive account of the 'wiki-saga', featuring the first major television interview with Wikileaks founder Julian Assange.

The film unites all the major protagonists for the first time, including Assange's erstwhile partner Daniel Domscheit Berg, and the editorial teams at the Guardian, Der Spiegel and New York Times newspapers, as well as the US state department spokesperson who had to deal with the leaks.

When Assange launched his whistle-blower website he was heralded as a hero, bravely publishing classified material to highlight government wrongdoings to its peoples.

He won awards around the world and was credited with creating a historic moment for journalism. But the story took a dark twist when Assange was accused of rape and sexual assault in his home country of Sweden.

Award-winning film-maker Patrick Forbes presents the story of Wikileaks, using the words of people at the heart of the story, and on both sides of the fence.

This is the story of Wikileaks told by the people involved: sulphurous, personal and moving, it documents history in the making and the frontier of new technology and journalism.

It's also a story of human emotions clashing with the advent of new technologies, summed up in the words of Guardian journalist Nick Davies as 'a Greek tragedy... as triumph was turned into disaster through the actions of one man.'

You will note the Channel 4 statement depicts your documentary as:

- 1) Neing about the personalities and not the work
- 2) containing "dark" references to the Swedish "rape" case
- 3) "summed up in the words of Guardian journalist Nick Davies as 'a Greek tragedy... as triumph was turned into disaster through the actions of one man.". Knowing Nick Davies' previous media statements, this clearly and damagingly refers to me. This narrative formulation, "summed up", shows no distance from Nick Davies' transparent attempt to shift criticism away from his own actions and that of his employer, but rather, adopts this blame-shifting as the narrative stance of the documentary and of Channel 4. As you know the Guardian and WikiLeaks, including the journalist Nick Davies, have long been locked into an adversarial relationship over the Guardian's deliberate breach of the Cablegate contract. Hence, this summation of the entire documentary is odd, unprofessional and, as a mater of fact, untrue.
- 4) includes the statements "home country of Sweden" which, as you are aware, is false. I have never lived in Sweden. I am born and raised an Australian citizen and live, as a result of legal force, in England.

5) states that a former German volunteer/employee for the organisation, Domschiet Berg, who we suspended last August, is a "major protagonist... [and] erstwhile partner". As you must be aware he is not a "major protagonist", except, perhaps as a gifted post-facto opportunist, and was never a "partner". He is, as you are aware, a peripheral player. He was, as you know, absent from most of the organization's work, including its founding, all the major publishing events of 2011, 2010, 2007 and 2006, the Guantanamo Files, Cablegate, the Iraq War Diaries, Collateral Murder, and most of the Afghan War Logs. That he has had ghost written a tawdry book of self-aggrandizing libels which he has sold to Hollywood does not give Channel 4 license to skip basic fact checking. His book contains many proven malicious untruths, for example, that the organisation sold information to Aftenposten or al-Jazeera to a claim that I torture cats. I include a previous statement on the status of Domschiet-Berg, which you have had ample opportunity to read, at the end of this document marked by the letters "AA".

While you and Channel 4 have both OFCOM and legal obligations to present accurately and impartially, I note here that you have extra moral and legal obligations in relation to the courts and to myself.

Your broadcast issues on November 29. On December 5, two high court judges at the Royal Courts of Justice will decide whether I am to be extradited or whether I may appeal to the Supreme Court. Your promo, broadcast and resulting publicity will occur during the time when the judges have retired to consider the matter. Given that the legal basis of the appeal is entirely whether the requested appeal point is of general "public interest", the judgement is political and will be influenced by your broadcast. If the broadcast is adverse, it may lead to a chain of events which would see my incarceration or killing in the United States.

Similarly, other courts, including the Grand Jury currently sitting in Washington, a future and highly politicised Swedish criminal trial, Manning's military trial, a future criminal trial against myself in the United States, and/or the administrative hearings currently being conducted by the European Commission into the banking blockade against WikiLeaks may be affected. Likewise, the political will of the Australian and British governments to intervene on my or Mr. Manning's behalf may be adversely affected by untruths or partial reportage broadcast by the film or its promo.

In my phone conversation with you, I drew your attention to these points. I note that the statement about my "home country of Sweden" has been corrected but that none of my other concerns have been addressed. This appears to demonstrate an ability to make corrections but a willful disregard to actually do so in relation to all but one of the points raised.

The collaboration offered to you, and the footage that arises from it, which we provided to you, and the interview between myself and you, was granted only under the terms you proffered, chiefly:

"We are setting out to make a definitive factual account of the WikiLeaks affair. It will focus on the core of the story, the substance, contact and impact of the Iraq, Afghan and diplomatic cables, rather than the way in which the media and others have handled them, or any unrelated legal proceedings.... We are also closely following Manning's treatment, his case and how it is being handled, assessing whether he is or will be able to have a fair trial or is being treated in a humane way during his confinement."

It was on this basis that I agreed to entertain collaboration with your film project for free. This collaboration, taken at market rates, is worth between fifty and three hundred thousand pounds. However your promises as to what the documentary was to be about are at odds with the Channel 4 promotional description of the film. The natural reading of this, given the only partial correction of the statement, is that the Channel 4 summary is an accurate description of the film, and that you have deceptively described it to me and Sunshine Press Productions to gain our involvement and access to me and to footage at below market rates.

In the pre-interview meeting with you and Tilly, for which we have second by second contemporaneous notes, you reconfirmed this statement, saying you were looking at the US assassination squad I discovered, Task Force 373, and were trying to locate its members, that the film would not cover Sweden, that the film was "more on the effect of publishing than on the production", and so on.

These promises are also at odds with the promo text issued by Channel 4.

Additionally, during our telephone call yesterday, you made the following admissions:

1. That David Leigh, a reporter from the Guardian, was made an adviser to the film, by you and that this fact was not disclosed to me. As you are aware this organisation, and myself personally, are locked into various disputes with Leigh, who, as you are aware, deliberately and secretly broke our Cablegate contract, and who, as you are aware, has engaged in a great many tawdry plots and libels in an attempt to destroy WikiLeaks.
2. That David Leigh and other hostile Guardian personalities, such as Nick Davies and Alan Rusbridger were paid monies, directly, or indirectly, by you, for their "involvement".
3. That these facts would not be revealed to the audience.

In making these statements, it is clear you are caught on the horns of a dilemma. Namely, that either Leigh et al were paid members of the production, in which case the film has no credibility, or that you paid for their interviews through slight of hand, in which case you have engaged in chequebook journalism. A third possibility is that you funnelled production money to senior people in the Guardian hierarchy to maintain patronage. Regardless, to intentionally conceal these payments and associations from the audience is a disgrace. Additionally, David Leigh, James Ball, Alan Rusbridger, and other Guardian personalities are either selling or have sold libelous books, life rights or film options about me and/or WikiLeaks. Have these and other pecuniary interests and legal conflicts been detailed to the audience?

I note that despite the film revolving around my work, which now suffers an unlawful banking blockade by US financial companies, no payments were made to me, by you. This asymmetry, where the worst type of opportunists are paid, by you, and where the people who have actually taken most of the risks and done most of the work, are not, is striking.

As a result, until I can be assured that the film, and the Channel 4 promo, is accurate and meets terms under which my agreement and the agreement of Sunshine Press Productions was given, namely that, "We are setting out to make a definitive factual account of the wikileaks affair. It will focus on the core of the story, the substance, contact and impact of the Iraq, Afghan and diplomatic aables, rather than the way in

which the media and others have handled them, or any unrelated legal proceedings.... We are also closely following Manning's treatment, his case and how it is being handled, assessing whether he is or will be able to have a fair trial or is being treated in a humane way during his confinement." I must suspend all agreements.

JULIAN ASSANGE

Document AA

Aug. 20, 2011

Five days short of a year ago, on 25 August 2010, WikiLeaks suspended former employee "Daniel Domscheit-Berg". Over the last 11 months, we have tried to negotiate the return of various materials taken by Mr. Domscheit-Berg, including internal communications and over 3000 unpublished, private whistleblower communications to WikiLeaks.

Mr. Domscheit-Berg has repeatedly attempted to blackmail WikiLeaks by threatening to make available, to forces that oppose WikiLeaks, these private communications and to which Mr. Domscheit-Berg is not a party. He has stated he will commit this action, should WikiLeaks move to charge him with sabotage or theft. Mr. Domscheit-Berg has refused to return the various materials he has stolen, saying he needs them, solely, to carry out this threat. Mr. Domscheit-Berg has already, secretly, and with malicious intent, disclosed portions of the private communications content to other parties, to the harm of WikiLeaks.

The negotiations have now been terminated by the mediator, Andy Müller-Maguhn, who has stated that he doubts Mr. Domscheit-Berg's integrity and claimed willingness to return the material and that under those circumstances Müller-Maguhn cannot meaningfully continue to mediate. In response, Mr. Domscheit-Berg has stated that he has, or is about to, destroy thousands of unpublished whistleblowers disclosures sent to WikiLeaks. The material is irreplaceable and includes substantial information on many issues of public importance, human rights abuses, mass telecommunications interception, banking and the planning of dozens of neo-nazi groups. Our sources have in some cases risked their lives or freedom attempting to convey these disclosures to WikiLeaks and to the public.

As a matter of policy and implementation WikiLeaks does not collect or retain source identifying information, so fortunately, source identities for this material are not significantly at risk.

WikiLeaks has only made one prior formal statement regarding Mr. Domscheit-Berg, which we issued in February and repeat here:

WikiLeaks has been taking legal action against former employee, Daniel Domscheit-Berg who was suspended from the organization in September. The reasons for these actions will gradually become clear, but some are hinted at by extracts from Domscheit-Berg's book.

In the book Domscheit-Berg confesses to various acts of sabotage against the organization. The former WikiLeaks staffer admits to having damaged the sites primary submission system and stolen material.

The sabotage and concern over motives led to an overhaul of the entire submission system, an ongoing project that is not being expedited due to its complex nature and the organization's need to focus its resources on publication and defense.

It should be noted that Domscheit-Berg's roles within WikiLeaks were limited and started to diminish almost a year ago as his integrity and stability were questioned. He has falsely misrepresented himself in the press as a programmer, computer-scientist, security expert, architect, editor, founder, director and spokesman. He is not a founder or co-founder and nor was there any contact with him during the founding years. He did not even have an email address with the organization until 2008 (we launched in December 2006). He cannot program and wrote not a single program for the organization, at any time.

Domscheit-Berg was never an architect for the organization, technically, or in matters of policy. He was a spokesperson for WikiLeaks in Germany at various times, but he was never the spokesman for WikiLeaks, nor was he ever WikiLeaks editor, although he subedited some articles. He was also never a computer scientist, or computer security expert, although he was a computer science student many years ago. His accounts of the crucial times in WikiLeaks history since April last year are therefore based upon limited information or malicious falsifications.

In order to provide an environment which would encourage Mr. Domscheit-Berg to return what he has stolen and not to use it for malicious purposes, we have made no further statements until today.

This diplomatic silence has been difficult for us, and, is perhaps a warning lesson about secret diplomacy. While we have been silent in order to maximize the chances of regaining the material that was entrusted to us, Mr. Domscheit-Berg has issued dozens of legally harmful falsehoods including during our ongoing legal conflict with the Pentagon, during the imprisonment and investigation of two alleged sources, Bradley Manning and Rudolf Elmer and during the imprisonment and extradition hearings of our founder Julian Assange.

Mr. Manning is imprisoned pending trial, Mr. Assange is under house arrest pending extradition. Over 100 WikiLeaks supporters have been arrested or raided by the FBI, Scotland Yard and other police or intelligence services. Publicly declared task forces into WikiLeaks over the last year include the Pentagon (120 personnel), the State Department, the FBI, the US Department of Justice and the CIA. Concurrently, a "secret" Grand Jury in Washington (Alexandria) has been considering whether to indict Julian Assange with espionage as a result of Wikileaks' publishing.

Mr. Domscheit-Berg has acted dishonestly, he has admitted to stealing WikiLeaks property, and has admitted to the deliberate sabotage of Wikileaks' operations, impeding it from carrying out the will of its sources. He has lied, constantly, and flagrantly, to the public, to us, to our lawyers, and to the mediator, Andy Müller-Maguhn.

We are making this public statement in a final attempt to make Mr. Domscheit-Berg return the data he has stolen, before he destroys it. This material was entrusted to WikiLeaks specifically by our sources, who often go to significant risks to bring us materials under the basis that we will bring their revelations to the public and defend

them from censorship. Every day that passes compromises the will of these sources and the efforts they have undertaken.

Mr. Domscheit-Berg has illegitimately taken this data along with Wikileaks' secure online submissions system, funds and internal documentation. He has sabotaged years of work, none of which was his own. We have had to recreate this work under difficult circumstances. This rebuilding comes at a significant cost to Wikileaks, which is under an unlawful Washington instigated financial blockade enforced by the big US financial companies. This cost is ultimately borne by the public, who fight to keep our operations afloat with contributions of twenty dollars a month or less.

Response from Patrick Forbes to Julian Assange (18 November 2011)

From: Patrick Forbes Date: 18 November 2011 16:26 Subject: RE: Channel 4
To: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Cc: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear Julian,

Thank you for your detailed email. Your concerns appear to stem from the Channel 4 press release and what role the Guardian and its personnel may, or may not, have played in the making of the programme. I believe your fears on both counts are unfounded. Please can I reassure you that I am confident I have made a film, both for Channel 4 and for distribution, which is accurate, fair, duly impartial and consistent with the description we gave you at the outset.

Let me deal first with the Channel 4 press statement. As I explained to you, the mistake about your nationality was corrected promptly, once I had alerted the Channel to it, and a short paragraph referencing Bradley Manning was inserted. The revised press statement can be found here: [http://www.channel4.com/programmes/...](http://www.channel4.com/programmes/)

Taking your points on the Channel 4 press statement in turn and using your numbering:

1. Inevitably, a press statement of a few paragraphs about a ninety minute film will include reference to the key protagonists involved in the story and whose interviews feature in the programme. It does not follow from this that the film does not do justice to "the core of the story, the substance, content and impact of the Iraq, Afghan and diplomatic cables".
2. The press statement does not say that the programme contains "dark" references to the Swedish case. It says "But the story took a dark twist when Assange was accused of rape and sexual assault in Sweden." I cannot imagine that for you that this has been anything other than a "dark twist", although this is not a phrase used in the film. Inevitably the case is referenced, it would be bizarre and misleading if it was not.
3. Nick Davies is referring to you in this comment. His key criticisms of you, with which you are familiar, are included in the programme, as are your rebuttals and your key criticisms of him. Nick Davies does not sum up the film in this sentence and nor does the press statement suggest he does.

4. The reference to Sweden as your “home country” was removed once the error was spotted, as I informed you at the time.

5. We are confident that Daniel Domscheit Berg is accurately described in the programme and the allegations you mention do not feature.

As to your application for permission to appeal to the Supreme Court, I’m afraid I don’t agree that the programme’s broadcast on 29th November can have any effect on the decision which the High Court will make on this issue or on the other matters that you mention.

Oxford Film and Television is not prepared to accede to any of your three demands. In our view we have full entitlement to use both your filmed contribution and the archive supplied under the terms of the release from and archive release which you signed on Friday 18th November. We expressly deny that you have been deceived or misled in any way, or that there is any question of a payment to you being appropriate in all the circumstances. Had the question of paying for your interview ever arisen, which it did not, I would have made it clear that this was not something to which we could agree.

I now turn to what you call my “admissions” and, again, use your numbering:

1. David Leigh acted as a consultant on some factual matters— chronology, fact checking— and helped us with contacts. He was not an “advisor” and will not be credited as such.
2. A small sum was paid to the Guardian in respect of the rights necessary to make the documentaries.
3. Commercial arrangements concerning rights are often made between media organisations and there is generally nothing improper about that and this is certainly the case here. These are matters that are simply not relevant for the audience to know.

Channel 4 does not generally permit previews of its programmes to participants except in specific circumstances which are agreed in advance and only then within very limited parameters. Had you requested a preview opportunity at any stage we would have considered it with Channel 4 but we can see no reason to provide one now. It is not appropriate for a contributor to a programme to see a promotional trail in advance of its broadcast. However, I have passed your email to Channel 4 so it can take account of your concerns when considering the content of the on air trail for the programme.

The film certainly contains opinions with which you won’t agree; but where they amount to a criticism of you then your position is reflected. We are satisfied that the Channel 4 programme, and indeed all versions of the programme, meets our obligations under the Ofcom Broadcasting Code, and is both accurate and fair.

We intend to rely on the agreements you have signed and believe we are fully entitled to do so. We would urge you not to write to Channel 4 and our distributors in the terms you suggest but I’m sure you’d check carefully with your lawyers before sending anything which might be libellous of, and thus damaging to, this company or me personally. Meanwhile I reserve all of Oxford Film and Television’s rights.

*Yours sincerely,
Patrick*

<http://wikileaks.org/Guardian-s-WikiLeaks-Secrets-and.html>

US targets WikiLeaks like no other organisation

*Philip Dorling
Sydney Morning Herald
December 3, 2011*

WIKILEAKS is the target of an "unprecedented" US government criminal investigation, Australian diplomatic cables obtained by the Herald reveal. The cables also show the Australian government wants to be forewarned about moves to extradite Julian Assange to the United States, but that Australian diplomats raised no concerns about him being pursued by prosecutors on charges of espionage and conspiracy.

The cables, released under freedom of information to the Herald this week, show Australian diplomats have been talking to the US Justice Department for more than a year about US criminal investigations of WikiLeaks and Mr Assange.

While the Justice Department has been reluctant to disclose details of the WikiLeaks probe, the Australian embassy in Washington reported in December 2010 that the investigation was "unprecedented both in its scale and nature" and that media reports that a secret grand jury had been convened in Alexandria, Virginia, were "likely true".

Last week the Foreign Affairs Minister, Kevin Rudd, told Parliament the government was "not aware of any current extradition request [for Mr Assange] by US authorities" and has "no formal advice" on a US grand jury investigation directed at WikiLeaks.

On Monday, Mr Assange will learn whether he will be allowed a further legal appeal against his extradition from Britain to Sweden to be questioned about sexual molestation allegations.

Mr Rudd avoided a direct answer to a question about whether Mr Assange could be subject to a "temporary surrender" mechanism that could allow him to be extradited from Sweden to the US. US Army Private Bradley Manning has been charged with "aiding the enemy" by leaking hundreds of thousands of classified government documents, published by WikiLeaks since February 2010.

Newly released Department of Foreign Affairs documents show that on December 7 last year, the Australian embassy in Washington confirmed the US Justice Department was conducting an "active and vigorous inquiry into whether Julian Assange can be charged under US law, most likely the 1917 Espionage Act".

Australian diplomats called on the Assistant Attorney-General for National Security, David Kris, to request "advance warning of any public announcement of the results of US investigations or proposed actions". Mr Kris replied he would take that "reasonable" request "up the line".

In a subsequent detailed assessment, the embassy observed that "a central theme has been the question of whether WikiLeaks is a media organisation... The general view of expert commentators is that a prosecution could not be successful unless it showed in court that WikiLeaks was not a media organisation since the history of these cases has never seen a media outlet convicted for publication of leaked documents."

Noting reports that the Justice Department was investigating alleged technical assistance provided to Private Manning, the embassy said: "Evidence of such a conspiracy could assist prosecutors rebut claims that WikiLeaks was acting merely as a media organisation."

<http://www.smh.com.au/technology/technology-news/us-targets-wikileaks-like-no-other-organisation-20111202-1obeo.html>

Supreme Court go-ahead for Julian Assange

*John Aston & Cathy Gordon
The Independent
5 December 2011*

A "thankful" Julian Assange has won a last chance in the UK to seek to block his extradition to Sweden, where he faces sex crime allegations. Two High Court judges today certified the WikiLeaks founder had raised a question on extradition law "of general public importance", paving the way for him to go to the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land.

Sir John Thomas, sitting in London with Mr Justice Ouseley, refused the 40-year-old Australian direct permission to appeal after Sir John described Assange's chances of winning as "extraordinarily slim". But the judges gave him 14 days to ask the Supreme Court justices themselves to give a final UK ruling.

If the Supreme Court refuses to hear his arguments, or he loses a full appeal, his remaining option will be to take his case to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Assange has fought a series of legal battles, arguing that it would be "unfair and unlawful" to order his extradition. The Swedish authorities want him to answer accusations of raping one woman and "sexually molesting and coercing" another in Stockholm in August last year. He denies the allegations and says they are politically motivated.

His WikiLeaks website has published a mass of leaked diplomatic cables and other documents, embarrassing several governments and international businesses.

Recently, the High Court upheld a ruling by District Judge Howard Riddle at Belmarsh Magistrates' Court in south east London that the computer expert should be extradited to face investigation.

Today Mark Summers, appearing for Assange, said his client was detained under a European Arrest Warrant (EAW) issued by a Swedish public prosecutor. Seeking permission to appeal against the High Court decision, Mr Summers said he wanted to ask the Supreme Court to rule that public prosecutors were not "judicial authorities" entitled to issue warrants under extradition law, and therefore the Assange warrant was invalid.

He told the judges a "disproportionately high" number of EAWs found to have been unjust or oppressive emanated from public prosecutors who "should not, in any circumstances, be permitted to issue EAWs".

During the hearing, Sir John told Mr Summers the court's view was that it had "very little doubt that, as a matter of law, the prosecutor was within the scheme" for issuing warrants, and Assange's chances of success in the Supreme Court were "extraordinarily slim". But at the end of the hearing the judge announced the court felt "constrained" to certify that the case raised at least one question of general public importance.

Later Assange, who continues to be free on bail and is living in a country house in Norfolk belonging to a friend, was cheered as he left the Royal Courts of Justice in London. He said the issue of extradition safeguards concerned many people in the UK, Europe and other countries who were "struggling for justice".

Assange said: "This afternoon the Parliament of the UK is considering in depth the matters that arise from various extradition cases in the UK, including my own. Today the High Court has decided that an issue arises from my own case that is of general public importance and may be of assistance to other cases and should be heard by the Supreme Court.

"I think that is the correct decision, and I am thankful. The long struggle for justice for me and others continues."

AB: 2011-12-05

Assange får överklaga till Högsta domstolen

Julian Assange fick rätt. Wikileaks-grundaren får överklaga utlämningsbeslutet till Sverige till Storbritanniens Högsta domstol. Det beslutade en domstol i London i dag—men det betyder inte att Högsta domstolen måste ta upp Assanges fall.

Julian Assange, 40, grundaren till Wikileaks, är sedan i november 2010 häktad i sin frånvaro misstänkt för våldtäkt och sexuellt övergrepp mot två kvinnor i Sverige som ska ha inträffat när Assange besökte landet i augusti förra året.

En europeisk arresteringsorder utfärdades och Assange greps av polis i december 2010 i Storbritannien. En brittisk domstol beslutade sedan att Assange skulle utlämnas till Sverige, där åklagare vill förhöra honom om anklagelserna.

Assanges advokater har överklagat utlämningsbeslutet, men fått avslag. Nu har dock Assange satt sitt hopp till London High Court ska ge honom prövningstillstånd till Storbritanniens Högsta domstol angående utlämningsbeslutet.

Men om det blir nej i dag— kan Assange utlämnas inom tio dagar till Sverige. Om det blir ett nej, har dock Assange sagt att han kommer vända sig till Europadomstolen i Strasbourg.

Aftonbladets reporter Torbjörn Ek är på plats och rapporterar från domstolen i London. Ett stort medieuppbåd samt supportrar till Assange hade på måndagsmorgonen samlats utanför rätten.

– Det är ett 20-tal reportrar här, runt 10 fotografer och två tv-stationen sänder live. Ett 30-tal supportrar till Assange har samlats, säger Torbjörn Ek.

Julian Assange själv anlände till domstolen vid 10.36-tiden. Med sig hade han Wikileaks andreman, isländska Kristinn Hrafnsson. Samt sin advokat och människorättskämpen Gareth Peirce, och John Pilger, journalist och författare som tydligt försvarat Assange.

Assange hävdar att anklagelserna mot honom är grundlösa och politiskt motiverade. Han har den senaste tiden suttit i husarrest hos Vaughan Smiths, journalist och rik supportrar, hem på en herrgård ute på den brittiska landsbyggen. Ifrågasätter den svenska åklagaren

Assanges försvarare la fram två argument varför man skulle få överklaga till Högsta domstolen. Det första:

– Kan man anse att den svenska åklagaren har den jurisdiktion (rättsbefogenhet) som krävs för en europeisk arresteringsorder? Därför borde detta tas upp i en högre instans.

Omkring 60 tidigare europeiska arresteringsordrar har behandlats i Högsta domstolen tidigare som utfärdats av andra länders åklagare men det har aldrig tidigare ifrågasatts eller avgjorts i Högsta domstolen om de faktiskt kan anses ha rätt att utfärda arresteringsordern.

Domaren John Thomas hade dock synpunkter:

– Det här innebär att du i så fall måste argumentera för att en åklagare aldrig kan ha en jurisdiktion i något fall. För den svenska åklagarens relativa självständighet har ju visats för den här rätten.

Assanges försvarares andra argument för att få överklaga var frågan om en person kan anses vara anklagad innan ett åtal har väckts.

– Där en åklagare inte har bestämt sig för att väcka åtal än eller några steg inte tagits mot att väcka åtal kan man inte anse att en person är formellt anklagad, säger Assanges försvarare Mark Summers.

Men även här hade domare John Thomas synpunkter:

– Men i det här fallet har inget slutgiltigt beslut om åtal fattats just för att det inte kan fattas förrän han utfrågats igen.

Mark Summers påpekade då att Assange skulle kunna utfrågas när och var som helst.

– Det är inte frågan här, det handlar om att den svenska åklagaren tagit fallet så långt det går i svenskt rättsväsende utan Assanges närvaro, säger domaren John Thomas.

Advokat Clare Montgomery representerar den svenska åklagaren i London. Enligt henne så håller inte någon av Assange två argument.

- Enda anledningen till att det här fallet inte kommit längre vad gäller åtalet beror bara på Assanges självvalda frånvaro. Det här är inte heller något för Högsta domstolen att avhandla.

Vid 11.30-tiden beslutade domarna att dra sig tillbaka för att överväga beslutet— om överklagan ska avslås eller bifallas. Domarna kom sedan tillbaka efter den korta ajourneringen.

– 60 fall har avgjorts i High court där arresteringsordern utfärdats av åklagare, men det här är ändå en intressant frågeställning. Därför accepterar vi att detta lämnas vidare till Högsta domstolen. Men vi kommer begära att denna lilla fråga behandlas så snabbt som möjligt.

Julian Assange kommer med andra ord få överklaga till Högsta domstolen. Han har nu 14 dagar på sig att skriva överklagan. Men det är upp till Högsta domstolen att avgöra om de överhuvudtaget kommer ta upp fallet. Det är också oklart när Högsta domstolen kommer med ett beslut.

– Om Högsta domstolen säger nej, då ska han utlämnas, säger Assanges advokat Gareth Peirce till Aftonbladet.

Men kan det bli då att Assange kommer vända sig till Europadomstolen?

– Varje individ i Europa har rätt att vända sig till Europadomstolen. Men det är extremt ovanligt att en utlämning blir fryst i väntat på ett besked från Europadomstolen ska komma med ett avgörande. Det kan finnas några fall när det handlar om utlämningar till USA, säger Peirce.

• *Sebastian Chaaban & Torbjörn Ek*

DN: 2011-12-06

Assange tillåts överklaga till Högsta domstolen

Wikileaks grundare Julian Assange tillåts överklaga beslutet att överlämnas till Sverige i Storbritanniens högsta domstol, High Court. Storbritanniens High Court meddelade på måndagen att Wikileaks grundare Julian Assange får rätt att pröva beslutet om överlämnande till Sverige i Storbritanniens Högsta domstol.

Assange är häktad i sin frånvaro sedan november förra året, misstänkt att ha våldtagit en kvinna och sexuellt ofredat en annan i Stockholm i augusti 2010. Kvinnornas advokat, Claes Borgström, är besviken över att "den ganska meningslöst utdragna förhållningen" fortsätter.

– Naturligtvis har Assange rätt att använda de rättsmedel som finns, självklart, men det är beklagligt att det ska ta ännu längre tid. Det är en påfrestning för mina klienter, ovissheten, möjligheten att få sätta punkt och gå vidare, säger Claes Borgström till DN.se.

Assange greps i december förra året i Storbritannien med stöd av en europeisk arresteringsorder. Han släpptes senare mot borgen och sedan dess har flera överklaganden av utlämningsbeslutet avslagits.

Per E Samuelsson, en av Assanges två svenska advokater, säger att beslutet är "glädjande".

– Det innebär att han får ytterligare en möjlighet att processa i Englands högsta domstol. Det innebär ju också att överlämnandet skjuts på framtiden.

Exakt på vilken punkt rätten anser att det finns en principiell rättsfråga att ta upp vet inte Samuelsson ännu.

– Det finns en hel del invändningar av substantiellt slag i fråga om överlämningen, säger han.

TT: Varför är Assange rädd för att komma till Sverige?

- Det huvudsakliga skälet är att han är rädd att Sverige ska lämna honom vidare till USA, på grund av att han är en jagad man i USA efter engagemanget i Wikileaks, säger Samuelsson.

Vad händer med Assange nu?

– Han är kvar i England under husarrest medan han förbereder talan i Englands högsta domstol. Jag har hört att det handlar om ett par månader, men jag vet inte om de uppgifterna är riktiga, säger Samuelsson.

"Åklagaren [Marianne Ny] lämnar inga kommentarer kring den brittiska processen och kan inte heller ge någon information om den svenska utredningen just nu" meddelar svenska Åklagarmyndigheten.

Den fråga som High Court givit Assange rätten att överklaga till Högsta domstolen är huruvida svensk åklagare har befogenhet att utfärda en europeisk arresteringsorder. Assange har nu två veckor på sig att skriva sin ansökan till Högsta domstolen, som sedan beslutar om den ska ta upp frågan eller inte.

• *Ossi Carp & Lasse Mannheimer*

Marianne Ny on Trial

There's a scapegoat? Flashback comments on the coming SC appeal.

Rixstep.com
2011-12-07

STOCKHOLM (Rixstep) — Julian Assange isn't in the hot seat at the moment. Right now it's Sweden— or more specifically Marianne Ny. Sweden has a long record of

defying EU regulations for issuance of arrest warrants and a lot of people want it stopped.

And Marianne Ny's online move yesterday, to defend her actions solely to a Swedish audience who have no say in the matter, only cements the suspicion there's a bit of desperation hanging in the air. And the Flashbackers are speculating this morning that Ny's behaviour, taken in the context of rule of law, may result in the case against Assange ultimately being dropped.
The Swedish System

All Gareth Peirce has to do, say the Flashbackers, is argue that Swedish prosecutors—and they think all prosecutors qualify over there—cannot by any stretch of the imagination be construed as the necessary 'independent judicial authority' as required by the EAW framework.

'The Swedish judicial system would be shaken to its roots', said Aleksanterinkatu at Flashback. 'But the English system would be shaken as well—they've gone along with 60 EAWs issued by Swedish prosecutors so far and never questioned them.'

The Brits seem to be getting more and more annoyed with the situation and really want it to stop.

'If Assange is given the right to appeal, this will mean—regardless of the outcome for Assange—that the EAW system and its glaring obvious shortcomings will garner even more attention than before. Assange isn't formally appealing for his own benefit.'

'What do you think of the odds that Marianne Ny will finally swallow her pride and use Mutual Legal Assistance to not cause any more harm to her case?' asked GoodwinStrawman. 'I think her superiors should make her do it—and try to protect rule of law in Sweden!'

Then Lillalinnea popped in at 20:50 yesterday evening to report on Marianne Ny.
Prosecutor on the Defence

'Do you think the prosecution authority are following the debate here at Flashback? For at 18:16 they published an article on who they think is authorised to issue EAWs!'

'Here we see the same abyss between the Swedish and British systems I've spoken about before', said BaalZeBub. 'Lagföring without prosecution is unthinkable for the English. Prosecution occurs early on in their system—and it's seen as an important right for people: the right to know what they're being charged with.'

'The fact that Sweden shoved in a rule that a 'lagföring' can be a matter of an investigation and a decision before any possible prosecution does not change the fact that this is an absurdity in the English judicial system.'

'And this is where I think the objections to the EAW have been the strongest', he continued. 'But we've seen the issue completely sidestepped by the English who want to appear as good Europeans able to tolerate the nutty idiosyncrasies of those silly Swedes.'

BaalZeBub goes on to cite Marianne Ny's statements to the media where she repeatedly says she's not yet decided whether to prosecute— that the EAW was issued for questioning only (because she wasn't interested in questioning Assange whilst he was still in the country, only when he left).

'As we've seen, British law and Swedish law are incompatible. Prosecution comes at a late point in the investigation in Sweden. Prosecution is a summons to the lower court when the preliminary investigation is completed. All you have are allegations up to that point— but in Sweden you can still hold someone in custody for months on end. But in the British system— and likely in most other European countries— prosecution is something that happens before any interrogation takes place.'

"This also means we're looking at two different systems of case law. In England a prosecutor decides early on what the case is going to be about. But in Sweden a prosecutor can hold young boys in custody on suspicion of rape and then begin the 'turning over of stones' [Marianne Ny's famous parole] to see what— if anything— she can prosecute for— or to in the end dismiss all the allegations of rape and prosecute them instead for distilling moonshine and perhaps a few other juicy things she learned from the interrogations.'

'This ad hoc process, deciding things after the fact based on what sticks to the wall, is expressly illegal in England.'
Marianne's Making it Up

Hoppsan came in today to tick details off one by one.

'The statute Marianne Ny is citing has to be based on a Swedish translation of the EAW. The problem is the word 'prosecute' has been translated as 'lagföring' which is fuzzier than even the British counterpart.'

'Marianne Ny came with her own unique interpretation of 'lagföring' for this case. I don't think you'll find a linguistic expert anywhere who'd agree that it means what she wants it to mean.'

'I was Googling around and I couldn't find a single legal text that equated 'lagföring' and 'investigation'. It's Marianne Ny who came up with her own original interpretation of it so she could pursue this case— except it really isn't an accurate interpretation at all.'

The legal glossary at the official website of the Swedish prosecution authority has no mention of such a thing.

'I find nothing at their site about 'lagföring' including interrogations', reported Lillalinnea.

All eyes are on Sweden. Not on Julian Assange this time— on Sweden. The Swedish authorities have some explaining to do— not only to Julian Assange and the British Supreme Court but to the world in general.

Julian Assange is under Swedish arrest— but not in Sweden. Swedish authorities are supposed to expedite cases as swiftly as possible— but they refuse to comply with their 'suspect' when he repeatedly asks to be questioned— and only get interested in things

when they find out he's left the country after finally getting their approval to do so.

He's specifically (as per Marianne Ny's EAW) wanted for questioning. Something he wanted to do a year ago.

'As we've noted, MN jumps in and confuses everything', said BaalZeBub. 'She hasn't based her EAW on a Swedish arrest. But she tosses in assorted suspicions, sanctions, and weak assertions of a possible prosecution after the interrogations.'

'Then we still have the matter of two completely different judicial traditions: in England you get to know the allegations at an early stage. In Sweden they first toss the poor sod in jail, then they interrogate a bit, and then when they're finally through with their investigation, the prosecutor decides which allegations if any will be used at trial. The English would regard the Swedish system as reprehensible if they fully understood it.'

'You can see how big a difference there is between these traditions if all you do is compare the Swedish 'åtal' with 'prosecution'. And it gets even crazier if you compare the Swedish 'häktning' with 'detention' as here:'

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Detention_of_a_suspect

'Pre-charge detention refers to the period of time an individual can be held and questioned by police prior to being charged with an offence. Not all countries have such a concept.'

'Sweden's so weird that they have their own section in that Wikipedia article.'
So Weird, So Weird

'From a British perspective, we have an absurd and exotic procedure that regularly comes under attack by Amnesty International and by organs of the United Nations—but we don't seem to give a damn.'

'At the same time the Swedish media can pretend to be highly critical when the US and other countries detain people without prosecution—and they don't hesitate to point out that it's in violation of the laws and judicial traditions in those countries. But they're amazingly quiet about how it's perfectly OK to do that in Sweden.'

Note: countries such as the US and the UK have legislation prohibiting detention without prosecution.

An Australian Abroad

Scott Ludlum (Australian Senator)
10 Dec. 2011

No-one was celebrating when it became apparent that the dense hour of argument and counter argument in the vaulted courtroom number 4 in London had resulted in a further stay of extradition for WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange. The arguments turned on obscure but important skirmishes over the controversial use of European

Arrest Warrants (EAWs) to transfer people from one country to another.

To get the technicalities out of the way, leave has been given for Mr Assange's legal team to apply to the Supreme Court to have an argument heard that a politically appointed prosecutor in Sweden doesn't qualify as a 'Judicial Authority' under mutual assistance agreements between Sweden and the UK.

The court would normally take up to six weeks— well into February 2012— to decide if it wants to hear the argument, but someone behind the scenes appears to be in a serious hurry and it's likely a decision will be made on December 19th, one day after the deadline for Mr Assange's legal team to present their arguments. Depending on the outcome, Mr Assange may well shortly thereafter find himself in Gothenberg prison awaiting questioning and possible prosecution.

In the mean time, he will continue to live in legal limbo at Ellingham Hall in Norfolk with an electronic ankle manacle and a curfew for company. Not quite a cause for celebration, but it was nonetheless a valuable opportunity to take part in the post-hearing debrief where the tight knit team of lawyers, campaigners, hackers and troublemakers downloaded a year of suspense and misadventure for the benefit of travellers from afar.

Assange in person is focused and measured, warm and remarkably good humoured for someone who has deliberately aroused murderous fury amongst some of the most powerful people on the planet. The antidote to pervasive hostile surveillance appears to be cheerful self-surveillance— every conversation is recorded and documented to within an inch of its life— in addition to the occasional all-out transparency assault on the watchers themselves, for which the WikiLeaks founder now has a well deserved reputation.

Stockholm in winter is about as far from summer in Fremantle as you can get. It is a long way to chase another Australian citizen from courtrooms in London to Sweden, but it is worth it to gain a better understanding of what his conditions and entitlements will be if the extradition goes ahead. I trust that proceedings in Sweden will be conducted with fairness and rigour— if there are charges, let them be finally laid and the evidence heard.

The reason for my visit is that I have no such trust in how the rule of law will be applied in the United States in the current political climate, and I hold grave fears for Mr Assange's safety if he is transferred there. In an election year in which senior Republican figures have pre-emptively declared him a terrorist, we need to look no further than the medieval treatment of Private Bradley Manning to understand the risks now faced by Julian Assange.

It is easy to dismiss calls for his casual murder as voices from the fringe, but remember— the United States has now completely normalised extrajudicial killing of foreign citizens by remote-piloted drones and highly trained kill teams. The post-911 legal environment in the US long ago passed the point of corrosive paranoia with regards anything relating to terrorism, and has drifted into a realm quite unhinged from the constitutional protections of which America was justifiably proud.

The regular process of extradition from Sweden to the US comes with important

safeguards, the most important being that Sweden would never consent to an extradition for politically motivated charges [*not if they were called by their right names; but otherwise... —A.B.*], and the UK Home Secretary would also have to give its consent, a process safeguarded by judicial appeal.

But here we come to a grey area. What will the Swedish Government do if the US seeks the 'temporary surrender' of Mr Assange while in custody in Sweden? This is a little-known and poorly understood clause buried within the EU-US Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance agreements signed into Swedish law in February 2010. It appears to allow a 'fast track' extradition, more akin to extraordinary rendition, in which Mr Assange could be taken rapidly out of custody in Sweden and transferred to the US to face prosecution on serious charges relating to espionage or computer crime. This would require the consent of the Swedish Prime Minister. The question is whether this option is on the table.

It is now more than a year since the spectacular releases of US State Department diplomatic cables to the world's major newspapers, longer yet since the horrific revelations of the Iraq and Afghanistan war logs. There has been time enough to consider the consequences.

The issue at stake here is trust. There is a form of consensus of the governed in open democratic societies, that we understand the need for a certain amount of confidentiality in international diplomacy. This does not mean we deserve to be lied to, tediously and repetitively deceived on matters of life and death.

I discovered things about my country that sit extremely uncomfortably. So did citizens of Sweden, and citizens of the United States. The release of this information was strongly in the public interest— not because states don't deserve a modicum of discretion in their operations (I believe they do), but because occasional acts of unexpected transparency hold up a mirror of truth.

For those who have told the truth, the release of the cables hold little consequence other than validation. For those who have honourably dissembled, the releases are instructive and clarifying. For those who have just simply lied about war, governance and commerce, they are an indictment. And a very great many people have lied, in our names, and on our payroll.

Open democracies where the truth still holds currency will weather this transparency storm vastly better than regimes that have come unmoored from the rule of law. Twelve months after the cable releases, senior military and political figures in the US have acknowledged that while embarrassing, the releases did no lasting damage. No-one died. We just understand better how power really works, and that is the primary role of a free press.

In the first line of the London High Court's ruling in November, Mr Assange was rightfully acknowledged as a journalist. On the other side of the world, in Australia's most prestigious media awards a few weeks later, he was honoured with a Walkley Award for outstanding services to journalism. Without people willing to take such risks to confront power, the democratic protections which those of us in fortunate parts of the world take for granted are sapped and eroded.

The Australian Government has been slow to react to the possibility of the publishing organisation known as WikiLeaks being crushed by a wounded superpower, it still

doesn't appear to understand the threat of Mr Assange's rendition to the US, and our Prime Minister appears mainly concerned with keeping her head down in the hope this will all go away.

The thing is, it won't. Time is now very short. If Mr Assange ends up jailed in Sweden, Australia has the ability to repatriate him under the International Transfer of Prisoners (ITP) scheme. Australia must strongly insist that there will be no rendition to the US under the 'temporary surrender' mechanism. It's time our Government pushed back on companies including Visa, Mastercard and Paypal, and demanded to know why they are continuing the crippling financial blockade of WikiLeaks. If indeed the blockade is legal under Australian trade practices law, then that's a problem the Australian Parliament can remedy.

Remember the campaign against the unwanted and misguided internet filter? No-one directed that campaign—it was won by tens of thousands of people spontaneously deciding that their individual contribution was worth the effort. The messy, unplanned collective result was worth vastly more than the sum of its parts—inventive, well networked, determined and effective.

The stakes here are much higher, because freedom of speech, freedom to publish, freedom to demand transparency of government and privacy of the individual, are the sources from which all our other freedoms flow.

<http://fieldnotes.org.au/2011/12/10/wiki/#more-306>

AB: 2011-12-17

Vågar vi lita på ert rättssystem, Sverige?

Australiensisk politiker: Julian Assange riskerar lämnas ut till ett hämndlystet USA

DEBATTÖREN

Scott Ludlam, 41, Fremantle, Australien. Senator för de australiensiska gröna och partiets talesperson i kommunikationsfrågor. Han medverkade vid Julian Assanges överklagande vid High Court den 5 december och besöker även Sverige.

* * *

I går kom beskedet att brittiska Högsta domstolen ska pröva fallet om Wikileaks-grundaren Julian Assanges utlämning till Sverige. Förra veckan gav en appellationsdomstol i London Wikileaks grundare Julian Assange tillåtelse att i Högsta domstolen överklaga en utlämningsorder till Sverige. I dag, den 19 december, väntas rätten besluta om han ska tillbringa julen med elektronisk fotboja på engelska landsbygden eller i häkte i Stockholm.

Det är långt att åka till Stockholm för en enda australiensisk medborgares skull. Men jag tycker att det är värt det för att få fram fakta bland alla rykten i det komplexa fallet och för att få en ökad förståelse för Julian Assanges fall.

Men jag är inte här för att lägga mig i den svenska rättsprocessen. Jag litar på att om ett eventuellt åtal sker så kommer rättegången att vara rättvis. Finns det anklagelser ska

givetvis dessa prövas på ett rättssäkert sätt av det svenska rättssystemet.

Jag har åkt till Sverige för att jag inte litar på rättssäkerheten i USA med det rådande politiska klimatet, och jag hyser en stark oro för Julian Assanges säkerhet om han överlämnas dit. Republikanska politiker i USA har redan på förhand fastställt att han är terrorist. Vi behöver bara se hur Bradley Manning behandlats för att förstå vad Julian Assange riskerar.

Den rättsliga utlämningsprocessen från Sverige till USA omfattar en rad viktiga garantier. Viktigast bland dessa är att Sverige aldrig skulle samtycka till en utlämning på grundval av politiskt grundade anklagelser, samt att den brittiska inrikesministern också skulle behöva ge sitt samtycke.

Men det finns en gråzon. Hur agerar den svenska regeringen om USA ansöker om "tillfälligt överlämnande" av Julian Assange när denne befinner sig i förvar i Sverige? Detta kan inte ske utan den svenska regeringens samtycke. Den fråga som jag och många oroliga australiensare med mig ställer är om det här är ett alternativ som ligger på bordet.

Mer än ett år har gått sedan Wikileaks läckte korrespondens från USA:s utrikesdepartement till världens stora dagstidningar och sedan de fruktansvärda uppgifterna i Iraq och Afghanistan War Logs publicerades. Vi har haft gott om tid att fundera på konsekvenserna. Förtroendet står på spel. Det råder en slags konsensus i öppna demokratiska samhällen om att det finns ett behov av diskretion inom internationell diplomati. Men det betyder inte att demokratiskt valda regeringar får ljuga och vilseleda sina medborgare när det gäller liv och död.

Genom Wikileaks har jag— i likhet med bland annat svenska och amerikanska medborgare— upptäckt obehagliga saker om mitt eget land. Att informationen släpptes låg i allmänhetens intresse. Sporadiska handlingar av spontan öppenhet håller upp en sanningsspegel.

Högt uppsatta militärer och politiker i USA har efter läckorna erkänt att även om de var pinsamma så orsakade de inga bestående skador. Ingen har dött. Och vi har fått en bättre förståelse för hur makten verkligen fungerar, vilket är den fria pressens främsta uppgift.

I utslaget från High Court i London i november omnämns Julian Assange med rätta som journalist. Några veckor senare tilldelades Assange Australiens mest prestigefyllda journalistpris för enastående insatser. Utan människor som är villiga att ta risker för att konfrontera makten undermineras de demokratiska skyddsmekanismer som vi tar för givna.

Australiens regering verkar inte riktigt förstå att Wikileaks kan komma att krossas av en sårad supermakt och att Julian Assange riskerar att utlämnas till USA. Australien är dock inte part i utlämningsavtalet mellan EU och USA. Där sätter vi vår tillit till det svenska rättssystemet.

Julian Assange's clear and present danger

*Tony Kevin
Eureka Street (Australia)
December 14, 2011*

The 2011 Walkley Awards included a surprising 'Most Outstanding Contribution to Journalism', to Julian Assange's website WikiLeaks.

According to the citation, 'by designing and constructing a means to encourage whistleblowers, WikiLeaks and its editor-in-chief Julian Assange took a brave, determined and independent stand for freedom of speech and transparency that has empowered people all over the world.'

In June, Assange also won in Britain the Martha Gellhorn Prize for 'journalism at the cutting edge ... that challenges secrecy and mendacity in public affairs ... and raises 'forgotten' issues of public importance, without fear or favour, working against the grain of government spin'.

These two awards commending WikiLeaks as publicly empowering journalism may yet prove to be vital to Assange.

If he is soon extradited from UK to Sweden, as now seems likely, he faces the danger of early 'temporary surrender' from there to the US, under a Swedish-US arrangement for transferring people charged with crimes in both countries. This enables the two governments to avoid procedural requirements and opportunities for appeal that exist under normal extradition arrangements.

Assange could then face very serious charges in the US. Cables recently obtained by the Sydney Morning Herald under Freedom of Information from the Australian Embassy in Washington confirm that since 2010 the US Justice Department has conducted an 'active and vigorous inquiry into whether Assange can be charged under US law, most likely the 1917 Espionage Act'.

This investigation is 'unprecedented both in its scale and nature'. Media reports that a secret grand jury has been convened in Virginia are 'likely true'. The embassy reports that 'a central theme has been the question of whether WikiLeaks is a media organisation ... the history of these cases has never seen a media outlet convicted for publication of leaked documents'.

The embassy notes that the US Justice Department was investigating alleged technical assistance provided by WikiLeaks to Private Bradley Manning who is under arrest and facing treason charges, and that 'evidence of such a conspiracy could assist prosecutors rebut claims that WikiLeaks was acting merely as a media organisation' in accepting for publication secret cables from Manning.

Assange thus faces risks of a long prison sentence if sent to the US. For who knows what Manning's testimony might say, after his months of cruel and unusual confinement? At worst, Assange could face real risk of assassination in the US, where there have been many death threats against him.

Assange has waged a year-long legal struggle against extradition from Britain to Sweden, to face questioning by a Swedish prosecutor on alleged rape charges. His lawyer says the allegations stem from a 'dispute over consensual but unprotected sex'. The reported circumstances are quite strange.

The ominous international political background has seemingly not been taken into account by British judges hearing the matter.

Assange now confronts the last possible legal opportunity to challenge his extradition to Sweden. He awaits a UK Supreme Court ruling, reported by some media as expected before Christmas Day, on a point of law considered by the final lower court to be 'of general public importance': whether a (Swedish) public prosecutor is a 'judicial authority' as required by the 2003 Extradition Act.

The issue revolves around the notion that there must be a separation between the executive and the judiciary when depriving a person of their liberty; in this case when the person concerned has not been charged and the device used to deprive their liberty is extradition to another state.

If I were Assange, I would not feel safe going to Sweden now. Though Assange has not been charged in Sweden, the Swedish public prosecutor has declined many offers over the past year that she question him in the UK. This raises questions of good faith.

Also, it is not clear how Sweden might respond to any US request for his temporary surrender to the US, if American charges were laid against him on arrival in Sweden. The present conservative Swedish Government has a history of acceding to all US rendition requests during the War on Terror.

Also, Karl Rove is an adviser to the Swedish Prime Minister. Rove had a notorious public history as a ruthless senior White House official. For example he was allegedly implicated in the Bush White House's career destruction of 'outed' CIA agent Valerie Plame and her diplomat husband Joe Wilson.

What has the Australian Government done to protect Assange these past months? Almost nothing. Kevin Rudd — who earlier took some interest in Assange's rights to consular protection as an Australian at risk overseas — now resorts to delaying tactics and formalistic responses.

Greens Senator Scott Ludlam tried to question the Prime Minister about Assange before Parliament rose for the summer break, but was blocked by an opposition censure motion.

Assange's mother appeals to Australians of good will to help defend her son from his clear and present danger: 'Get informed. Inform a friend. Call talkback radio. Go and see your local Federal Member ... and tell them you expect them to stick up for an Australian citizen ...'

I do not claim impartiality here. I think this is an important cause, and commend it to Eureka Street readers. Bad things happen when good people do nothing.

• *Tony Kevin* Tony Kevin retired from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 1998, after a 30-year public service career in DFAT and Prime Minister's Department. He was Australia's ambassador to Poland (1991–94) and Cambodia (1994–97).

<http://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article.aspx?aeid=29449>

UK court grants Assange extradition appeal

AFP

16 Dec. 2011

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has been granted permission to appeal against extradition from Britain to Sweden over rape allegations and a hearing will start on February 1, a court said Friday.

"The Supreme Court has granted permission to appeal and a hearing has been scheduled for two days, beginning on 1 February 2012," said a statement from the Supreme Court, the highest court in England.

The decision means Assange will spend a second Christmas at the country mansion of a wealthy supporter in Norfolk, eastern England. He was arrested last December on a European arrest warrant issued by Sweden after allegations by two women of sexual assault and rape.

The 40-year-old Australian strongly denies any wrongdoing and says the sex with the women was consensual. He believes the allegations are politically motivated and linked to WikiLeaks' release of hundreds of thousands of classified US files about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Supreme Court decision comes as Bradley Manning, the US soldier accused of passing the files to WikiLeaks, is due to make his first appearance in a US court on Friday.

The hearing will determine whether the former intelligence analyst, who turns 24 on Saturday, should be tried on charges which could see him sentenced to life imprisonment.

Manning is accused of downloading 260,000 US diplomatic cables, videos of US air strikes and US military reports from Afghanistan and Iraq between November 2009 and May 2010 while serving in Iraq, and transferring them to WikiLeaks.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, speaking on the eve of Manning's hearing, said it was a "very unfortunate and damaging action... that put at risk individuals and relationships."

Manning's supporters say his health has sharply deteriorated while in custody.

AB: 2011-12-16 (långt ner på hemsidan)

Högsta domstolen prövar Assange-fall

▶ [Brittiska HD prövar fallet om Julian Assanges utlämning till Sverige](#)
Rättegången inleds den 1 februari.



AB: 2011-12-16

HD prövar Assange-fall

Brittiska Högsta domstolen prövar fallet om Julian Assanges utlämning till Sverige, uppger AFP. Rättegången inleds den 1 februari och väntas pågå i två dagar. Brittiska Högsta domstolen är Storbritanniens högsta juridiska instans.

Assange är begärd utlämnad sedan två kvinnor i Sverige anmält honom för våldtäkt och andra sexbrott i augusti 2010. *[Nej, det är snarare åklagare som anmält. —A.B.]* Julian Assange, som sedan gripandet i december bor i Storbritannien, nekar till brott.

Den svenska åklagarmyndigheten har tidigare kommenterat att det Assange vill få prövat är "om en svensk åklagare över huvud taget är behörig att utfärda en europeisk arresteringsorder". På myndighetens hemsida förklarar man att det finns ett EU-rambeslut som reglerar detta. Där står att varje stat ska utse de rättsliga myndigheter som är behöriga att utfärda en europeisk arresteringsorder.

I den svenska förordningen framgår att ordern utfärdas av åklagare. Det är riksåklagaren (RÅ) som bestämmer vilka som har behörighet att utfärda en europeisk arresteringsorder. I Sverige har RÅ bestämt att alla allmänna åklagare har behörighet.

"Högsta domstolen har gett tillåtelse till en överklagan och domstolsförhandlingar har schemalagts till två dagar, med start den 1 februari 2012", skriver domstolen i ett uttalande.

Julian Assange har sagt att de två kvinnorna frivilligt har haft sex med honom och att anklagelserna är politiskt motiverade, sedan Wikileaks släppt hundratusentals hemliga amerikanska filer.

Det är Assanges advokater som har hävdats att den europeiska arresteringsorder, som gjorde det möjligt att gripa Wikileaksgrundaren i Storbritannien, var felaktig då den utfärdats av en svensk åklagare, som man anser inte har behörighet att utfärda en sådan. I den tidigare instansen High Court höll domaren John Thomas inte med om det resonemanget, men han ändå ville låta HD fatta beslutet.

Claes Borgström, som företräder de två kvinnorna som anmält Assange, kommenterade resonemanget då:

– Regelverket är enkelt. Om det här inte skulle sluta med att han överlämnas, då kan man skrota den europeiska arresteringsordern, för då fyller den ingen funktion, sade han då till TT. [*Typiska dumheter av Borgström. Det "värsta" som kunde hända vore att det blir svårare för sådana som Borgström och Ny att missbruka EAW-mekanismen. ---A.B.*]

Seven judges to hear Julian Assange extradition appeal

Supreme court says size of panel reflects 'great public importance' of issues raised by WikiLeaks founder's hearing

*Owen Bowcott and Rob Booth
The Guardian
16 December 2011*

A panel of seven supreme court justices will hear Julian Assange's appeal against extradition to Sweden to face accusations of rape and sexual assault. The large number of judges employed reflects "the great public importance of the issue", according to a statement from the UK's highest court.

The supreme court said there would be a two-day hearing of the appeal by the Australian-born founder of WikiLeaks beginning on 1 February. A panel of three supreme court justices— Lord Hope, Lord Mance and Lord Dyson— examined Assange's application on Friday following the high court's "certification of a point of law of general public importance".

At full strength the supreme court has 12 justices. The more significant the case, the greater number of judges will hear it. **The central issue to be examined, the court said, is "whether a prosecutor is a judicial authority."**

Assange has been detained under a European arrest warrant (EAW) issued by a Swedish public prosecutor over allegations that he sexually assaulted two women during a visit to Sweden in August 2010. He denies the claims.

At an earlier hearing his barrister, Mark Summers, argued that public prosecutors were not "judicial authorities" able to issue warrants under extradition law, and so the warrant was invalid. If Assange, 40, loses this appeal he may still be able to appeal against extradition to the European court of human rights in Strasbourg.

Meanwhile, Assange has moved from Ellingham Hall, Norfolk, where he has been staying for more than a year at the home of Vaughan Smith, owner of the Frontline Club for journalists.

Assange and a group of his supporters had been holed up in the country house with Smith and his family including his pregnant wife. Assange's bail conditions meant he had to sign in at nearby Bungay police station every day.

There have been times when as many as 20 people from WikiLeaks stayed at the house. "I'd open a cupboard and another one would fall out," Smith has joked.

On one occasion Assange reportedly upset the estate's farm manager when he let out some pigs to make a video about credit card companies that have denied him the means to raise donations.

"My wife is eight months pregnant and they felt if they stayed longer it would not be right," Smith said on Friday. "I think Julian thinks a year is a long time to be with anybody."

Smith has spoken proudly of his decision to stand by Assange and support him through the legal process of challenging his extradition, but he has also admitted to minor domestic bother.

Bradley Manning's lawyer demands judge step down over Assange link

Lawyer claims Department of Justice hopes to force Manning into plea bargain to give evidence in WikiLeaks investigation

*Ed Pilkington and Matt Williams
The Guardian
16 December 2011*

Eighteen months after his arrest in Iraq for allegedly authoring the largest leak of state secrets in American history, Bradley Manning appeared in court and immediately started to turn the guns against his military accusers.

At the start of a preliminary hearing to establish whether the US soldier should be face a full court martial for allegedly passing more than 250,000 US embassy cables to WikiLeaks, his lawyer issued a dramatic challenge to the military presiding judge implying that the proceedings were biased and rigged.

David Coombs demanded that the judge, known as the investigating officer, Lt Colonel Paul Almanza, recuse himself from the case on the grounds that he works for the US department of justice, which is involved in the American criminal investigation into the founder of the whistleblowing WikiLeaks website, Julian Assange.

Coombs put it to the judge: "You have been at the department of justice since 2002; by your own admission you have prosecuted 20 cases. And the department has an ongoing investigation in this case."

He suggested that the department's intention was to force Manning into a plea bargain, so that he would give evidence against Assange. "If the department of justice got their way, they would get a plea in this case, and get my client to be named as one of the witnesses to go after Julian Assange and WikiLeaks."

Manning, aged 23, was appearing in public for the first time since 25 May 2010, when he was arrested at Forward Operating Base Hammer outside Baghdad. He was dressed in military fatigues, wore black-rimmed glasses and had closely cropped hair.

His only comments were to answer questions from the judge confirming that he was aware of the charges against him. The soldier faces a maximum sentence of life in military custody with no chance of parole— prosecutors have indicated they will not seek the death penalty, contrary to what was later suggested by Coombs to the hearing.

The full charge sheet was released for the first time: a total of 23 counts, the most serious of which is that Manning knowingly gave "intelligence to the enemy, though indirect means". The idea that WikiLeaks constitutes a conduit to an enemy of the US state will in itself be subject of much debate and legal argument.

A second charge accuses of Manning of causing information to be published "having knowledge that intelligence published on the internet is accessible to the enemy".

He is also charged with passing information from a secure database containing more than 250,000 records belonging to the US government— a reference to the US embassy cables published by WikiLeaks through an international group of newspapers including the Guardian in November 2010.

Another charge refers to the first act of publication by WikiLeaks in February 2010, a US embassy cable known as Reykjavik-13.

Coombs complained at the way his desired list of defence witnesses was whittled down by the judge. The prosecution, he said, had asked for 20 witnesses and was granted them all. By contrast, Coombs asked for 48 and had two approved. "Two out of 48!" he exclaimed. "In a case in which the government has charged [Manning] with aiding the enemy, which carries the maximum sentence right now of death!"

Manning's lawyer also protested that he was not allowed to call witnesses who would contest the true nature of the material leaked to WikiLeaks, and query the harm that it allegedly caused the US national interest. "Why are we here a year and a half later?" Coombs asked. "The government has asked for delay after delay after delay."

Aside from press and legal council, a few members of the public were allowed inside the courtroom on a first-come, first-served basis. Those who got in had queued at the military base since "predawn", an officer said. A vigil in support of Manning was held outside the main gates of Fort Meade, situated in the state of Maryland.

The army has been criticised for taking so long to bring Manning to trial and faces further questions over how it is conducting the start of deliberations. The hearing is a preliminary stage, known as an Article 32, equivalent to a civilian pre-trial hearing, and is designed to assess whether the US soldier should be sent to a full court-martial.

Among the stranger aspects of the case is that it begins on a Friday and will run through the weekend. The military authorities have indicated that each day could extend late into the night.

Jeff Patterson, of the Bradley Manning support network, said: "To run the hearing through a weekend right before the Christmas vacation is clearly designed to minimise both media coverage and public protests."

Government unlikely to aid Assange

*Stephanie Peatling
Sydney Morning Herald
December 18, 2011*

THE federal government has indicated it is unlikely to interfere in the case of the WikiLeaks founder, Julian Assange, should a request be made to extradite him to the US from Sweden.

Mr Assange's appeal against extradition to Sweden to answer rape and sexual assault charges was scheduled to be heard tomorrow and his lawyers feared he may have been moved immediately. But, late on Friday night, it was announced the appeal would now be heard in February by a panel of seven justices because of "the great public importance of the issue", according to a statement from the Supreme Court, Britain's highest court.

His supporters are calling on the government to ask for Mr Assange, pictured, to be repatriated and serve any sentence in Australia. "The Prime Minister should immediately rule out his transfer to the US ... and establish whether or not the US will seek the 'temporary surrender' of Mr Assange if he finds himself in custody in Sweden," the Greens Senator Scott Ludlam said.

A request by Senator Ludlam for a briefing on the government's position resulted in a statement earlier this month from the then Attorney-General, Robert McClelland. "The decision by a foreign state to make, or grant, an extradition request is a sovereign act done in accordance with that state's domestic laws and procedures and in light of any relevant treaty obligations that it has assumed," Mr McClelland wrote. "On that basis, Australia would not expect to be a party to any extradition discussions that may take place."

If extradited to Sweden, Mr Assange fears he could be moved to the US where WikiLeaks is under investigation for releasing thousands of secret cables.

The Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, declined to say what the government would do if Mr Assange was found guilty in Sweden.

WikiLeaks lawyers protest at denial of full access to Manning hearing

Assange's lawyer relegated to public benches at alleged leaker's pre-trial hearing after army appeals court rejects motion

*Ed Pilkington in Fort Meade
The Guardian
17 December 2011*

Lawyers acting on behalf of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks are protesting that they have been denied full access to the pre-trial hearing of Bradley Manning, the US soldier accused of passing hundreds of thousands of secret state documents to the whistle-

blowing website.

A motion filed with the army appeals court on Thursday asking for legal representatives of the site to be granted full privileges in the court has been rejected, relegating Assange's lawyer Jennifer Robinson to the public benches. The lack of access could prove significant should the hearing go into private session over confidential material, to which Assange will be excluded.

Robinson insisted that WikiLeaks should be considered a party to the hearing because of the on-going criminal investigation into the site in which Manning could be called as a witness. There is a grand jury currently sitting in secret in Virginia looking at a possible criminal pursuit of both Assange and the whistle-blowing network he founded.

Robinson told reporters in the court room at the Manning hearing that the soldier's own defence team had made it clear that pressure is being put on Manning to implicate Assange in the department of justice investigation.

WikiLeaks stresses that there would be no security risk in allowing it access to confidential private sessions of the court, as it is working with a lawyer with the Centre for Constitutional Rights, Amanda Jacobsen, who carries full security clearance.

Robinson said that Manning's defence team, led by a civilian lawyer, David Coombs, were aware of WikiLeaks's presence in the court "but that's the extent of the involvement".

The motion, filed with the appeal court by the CCR on behalf of WikiLeaks and Assange, says that the charges against Manning are wholly unproven. "There is strong evidence that Manning has nonetheless suffered serious human rights violations as a result of these unproven claims, including prolonged isolation and sensory deprivation, and other torture or cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment reminiscent of the worst abuses at Guantánamo Bay."

The motion adds that Assange and WikiLeaks have rights under the US constitution to proper access to the hearing because they may have to confront "allegations against them, particularly as relates to the grand jury investigation in the eastern sistrict of Virginia, which is apparently targeting Assange in connection with matters that will likely be addressed at Manning's Article 32 hearing."

Pvt. Manning Finally Appears in Court

The long-delayed court martial proceedings against alleged WikiLeaks leaker Bradley Manning finally got under way with supporters of the Army private filling a hearing room at Fort Meade, Maryland. But questions about the fairness of his treatment continue, retired Col. Ann Wright reports.

*Ann Wright
ConsortiumNews.com
December 17, 2011*

On Friday, 40 supporters of Bradley Manning saw him in person in the military courtroom at Fort Meade, Maryland, and another 60 watched the video feed from the court, the first time the Army private has been seen by the public in 19 months. Over 100 other supporters, including 50 from Occupy Wall Street who had bused down from New York City, were at the front gates of Fort Meade in solidarity with Manning. Hundreds of supporters will gather for a rally and march on Saturday, which is Manning's 24th birthday.

For his first court appearance, Bradley was in what looked to be a new military uniform and had received a fresh military-style haircut. He was not in shackles in the courtroom, but it appeared in a photo that he was shackled in the van that brought him to the court. Manning talked freely with his civilian defense counsel and his two military legal counsels.

He did not turn around and look at the people in the court, but as he was brought in and taken out during the various recesses of the court, he no doubt noticed supporters in Bradley Manning t-shirts.

Bradley Manning has been imprisoned for 19 months, since May 2010, without a trial. On Friday, an Article 32 hearing began at Fort Meade, Maryland, in which an investigating officer will determine whether there is sufficient evidence of the crimes with which the military has charged him for the case to be referred to a General court-martial.

In July 2010, Manning was charged with transferring classified information onto his personal computer and communicating national defense information to an unauthorized source. Twenty-two more crimes were charged in March 2011, including "aiding the enemy," a capital offense, though Defense Department prosecutors said they would not seek the death penalty. In April, Manning was found fit to face a court martial.

Defense Challenges

At Friday's hearing, Manning's civilian lawyer, David Coombs, challenged the impartiality of the investigating officer U.S. Army Reserve Lt. Col. Paul Almanza, citing Almanza's civilian employment as a lawyer in the Department of Justice, which has conducted investigations of Manning, Julian Assange, and WikiLeaks, the Web that received the information allegedly leaked by Manning.

Noting that the defense team had requested that 38 witnesses be allowed to testify in the Article 32 hearing, Coombs said the decision of Almanza to allow only two defense witnesses— other than the 10 the prosecution already wanted— demonstrated a bias by Almanza. (Some of the disallowed witnesses were expected to challenge the government's assertion that the leaks damaged U.S. national security, when some experts believe the published cables spurred the Arab Spring and other events praised by the Obama administration.)

Coombs told Almanza, "That simple fact alone, without anything else, would cause a reasonable person to say, 'I question your impartiality.'" Almanza rejected the recusal request, stating that his office of child exploitation in the Department of Justice had nothing to do with the WikiLeaks investigation or with national security issues.

Almanza told Coombs and Manning, “I do not believe a reasonable person, knowing all the circumstances, would be led to the conclusion that my impartiality would be reasonably questioned. I thus deny the defense request to recuse myself.”

After that, Coombs filed a writ with the Army Court of Criminal Appeals to stay the proceedings until a decision can be made on whether Almanza should continue to preside. According to military law experts, the hearing can proceed while the appeals court makes its determination.

Harsh Imprisonment

The military’s treatment of Manning has reeked of intimidation and retaliation. Until citizen activists protested in March, 2011, bringing attention to the harsh conditions of Manning’s pre-trial confinement, the U.S. military treated him as if he were beyond the scrutiny of the law — as if he were an “enemy combatant” in Guantanamo or Abu Ghraib.

Amnesty International and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture expressed great concern about the conditions under which Manning was being held—in a maximum-security, single-occupancy cell, placed on a prevention-of-injury order and allowed to wear only a suicide-proof smock at night.

On July 12, Juan Mendez, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture, said it was “vital for him to have unmonitored access to Bradley Manning,” adding:

“I am assured by the U.S. Government that Mr. Manning’s prison regime and confinement is markedly better than it was when he was in Quantico, however, in addition to obtaining firsthand information on my own about his new conditions of confinement,

“I need to ascertain whether the conditions he was subjected to for several months in Quantico amounted to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. For that, it is imperative that I talk to Mr. Manning under conditions where I can be assured that he is being absolutely candid.”

At the request of Mendez and after several meetings, the U.S. Defense Department said it would allow him to visit Manning, but warned that the conversation would be monitored. Mendez said such a condition violated long-standing rules that the UN applies for prison visits and for interviews with inmates everywhere in the world. On humanitarian grounds and under protest, Mendez, through Manning’s counsel, offered to visit him under these restrictive conditions, an offer Manning declined.

Mendez said, “The question of my unfettered access to a detainee goes beyond my request to meet with Mr. Manning — it touches on whether I will be able to conduct private and unmonitored interviews with detainees if I were to conduct a country visit to the United States.”

Additionally, Mendez has requested several times since his appointment in November

2010, that the U.S. Government allow him to visit the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. However, **the U.S. government has not responded to his requests.** Despite the military's mantra of having the best military legal system in the world, the past treatment of Manning— keeping him in solitary confinement, forcing him to stand naked while in pre-trial confinement and the lack of compliance with the norms of the military legal system of a "speedy" trial— have added to the low points of Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo in the history of U.S. military "justice."

The federal courts have long established mechanism of dealing with classified information in national security cases. The military's contention that it took 19 months to figure out how to try Manning while protecting classified materials reeks of intimidation, retribution and retaliation.

• *Ann Wright is a retired U.S. Army Reserve Colonel and a former U.S. diplomat who resigned in 2003 in opposition to the Iraq war. She is a member of Veterans for Peace and is on the Advisory Board of the Bradley Manning Support Network. (This story previously appeared at warisacrime.org)*

Rudd urged to protect Assange

*Dan Oakes
December 19, 2011
Sydney Morning Herald*

THE former prime minister Malcolm Fraser and dozens of public figures have called on the Foreign Affairs Minister, Kevin Rudd, to ensure the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is protected from "rendition" to the US.

They warn that if Assange is extradited from Britain to Sweden, where he may face rape and sexual assault charges, he could then be handed over to the US, where prosecutors are considering criminal charges against him following the release of confidential cables.

"The chances of Mr Assange receiving a fair trial in the United States appear remote. A number of prominent political figures have called for him to be assassinated, and the Vice-President has called him a 'high-tech terrorist'," their open letter reads.

"Given the atmosphere of hostility in relation to Mr Assange, we hold serious concerns about his safety once in US custody. We note that Mr Assange is an Australian citizen, whose journalistic activities were undertaken entirely outside of US territory."

Assange has been on bail in Britain for almost a year as he fights extradition to Sweden, where two women have alleged he committed sexual offences against them. He has denied the claims, and last week won the right to appeal against the extradition.

The signatories to the letter— who also include the— American academic Noam Chomsky, Julian Burnside, QC, and the Greens leader Bob Brown— warn that Sweden could hand Assange over to the US without the "appropriate legal processes that accompany normal extradition cases".

Private Bradley Manning, who leaked the thousands of secret cables, faced the first day

of a preliminary hearing on Friday to determine whether he should be court-martialled over the leaks.

Private Manning's lawyer told the court that the government wanted the 24-year-old soldier to agree to plead guilty in return for a reduced sentence so he could be used as a witness against Assange and WikiLeaks. Lawyers for Assange were in the courtroom during the first day of the pre-trial hearing, and have asked for access to the court for the duration of the proceedings.

SvD: 22 december 2011

Assange: Sverige har inte motsatt sig USA under 00-talet

Sverige har gått med på varenda utlämning som USA begärt sedan år 2000, påstår Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange. Det stämmer inte helt, visar SvD:s Faktakollen.

PÅSTÅENDE:

I en intervju med TV4 får Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange, som fortsätter slåss för att slippa överlämnas från Storbritannien till Sverige, frågan om han är rädd att utlämnas till USA och vad han tror kommer att hända med honom om det händer. Han svarar "Ja, det är det enskilt största övervägandet, att överlämnas till USA. Vid varje enskild begäran om utlämning som har sänts till Sverige från Förenta staterna sedan år 2000, har Sverige lämnat över personen".

Assange har också vid flera tillfällen tidigare sagt att han är rädd att lämnas vidare till USA om han överlämnas från Storbritannien till Sverige.

SvD FAKTAKOLLAR:

Enligt justitiedepartementet har USA krävt utlämning från Sverige sammanlagt sex gånger sedan år 2000. Två gånger har Sverige gett USA avslag och båda gångerna har orsaken varit att man inte hittade personen som USA ville ha tag på. Hade personerna hittats hade man därefter tagit ställning till om de skulle utlämnas eller inte, så det är alltså oklart vad som hänt om personerna påträffats i Sverige.

Det vanliga förfarandet i utlämningsärenden är att ett land som vill ha få tag på en misstänkt brottsling först gör förfrågningar och undersöker om en utlämning är möjlig, berättar överåklagare Nils Rekke. Om ett land redan i förhand får information om att det finns hinder i lagstiftningen i det land man vill ha någon utlämnad från, lämnar man sannolikt inte in en formell begäran.

Brukar länder kolla förutsättningarna noga, så att man bara lämnar in en formell begäran om man är nästan säker på att kunna få någon utlämnad?

– Ja, det vill man förvissa sig om, så att det inte blir ett avslag. Precis som inte vi vill lägga ner tid och kraft på att försöka få ett annat land att lämna ut någon fastän man

vet att det strider mot lagarna i det landet. Då är det ingen idé att göra det, säger Nils Rekke.

Därför kan det finnas fall där USA velat ha någon utlämnad, men fått ett informellt nej och därför inte gjort någon begäran. Ett sätt att komma med en sådan informell begäran är att efterlysa någon via Interpol. Då säger ett land i praktiken att om personen hittas i ert land så vill vi ha honom eller henne utlämnad. Men om Sverige finner skäl emot att lämna ut personen kommer USA alltså antagligen inte att lämna in en formell begäran.

Rikspolisstyrelsen för dock ingen statistik över hur många gånger USA efterlyst någon via Interpol, som visat sig befinna sig i Sverige, men som inte blivit utlämnad. Därför går det inte att med säkerhet avgöra om, och i så fall hur många gånger, USA har velat ha någon utlämnad utan att lämna in en formell begäran.

SLUTSATS:

Påståendet att Sverige inte har nekat USA utlämning en enda gång sedan år 2000 stämmer inte. Men de gånger Sverige inte har lämnat ut personer har det berott på att en utlämning i praktiken varit omöjlig, då man inte hittat personen. Man kan alltså se det så att Sverige aldrig aktivt motsatt USA:s begäran under 2000-talet. Därför får Assange gult ljus.

Det kan också vara så att USA i praktiken velat ha personer utlämnade, men aldrig formellt begärt det för att man inser att det inte kommer att gå igenom. Enligt Nils Rekke är det vanligt att det går till så. Assange försöker med sitt uttalande argumentera för att det är hög sannolikhet att bli utlämnad från Sverige till USA om USA begär det, och då blir påståendet missvisande eftersom det inte belyser hur utlämningsärenden hanteras i praktiken.[???

SvD har tidigare skrivit att även om Assange utlämnas hit är det inte enbart upp till Sverige att överlämna honom till USA, om landet skulle begära det. Eftersom han i så fall skulle befinna sig här som överlämnad från Storbritannien, måste Storbritannien samtycka till att sända honom vidare till ett tredje land. Assange är inte heller i nuläget anklagad för något brott i USA, och för att frågan om utlämning ska bli aktuell måste USA åtala Assange för ett brott som kan ge minst två års fängelse i både USA och Sverige.

- Karin Thurffjell

[Obs! Detta är en ytterst ytlig behandling av ämnet. Se t.ex. "US Extradition" på <http://justice4assange.com> —A.B.]

En pressetik som är satt ur spel

Carin Stenström
Laholms Tidning
29 DECEMBER 2011

Under lång tid fanns det pressetiska regler som bromsade lögn och förtal. Dessa regler har successivt satts ur spel, till skada för enskilda och till allvarlig förtroendeförlust för media.

Den strax före jul publicerade så kallade "kungabilden" är ett exempel på förfallet. I många månader hade media skrivit om denna bild som man hävdade visade kungen i en komprometterande situation. Men när bilden till sist publicerades visade den sig vara förfalskad. En lögn hade alltså legat till grund för en hetskampanj mot Sveriges statschef.

Men den bristande respekten för pressetiken visar sig också på många andra sätt. Människor kränks och förtalats, verkligheten förvanskas, fakta kontrolleras inte. Kränkande omdömen och guilt by association (att på obefintlig grund förknippa en person med något förkastligt) används oreflekterat, också av förment seriösa skribenter.

Att försvara och värna sina källor har varit en hederskodex för media, men också den håller nu på att erodera.

I april publicerade Aftonbladet, med Wikileaks som öppen källa, sensationella uppgifter om USA:s fångläger på Guantanamo-basen. Vid denna tidpunkt satt redan den amerikanske sergeanten Bradley Manning häktad under tortyrklassade förhållanden, misstänkt för att vara Wikileaks hemliga källa.

Dagen innan Aftonbladet publicerade de scoop som man fått från Wikileaks angriper tidningen sina egna källor, i en infam krönika skriven av Jan Guillou. Guillou kallar Wikileaks talesperson Julian Assange, för "ett litet äckel", ett omdöme som Aftonbladets chefredaktör tillåter om tidningens egen källa. Han tillåter också en än mer märklig uppmaning i samma krönika, nämligen till Bradley Manning att erkänna sig vara den hemliga källan.

Samtidigt som Aftonbladet alltså förbereder publicering av hemligt källmaterial publicerar man en uppmaning till den misstänkta källan, som tidningen enligt grundlagen är skyldig att skydda, att träda fram.

Det står nu klart, efter en första rättslig prövning, att Bradley Manning inte kan räkna med något stöd från de svenska medier, som eventuellt dragit nytta av honom. Man tackade och tog emot sensationella avslöjanden från Wikileaks, som kan ha kommit från Manning, men man förhåller sig neutral eller likgiltig när den eventuella källan hotas av dödsstraff eller livstids fängelse. Åtalet mot honom nämns som en mindre nyhet bland andra. Det kan inte kallas för annat än ett grovt svek. *[Samtidigt som man anklagar Assange för just detta. —A.B.]*

Inte heller källan Assange, mot vilken det i USA förbereds åtal för spioneri, med dödsstraff som påföljd, kan räkna med stöd från de medier som använt hans källmaterial.

Att USA-politiker öppet förespråkat lönnmord har inte väckt protester. I stället verkar ledande journalister gå i maktens ledband. En kulturchef på Expressen vid namn Karin Olsson kallar i en internationellt publicerad förtalsartikel Wikileaks grundare Julian Assange för "paranoit, chauvinistiskt svin".

Det är den medienivån som råder. Det är allvarligt.

Swedish doc accuses police of misconduct

The Local
5 Jan. 2012

Police officers who investigated a doctor accused of the manslaughter of a baby at a Stockholm hospital last year are now themselves facing a misconduct probe over the way they handled the doctor after she was arrested.

The officers allegedly failed to tell the paediatrician of the nature of the accusations against her and acted in a threatening manner at the time of her arrest. "One of them snapped at me saying that I should not act as though I didn't know what it was about, after having done what I did," she told the *Läkartidningen* medical journal .

The three-month-old baby was born prematurely, unconscious and with serious brain damage, and died in September of 2008 shortly after her birth. The paediatrician was then charged with manslaughter, suspected of deliberately having administered a high dose of the anaesthetic Pentothal in combination with morphine, in order to speed up the baby's death.

A lengthy and complicated investigation started, and on October 21st 2011 the doctor was unanimously acquitted by the Solna District Court. The doctor's complaints have now been taken up by prosecutors.

Chief Prosecutor Håkan Roswall at the National Prosecution Authority (*Åklagarmyndigheten*) said to the journal that they are currently investigating the police on six specific points.

In addition to failing to inform her of the accusations and acting in a threatening matter, the doctor complained that police confiscated some of her belongings but never gave her an official list of the things they had appropriated.

She is also very critical of the way police and pathologists in the case have speculated publicly about medical treatments, how medical journals are kept and how specific drugs are administered, which became evident from a tape which was released some time into the investigation, according to the journal.

If the police officers are found to be guilty of misconduct, they could face hefty fines or up to two years in prison. Prosecutors say the volume of evidence— the case file runs to over a thousand pages— means it may take months to establish what charges, if any, can be made against the officers.

Julian Assange's 400th day under house arrest approaches: political detainment in action

*DJ Pangburn
Death & Taxes
5 January 2012*

January 11, 2012 will mark the 400th day of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange's house arrest, a court order that arose after an erstwhile Swedish prosecutor decided to re-launch a case against the free information and open government activist for a broken condom [*among other falsehoods* —-A.B.]. According to Swedish laws, sex with a broken condom is deemed not fully consensual.

Assange by that point, of course, was international public enemy #1 for most of 2010 after WikiLeaks began leaking diplomatic cables to the media, some of which contributed to the Arab Spring, which in turn inspired protests across the world, including Occupy Wall Street. Thus, some viewed it as rather convenient that Assange's presence was rather suddenly demanded in Sweden at the precise moment when WikiLeaks' influence in the free and open government movement was at its apogee.

Lead Swedish prosecutor Marianne Ny has stated that the arrest warrant was issued because interviews in the case cannot be conducted over the phone or internet [*or via video link, or in person in another country such as the U.K.* —-A.B.]; they must be held in person, according to Swedish law. Assange and his legal team have argued that it was an attempt to have him extradited to the United States for prosecution under U.S. espionage laws.

Shortly thereafter, WikiLeaks efforts were severely limited by Amazon, Visa, Mastercard and PayPal refusing service due to the political strong arm tactics from the likes of Senator Joe Lieberman, who was Chairman of the Senate Homeland Security Committee.

While Assange is scheduled for a... hearing at the UK Supreme Court on February 1st over an "application for permission to appeal," it is quite clear that Assange's house arrest has also functioned as a de facto political detainment; that Assange is thus a political detainee, and the lengthy process has largely been successful at tightening a logistical and financial vice grip around WikiLeaks' free information journalism.

WikiLeaks supporters can help the publisher and Assange by donating money at WikiLeaks.org and certainly by continuing to blow the whistle when and wherever government and business attempt to cloak bad ethics and morality in a veil of secrecy.

Video interview with Julian Assange from July 2010:
<http://www.deathandtaxesmag.com/172587/julian-assanges-400th-day-under-house-arrest-approaches-political-detainment-in-action/>

Julian Assange: Gillard govt 'unaccountable'

Tom Cowie
The Power Index
10 January 2012

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange remains frustrated by the lack of assistance from the Australian federal government over his prolonged overseas legal plight, three weeks ahead of his appeal against extradition in the UK Supreme Court.

In an exclusive interview with The Power Index, the platinum-haired whistleblower revealed Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd's office had been in contact with his lawyers in the past month but with "no results".

When asked if he had been receiving adequate assistance from the federal government over his potential extradition from Britain to Sweden, Assange replied: "Of course not. Almost no Australian who is involved in trouble overseas receives the assistance they should," he said. "Australia is famous for its lack of assistance to its people who enter into difficulty overseas."

A clearly-discouraged Assange said Prime Minister Julia Gillard, former Attorney-General Robert McClelland and other members of the ALP had "risen above their population and developed network connections with elites in other countries. That is their game... and in doing so they develop a base outside their own country and are no longer political accountable to the people of their country," he told The Power Index. "[They] have been working their international connections, yes at my expense, but also at the expense of the Australian people."

Assange is currently awaiting a hearing in the Supreme Court to be held early in February, where a panel of seven judges will consider his appeal against extradition on accusations of rape and sexual assault of two women. If Assange loses the appeal he could face extradition within weeks. There is another option of appeal which could see him take the case to the European Court of Human Rights.

The 40-year-old Australian said the prime minister, who has denounced the actions of WikiLeaks as "illegal" in the past, had not been in contact recently.

A spokesperson for foreign minister Kevin Rudd told The Power Index that consular officers have been in touch with Assange's lawyers and were "closely monitoring" his case. "The Australian government cannot interfere in the judicial processes of other governments but Australia's ambassador to Stockholm has sought and obtained assurances from Swedish authorities that Mr Assange's case will proceed in accordance with due process," the spokesperson said. "Such assurances have also been sought and obtained from the relevant UK authorities."

Greens Senator Scott Ludlam said he believed the government had not done enough to assist Assange, who has been under house arrest for more than a year. "I think it would be much better for the Australian government to pull out all the stops and that means

not just consular assistance, it means diplomatic activity and it means political statements," he told The Power Index.

"We need to hear the prime minister and the attorney-general quite clearly advocating to the US that they would not support onward extradition of an Australian journalist to face trumped up charges in the United States."

Assange has said on multiple occasions his expulsion to Sweden could lead to his handing over to authorities in the United States, where WikiLeaks is being investigated for publishing thousands of secret state cables. Last month a group of high-profile Australians urged Rudd in an open letter to protect Assange from the possibility of rendition to the United States.

Rudd's spokesperson said it was "premature to speculate" on the actions of the United States and what further representations Australia may make.

Ludlam rejected those statements, saying it was "highly disingenuous" of the government to be claiming that onward extradition was a hypothetical. "And there is no doubt at all which way public opinion will swing if it comes to that," he added.

Assange spoke to The Power Index ahead of the upcoming Thinkers power list, of which he is a contender. When asked about the effect of the financial embargo enacted by Visa, PayPal and others on WikiLeaks' operations, Assange said donations had recovered "to a degree" but 95% of the organisation's revenue stream had been wiped out.

The financial blockade has forced WikiLeaks to focus primarily on fundraising rather than any substantial new releases. "We hear that it is likely in January that the European Commission will make its decision on whether to engage in a full-scale investigation into the behaviour of the card companies," he said.

On the signing into law of the controversial National Defense Authorization Act by US President Barack Obama on New Year's Eve, Assange said the bill was a "reflection of the military industrial complex having greater political power. That patronage network, the military, is strengthening and become more pyramidal. So it's pulling in other points of power within the United States into it," he added.

Civil liberties groups have raised concerns about the NDAA and some of its key components, including the provision for the military to indefinitely detain US citizens without charge.

Assange also spoke about the recent Occupy Wall Street protests, saying we "shouldn't necessarily say that they are a great and hopeful sign. If you saw someone's leg off they will scream and that's what's happening to a number of populations. They are acting against the pressure that is being applied to them," he said.

He also said that crowd control techniques and weapons had "leapt forward over the past year" but so had the ability of people to "see the abuses that are occurring. When you look at Occupy Wall Street we shouldn't think that this is merely the result of politically educated youth, educated as a result of the internet, or as a result of mobile phone calls or WikiLeaks or YouTube, all these things are factors," he said. "It is also a

back reaction to the degree of wealth inequality and oppression that is occurring."

The Power Index asked the attorney-general's office for comment on what actions the government would take should Assange be extradited but did not receive a response by deadline.

<http://www.thepowerindex.com.au/head-to-head/julian-assange-gillard-govt-unaccountable/20120109912>

SvD: 12 januari 2012

"Prata om det" blir bok

Det började med hashtaggen #prataomdet på Twitter. Mängder av twitterinlägg, artiklar, bloggposter, teateruppsättningar och radioprogram senare kring ämnet sexövergrepp kommer nu "Prata om det" ut som pocket.

Boken innehåller ett urval av de texter som publicerades under rubriken "Prata om det" och dessa är hämtade både från tidningar och nätet. Pocketen ges ut av förlaget Kalla Kulor.

TT Spektra

Assange Extradition Fact Sheet (15 Overlooked Facts)

Submitted by issylvia

WL Central

13 Jan. 2012

- 1) Julian Assange is not charged with anything in Sweden or any other country.
- 2) Julian Assange did not flee Sweden to avoid questioning. He was given permission to leave the country on the 15th September 2010, after remaining 5 weeks in Sweden for the purpose of answering the allegations made against him.
- 3) The case against Julian Assange was initially dropped, and deemed so weak it could not warrant investigation. After the intervention of a Swedish politician close to American diplomats, it was revived by a different prosecutor.
- 4) In all instances, the 2 plaintiffs consented to sexual intercourse, which they did not take the initiative to stop: they never expressed non-consent and afterwards declared to not have felt threatened by Julian Assange.
- 5) A condom submitted as evidence by complainant AA, who claimed it had been deliberately torn by Julian Assange during sexual intercourse, contains no chromosomal DNA from either the complainant or Julian.
- 6) Text messages exchanged between complainants and their friends contradict the

factual allegations in the European Arrest Warrant (EAW) issued for Julian Assange and cast doubt on the allegations.

7) After the date of the alleged sexual misconduct: a) Complainant AA created then deleted evidence (tweets) indicating she was enjoying Julian Assange's company; b) AA went as far as suggesting one of her friends (Witness C) should be intimate with Julian as well.

8) The law firm hired in the Assange investigation is run by Claes Borgström (politician and legal representative for both plaintiffs) and by former minister Thomas Bodström. Both are members of the Social Democrat Party in Sweden. Bodström is a friend of police interrogator Irmeli Krans, who interrogated complainant SW.

9) Police interrogator Irmeli Krans is, in turn, friends with the other plaintiff, complainant AA, with whom she has political ties (Social Democrat Party). Krans also breached protocol by commenting negatively about Julian Assange on social media.

10) Swedish prosecutor, Marianne Ny, refused to provide Julian Assange or his lawyers with information on the allegations against him in writing. This violates the Swedish Code of Procedure (RB 23:18) and the European Convention of Human Rights (article 5), and the EU Fundamental Charter on Human Rights. Prosecution also refused all voluntary offers for cooperation that fit under Mutual Legal Assistance protocol, such as making use of alternative methods to interview Julian Assange.

11) Both the EAW and the Interpol red notice were issued for Julian by Sweden just before WikiLeaks began to publish Cablegate.

12) The allegations against Julian Assange do not constitute an offense in Australia or in the UK.

13) If extradited to Sweden: still without charge, Julian Assange would be held incommunicado and placed under solitary confinement. Pre-trial detention would last for an indefinite period. Trial in Sweden would be held in secret.

14) The Swedish legal system features lay judges who are appointed because of their political affiliations. They have no formal legal training. *[But the theoretical basis is democratic, i.e. that lay judges will be more familiar and sympathetic with the life circumstances and behaviour of "ordinary people. --A.B.]*

15) Sweden has the highest per capita rate of cases brought to the European Court of Human Rights relating to article 6.1 (right to a fair trial).

Conclusion and References

Julian Assange is wanted in Sweden for questioning. According to the law, Julian is not required to be present in the country for the interview to take place. It could instead be conducted using alternative methods, such as a simple phonecall.

On the 13th July 2011, during an extradition appeal hearing, Judges on the case asked why this did not happen: "Why go through all of this if Mr. Assange offered to be

interviewed?... Why does judicial corporation not entail... sensible steps to get on with it?"

Prosecution, however, continuously refuses to interview Julian in the UK, insisting he must be extradited to Sweden for interrogation. For this purpose an European Arrest Warrant was issued by Sweden, in disregard for one of its basic restrictions: an EAW is for prosecution purposes only.

The extradition to Sweden insisted upon by prosecution would facilitate subsequent extradition to the US, as Sweden never once denied a US extradition request since 2000. Therefore, the Swedish case against Julian Assange cannot be dissociated from the ongoing US Grand Jury investigation on WikiLeaks. As such, it is extremely important any opinion formed on this specific subject be based on facts.

This list of 15 facts is mostly based on information originally put together by Christine Assange (twitter account: @AssangeC), and it covers crucial aspects about irregularities and political interest in Sweden's extradition case against Julian Assange. These important details are often ignored or misrepresented by the media.

Another reference document you might wish to read is the briefing note written by WikiLeaks' legal advisor Jennifer Robinson, a detailed overview of Human Rights concerns regarding Julian Assange's extradition to Sweden:
<http://wlcentral.org/node/1418>

And over at Justice4Assange.com you will find a lot more information on this case. Visit the Action page to know what you can do to support Julian Assange:
<http://www.Justice4Assange.com/Action.html>

To make a donation to the Julian Assange Defence Fund:
<http://www.Justice4Assange.com/Donate.html>

Sources: <http://wlcentral.org/node/2429>

Assangefallet — ett gigantiskt justitiemord

Journalisten
17 januari 2012

Inte enbart svenska grävande journalister verkar ha drabbats av ryggsnitt utan också en pandemi tycks ha utbrutit. Flertalet av världens vanligtvis kritiska och observanta samhällsjournalister, med ett fåtal undantag, tycks nu villrådigt huka och/eller fokusera sitt intresse för Julian Assange och Wikileaks på en sprucken kondom, när i själva verket ett gigantiskt justitiemord spelas upp mitt framför näsan och inom det egna reviret.

En kollega, arketyper för hur varje journalist borde vara, håller på att malas till småsmulor av de krafter som han och alla vi andra är tänkta att granska; ...har någon global jantelag plötsligt hemsökt journalistkollektivet, eller vad handlar det egentligen om, för Julian Assange och Wikileaks?

Javisst, jag har tagit ställning för Wikileaks, men har full respekt för alla som inte delar min uppfattning, eller bara är helt neutrala, så måste det så klart vara. Men snälla, släpp den spruckna kondomvinkeln, nästa gång Julian Assange och Wikileaks är på agendan och försök lyfta blicken mot "skogen" i stället.

Det är väl ingen, hoppas jag, utom möjligen Jan Guillou i Aftonbladet (<http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/kolumnister/janguillou/article13892180.ab>), som inte har fattat att huvudskälet till varför Julian Assange inte vågar sig till Sverige, är ett generöst utlämningsavtal som Sverige har tecknat med USA. Så här skriver Julian Assanges advokat inför en förestående riskerad utlämning till Sverige: "Det är inte det svenska rättsväsendet i sig som utgör något 'allvarligt hot' mot Assange, utan en juridisk knepighet som kallas 'ett tillfälligt överlämnande', enligt vilket han kan skickas vidare från Sverige till USA utan prövning, snabbt och i hemlighet."

Med tanke på det godtycke som juridiska myndigheter i USA har tillämpat till exempel i Bradley Mannings fall, så vore det väl mer än uppseendeväckande om Julian Assange inte stretade emot en utlämning till Sverige, för allt vad tygen håller.

Jag försöker efter bästa förmåga och så objektivt som möjligt följa vad som skrivs om Wikileaks/Julian Assange och andra utsatta journalister, på Facebooksidan "Don't shoot the Messenger" (www.facebook.com/globaljournalist) som jag administrerar. På engelska har det blivit för det mesta, eftersom besökare och artikelmaterial i huvudsak är engelskspråkigt. Besök gärna sidan och kommentera där vad ni tycker, om sådant som verkar intressant.

— Björn Karlin, *journalist, Karlinmedia*

Kommentarer

Hej Björn,

du pratar om den konstiga svenska utlämningslagen. Det kanske stämmer, men vi andra tänker på det mer rimliga problemet att USA och England har ett mycket mer långtgående samarbete gällande utlämning. Det innebär i stort sett att om det är utlämning till USA som Assange är rädd för, så är England det sämre av alternativen. För så sent som en vecka sedan så blev en Brittisk medborgare utlämnad till USA. Han har aldrig varit där förut. Brottet han blev utlämnad för är att ha länkat youtubevideos på sin webbsajt så att man kunde se på nya TV-serier som fanns uppladdade på youtube. Han hade inte ens materialet själv utan allt låg på amerikanska datorer.

Detta ansåg brittiska myndigheter rimligt att utlämna en ung inhemsk medborgare för.

Du har helt rätt i att det är två historier gällande WikiLeaks och Julian Assange. Men fakta är att Julian Assange gömmer sig bakom WikiLeaks. Han vägrar ta någon skuld själv för sina egna misstag utan säger att allt handlar om Wikileaks. Själv är att jag ett stort fan av vad WikiLeaks har gjort. Däremot så ogillar jag Julian Assange. Problemet för mig är att alla andra som har fått vara offentliga i organisationen blivit utsparkade av Assange för att de vägrat stötta honom i hans våldtäktsmål. Varför? Samtliga säger att han har problematiska förhållanden till kvinnor. Det gör att Wikileaks faktiskt faller pga Assanges ovillighet att inte missbruka saken för att slippa stå till svars.

Men åter till saken: Att stanna kvar i England för att slippa bli utlämnad till USA är nog det sämsta draget man kan göra. Men att stanna kvar i England för att slippa få sin gloria på sniskan, det kanske är ett bättre drag. För om 300 dagar faller faktiskt målet

på preskribering. Över hälften av tiden har gått...

- *Inlagt av Nils Poppe tors, 2012-01-19*

Det finns mycket att säga om Assangefallet både vad det gäller anhängare och motståndare. Just nu verkar det viktigast att så långt som möjligt hålla sig till fakta. Så vitt jag förstår är "tillfälligt överlämnande" baserat på ett avtal mellan EUs medlemsländer och USA— <http://tiny.cc/83smr>. Alltså gäller detta också Storbritannien och USA. Det är svårt att förstå varför det skulle vara mer sannolikt att Sverige lämnar ur Assange än England. Rimligtvis är det väl så att banden mellan Storbritannien och USA är starkare än mellan Sverige och USA?

- *Inlagt av Johan Lidberg tors, 2012-01-19*

Det var gott att läsa din kommentar. Det är så mycket som är konstigt i hanteringen av anklagelserna mot Assange. Det har ändå väckt en liten debatt om svenskt rättsväsende. Vi tar gärna våra lagar och regler som självklara. Det är nyttigt att lyfta blicken och jämföra med andra länder och utvärdera vår hantering. På www.wikileaksforum.com finns en svenskspråkig del. Fler borde skriva där!

- *Inlagt av Marianne Nord tors, 2012-01-19*

Wikileaks talesperson heter sedan länge Kristinn Hrafnsson. DanielDumbsheit fick foten (bland annat) för att han ägnade sig åt sabotage och stöld. Först därefter övergick han till rycktesspridning och lama PR-kampanjer. Vem försöker DU lura? <http://dissenter.firedoglake.com/2011/08/21/openleaks-founder-destroys-c...>
<http://exiledonline.com/inside-wikileaks-revenge-of-the-second-banana/>

- *Inlagt av KrastaPopolos tors, 2012-01-19*

Det är en enkel fråga att besvara faktiskt. Både Sverige och Storbritannien har överlämningsavtal med USA. Alla EU länderna har detta. Den biten är korrekt. Dessa avtal går genom rättssystemet. Sverige har dock även "tillfälligt överlämnande", något som Storbritannien INTE har. Detta är ett överlämnande helt utan någon rättslig prövning.

En sådan överlämning sker helt och hållet baserat på ett beslut av UD. Avtalet har lagstatus här tom och sätter specifikt skyddet mot vidareutlämning ur spel t.ex. och behöver alltså inget helst tillstånd från Storbritannien. Ett sådant krav på tillstånd skulle nämligen ta bort hela grunden till varför vi har avtalet som är just för att det ska kunna ske snabbt. Inom loppet av timmar närmare bestämt.

Dvs att risken faktiskt finns att om Assange överlämnas till Sverige, så skulle han kunna sitta på ett plan till USA redan samma dag han sätter sin fot här. Helt lagligt och korrekt enligt det existerande regelverket här.

Risken är ju inte överhängande stor precis tror jag. Iaf inte så snabbt. Men den finns där helt klart.

- *Inlagt av Daniel tors, 2012-01-19*

New Assange TV Series

WikiLeaks
23 January 2012

Julian Assange will be hosting a series of in-depth conversations with key political players, thinkers and revolutionaries from around the world. The theme: the world tomorrow.

Upheavals and revolutions in the Middle East have commenced an era of political change that is still unfolding. In the West, the deterioration of the rule of law has demonstrated the bankruptcy of once leading political institutions and ideologies. The internet has never been so strong, or so much under attack.

At this pivotal moment there is an awareness of the need to radically rethink the world around us.

WikiLeaks, as the world's boldest publisher, has been at the front line of this global movement for understanding and change. Its founder, Julian Assange, as the subject of an ongoing Grand Jury investigation in the United States for over 500 days now, is one of the world's most recognizable revolutionary figures.

Both a pioneer for a more just world and a victim of political repression, he is uniquely placed to catalyse a global discussion on how to go forward.

In recognition of this, Assange will draw together controversial voices from across the political spectrum— iconoclasts, visionaries and power insiders— each to offer a window on the world tomorrow and their ideas on how to secure a brighter future.

Julian Assange says: "Through this series I will explore the possibilities for our future in conversations with those who are shaping it. Are we heading towards utopia, or dystopia and how we can set our paths? This is an exciting opportunity to discuss the vision of my guests in a new style of show that examines their philosophies and struggles in a deeper and clearer way than has been done before."

The series will begin airing in mid-March, in ten weekly half-hour episodes. Initial licensing commitments cover over 600 million viewers across cable, satellite and terrestrial broadcast networks. To enquire about licensing the series for your region contact contact@quickrollproductions.com.

Press release authorized by Julian Assange

<http://wikileaks.org/New-Assange-TV-Series.html>

Political Interference by the Swedish Prime Minister

Swedish Prime Minister interferes in Assange case with fresh attacks on Assange

*Justice4assange.org
25 January 2012*

“This is typical of someone accused [‘anklagad’] of a crime in a different country—to try to cast suspicion on that country or its legal system. One can see similarities with other cases where this technique has been used. Of course we have to stand our ground—we have a system of rule of law that works. And we take rape accusations very seriously—there are special interests trying to disparage how we have developed and how we stand by the good legislation [that is relevant] in this [Assange] case.” (*Full transcript below.*)

Swedish Prime Minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt, talks about the Assange case [on Swedish national radio](#) on 25 January 2012—only one week before Assange’s team will argue that the European Arrest Warrant has not been subjected to scrutiny by an independent and impartial ‘judicial authority’, before the [UK Supreme Court](#).

The following transcript is from the call-in programme “Studio Ett” (25 January 2012) where the question related to Julian Assange’s case and US extradition is asked to Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt (FR) by the caller, author Carina Rydberg (CR). The host is Anders Holmberg (AH):

AH: And now we have Carina Rydberg from Stockholm. Hello!

CR: Hello hello!

AH: This is the author Carina Rydberg as I believe?

CR: It is! That’s who you’re talking to! And we’ll keep things international here. It’s started well. Because I thought I’d ask the prime minister: Julian Assange—you’ve heard of him?

FR: Oh yes.

CR: He will be heard again in a few days’ time at the [Supreme Court in the UK](#), about whether he is to be surrendered to Sweden or not due to allegations of sexual offences. And what is spreading in the international media, [recently in Rolling Stone](#) in the US but also earlier in Le Monde, that if Julian Assange is handed over to Sweden he will immediately and without any judicial scrutiny whatsoever be extradited to the US if that country wants him—due to some kind of [overly generous extradition agreement](#).

AH: What is your question Carina Rydberg?

CR: My question is what comments the Prime Minister has in relation to these claims that are circulating?

FR: Well hello Carina. Anyone who has followed this issue is aware that it is an extremely sensitive issue, so I can’t make any comments on a specific case. Furthermore

the international press is using, as you have also pointed out, a specific lens that suggests that the Swedish judicial system is [entangled with political decision-makers](#). And I have had to clarify that this is not the case. Extradition procedures are built on [judicial systems talking to each other according to a set of rules](#), and it is applicable in this case, so it is appropriate for me in this case not to try to assess or speculate about how things might unfold.

CR: So what you mean is that if the US requests Assange's extradition, the matter will go through the Swedish judicial system, for example the Supreme Court, ummm but not, it won't be like what happened to those two Egyptians a few years ago [Carina Rydberg is referring to the case of extraordinary rendition of two Egyptian refugees in Sweden known as [Agiza v. Sweden at the UN Committee Against Torture](#)]. Because that is what is being suggested: there is no real system of rule of law in this country. Abroad we appear as some kind of, umm well, a Scandinavian, US-friendly version of North Korea. I find it upsetting!

FR: Umm yes. I also want to point out that it is also partly based on the fact that there has been an attempt to cast doubt on [Sweden's rape legislation](#). So... there are arguments being made that distinguish Sweden's judicial system from other countries', and some try to use that as a basis to cast doubt on Sweden. We stand by our system because we have a functioning system of rule of law where we have a good system for handling such extradition requests. I think in the case of Egypt— that was rather [unique in its character](#) and it has been discussed on many occasions umm about Sweden's role in the affair, and there has also been [criticism of Sweden](#). But in this [Assange's] case it is once again legal systems that are [talking to one another](#), there are rules that exist and must be observed, and political decision-makers should not make public statements about it or try to speculate about how it will be handled.

AH: Is it a problem for you— one moment, Carina Rydberg— is it a problem for you [Prime Minister] Fredrik Reinfeldt or for Sweden that there are these kinds of descriptions of Sweden as a banana republic as far as the law is concerned in the international press?

FR: Well. This is typical of someone accused [‘anklagad’] of a crime in a different country— to try to cast suspicion on that country or its legal system. One can see similarities with other cases where this technique has been used. Of course we have to stand our ground— we have a system of rule of law that works. And we take rape accusations very seriously— there are special interests trying to disparage how we have developed and how we stand by the good [legislation](#) [that is relevant] in this [Assange] case.

Despite this clearly impinging on Julian Assange's due process rights the prosecutor (Marianne Ny), the Prime Minister (Fredrik Reinfeldt) and the politician-lawyer who represents the women (Claes Borgstrom) have attacked Julian Assange in the media over the past 15 months. Basic inalienable rights to due process, enshrined in the European Convention of Human Rights and the EU Charter, are not being respected when the chief of the Swedish executive and other members of the executive publicly commenting on the Assange matter.

* * *

Statsminister Fredrik Reinfeldt i Sveriges Radio, 2012-01-25

AH: ... med oss Carina Rydberg Stockholm hallå!

CR: Hallå hallå!

AH: Det är författaren Carina Rydberg tror jag?

CR: Det är det. Det är den som du pratar med. Och vi håller oss internationellt här! Det har börjat bra. För jag tänkte fråga statsministern: Julian Assange har du hört talats om.

FR: Jo.

CR: Han kommer nu inom några dagar, det kommer att prövas igen i brittiska högsta domstolen, huruvida han ska överlämnas till Sverige eller inte på grund av anklagelser om sexbrott. Och då sägs det i internationella media, vitt och brett, senaste i Rolling Stone i USA men tidigare i franska le Monde, att om Julian Assange överlämnas till Sverige så kommer han omedelbart och utan någon som helst rättslig prövning att utlämnas till USA om landet så önskar på grund av något slags extra-generöst utlämningsavtal...

MC: Vad var din fråga Carina Rydberg?

CR: Min fråga är vad har statsministern för kommentar till denna, till dessa uppgifterna som florerar här?

FR: Jo hej Carina. Den som har följt frågan vet att det är utomordentligt känsligt för mig att uttala mig kring detta i enskilt fall, dessutom används ju internationellt media, vilket du också påpekar, någon sorts synsätt att man försöka hävda att det svenska rättssystemet är sammanblandat med politiska beslutsfattare. Och då har jag varit med om att tydliggöra att så är det inte. Utan utlämningsärenden bygger på rättssystem som talar med varandra utifrån särskilda regler, och det skulle i så fall vara tillämpligt också i det här fallet och det ska jag inte försöka bedöma eller spekulera kring hur det kan falla ut.

CR: Men vad du menar då är alltså att om USA begär Assange utlämnad så kommer det att gå via det svenska rättssystemet, exempelvis HD, eh men inte, det kommer inte att gå som med de där två egyptierna för några år sen. För det är det man vill hävda. Det finns inget regerande rättssystem i det här landet. Vi framstår i internationella ögon som nån sorts, alltså eh, Skandinaviens svar på Nordkorea i USA-vänlig tappning. Det tycker jag är upprörande!

FR: Eh jo. Jag vill också påpeka det är delvis också grundat i att man har försökt misstänkliggöra hur den svenska våldtäktslagstiftningen ser ut. Så att... det finns absolut diskussioner där vid Sverige rättsligt möjligen kan liksom skilja från andra, och man försöka använda det som grund för att misstänkliggöra Sverige. Vi står ju för att vi har en fungerande rättsstat där vi god ordning kring hur sådana här utlämningsärenden ska hanteras. Jag tycker detta fall kring Egypten i så fall är snarare

speciellt i sin karaktär och det har också omdiskuterats vid många tillfällen eh Sveriges roll kring detta och också varit kritik mot det. Men i det här fallet återigen det är rättssystem som talar med varandra, det är regelsystem som finns och som måste efterlevas, och det ska inte politiska beslutsfattare uttrycka sig kring eller försöka spekulera hur det kan sköta sig.

AH: Är det ett problem för dig— ett ögonblick Carina Rydberg— är det ett problem för dig Fredrik Reinfeldt eller för Sverige att det förekommer den här typen av beskrivningar av Sverige som en juridisk bananrepublik i internationell press?

FR: Nja. Det är ju väldigt ofta en metod man använder, att försöka misstänkliggöra ett land eller ett helt rättssystem när man har, så att säga, står anklagad för ett brott i ett annat land. Det finns tyvärr likheter också vid andra tillfällen då den här tekniken har använts. Vi måste naturligtvis stå upp för att vi har en fungerande rättsstat och också vi tar mycket allvarligt på anklagelser som handlar om våldtäkt för det finns också inslag av att försöka förminska hur vi har utvecklats och står för en bra svensk lagstiftning i det här fallet.

Assange win would have 'profound' effects

The Local
31 Jan. 2012

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange's two-day hearing at England's Supreme Court gets underway Wednesday, in the latest stage of his lengthy battle against extradition to Sweden to face rape allegations.

If the court rejects his case, the 40-year-old Australian will have exhausted all his options in Britain but he could still make a last-ditch appeal to the European Court of Human Rights, prosecutors have said.

The Supreme Court, England's highest, granted Assange permission to appeal in December. It said his case raised an issue of "great public importance", namely whether Sweden's state prosecutor had the right to sign the European arrest warrant under which he was held.

The case will be considered by seven judges, rather than the usual five. The Supreme Court usually takes about 10 weeks to deliver a judgement but the parties have requested that this case be speeded up.

Wednesday marks 421 days since the arrest of the former computer hacker, who has been living under tight bail conditions at the country mansion of a wealthy supporter in Norfolk, eastern England.

Assange was arrested in Britain in December 2010 after two women made allegations of sexual molestation and an accusation of rape in Sweden, which he strongly denies. He says the sex was consensual and claims the allegations are politically motivated, linked to WikiLeaks' release of hundreds of thousands of classified US files about the

wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as diplomatic cables.

Assange's extradition to Sweden was initially approved by a lower court in February. An appeal to the High Court was rejected in November, but it subsequently granted him permission to appeal to the Supreme Court.

If this appeal fails, the WikiLeaks founder will have only one other option to stop his extradition— an appeal to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

"If the ECHR takes the case then his current bail conditions would remain in force and he would remain in the UK until the proceedings at the ECHR have concluded," the Crown Prosecution Service said in a commentary on the case. "If the ECHR declines to take the case then he will be extradited to Sweden as soon as arrangements can be made," England's state prosecutor said.

Concerning Assange's case before the Supreme Court, Julian Knowles, an extradition law specialist with the Matrix Chambers law firm, said the question of whether a public prosecutor was a valid judicial authority had been comprehensively tested.

"The courts have always reached the clear answer that while it may look odd to English eyes ... European systems don't have the same structure," he was quoted as saying Tuesday in *The Guardian* newspaper. "The courts have always said that to make extradition work, you have to be flexible in your approach to what extradition is."

Were Assange to win, the consequences would be "very profound", he said. "It would basically mean, until the law is rewritten, that extradition to Europe (would) become very difficult, if not impossible. Because in the vast majority of European extradition requests, the arrest warrant is issued not by a court, as it would be in England, but by a prosecutor."

Assange announced last week that he was launching his own television chat show and promised interviews with "key political players, thinkers and revolutionaries". No guests have been unveiled, but a statement on the WikiLeaks website said the show would go on air in mid March in 10 weekly half-hour episodes.

Russian state television channel RT said it had the rights to show the episodes first. Formerly known as Russia Today, the English-language channel is funded by the Russian government. [*As the BBC is funded by the U.K. government. —A.B.*]

SvD: 31 januari 2012

Rött ljus till Assange i Faktakollen

Julian Assange hävdar att svenska fängelser utnämns till värst i Europa— och får rött ljus i Faktakollen.

PÅSTÅENDE: I en intervju som publicerades i *Rolling Stone* i januari säger Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange att fängelseprästorganisationen International Prison Chaplains Association (IPCA) hävdar att "svenska fängelser är de värsta

fängelserna i Europa. Det inkluderar till och med Rumänien, Estland och så vidare. Det är för att i 47 procent av fallen hålls fångar i Sverige isolerade”.

SvD FAKTAKOLLAR: Vi börjar med påståendet att IPCA säger att svenska fängelser är de värsta i Europa.

Kriminalvården för inte statistik på andelen fångar i fängelse som isoleras, men uppger att det definitivt rör sig om betydligt färre än 47 procent. Däremot visar Kriminalvårdens statistik att av alla häktade den 1 september förra året hade 47 procent ålagts gemensamhetsrestriktioner, vilket betyder att de inte får vistas med andra häktade. Därför är det troligt att Assange syftar på häkten, även om han använder ordet ”prison”. Men varken i Nationalencyklopedin eller något annat lexikon som SvD tittat i kan det betyda häkte istället för fängelse.

Men IPCA har varken utnämnt svenska fängelser eller svenska häkten till värst i Europa, enligt Doris Bernhardson som är Europarepresentant för IPCA.

– Det finns helt klart andra länder i Europa som har värre fängelser än Sverige har, säger hon.

När det gäller häktesrestriktioner har Sverige upprepade gånger kritiserats av både FN:s och Europarådets tortyrkommittéer, som menar att restriktioner döms ut för länge och för ofta. Men varken IPCA, FN eller Europarådet har slagit fast att Sverige är värst i Europa på den punkten. I själva verket gör ingen av organisationerna jämförelser mellan olika länder.

– Det är definitivt inte ett uttalande från oss som organisation. Det är möjligt att den uppgiften har förts fram på någon föreläsning eller seminarium som vi har haft någon gång, men det är inte en officiell hållning, säger Doris Bernhardson.

Madelaine Seidlitz, jurist på Amnesty, känner inte till att det finns någon organisation som rangordnat europeiska länder efter förhållanden i deras häkten, eller att Sverige skulle ha utnämnts till värst eller bland de värsta av någon organisation. Det gör inte heller någon annan av de människorättsexperter SvD talat med.

SLUTSATS: Det stämmer inte att IPCA säger att Sverige har de värsta fängelserna i Europa. Organisationen säger heller inte att Sverige har de värsta häktena i Europa, och slår inte ens fast att Sverige är värst när det gäller restriktioner i häktet. Däremot har Sverige fått hård kritik från både FN och Europarådet när det gäller isolering i häkte. Men inte heller FN eller Europarådet har utsett svenska fängelser, svenska häkten eller svenska häktesrestriktioner till värst i Europa.

Det stämmer inte heller att i 47 procent av fallen hålls fångar i svenska fängelser isolerade. Siffran stämmer däremot om man tittar på häktade med restriktioner som hindrar dem från att träffa andra häktade. Julian Assange får rött ljus.

Julian Assanges svenska advokat Per E Samuelsson säger att han delar uppfattningen att Sverige är bland de västa länderna när det gäller restriktioner i häkte, men känner inte heller till om det finns någon organisation som har rankat länderna.

Wikileaks Founder Julian Assange Faces Extradition

Staff

Common Dreams

January 31, 2012

Wikileaks founder, Julian Assange, will face potential extradition to Sweden tomorrow before the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom. Seven judges will decide whether or not Assange will be sent to Sweden to face charges of sexual assault.

However, these pressures have not slowed down Assange. While under house arrest in the UK, he has managed to announce plans for a new talk show, which will be aired on the news network RT. In addition he will 'appear' in 'The Simpsons' 500th episode which will air on February 19, 2012.

Assange's case will raise questions about international extradition, and the means by which it can be requested. The Guardian reports:

In February last year, a [UK] court ruled that Assange should be sent to Sweden to answer [accusations of sexual assault]; he appealed, and lost. But two high court judges granted him leave to appeal to the highest British court, not on the circumstances of his own case but on a point of law: namely, whether a prosecutor had sufficient authority to require someone's extradition, as in Assange's case. Many legal observers were surprised when the supreme court not only agreed to hear Assange's petition, but said seven judges, rather than the usual five, would preside, "given the great public importance of the issue raised". The court will sit for two days, on 1 and 2 February, though the judges are unlikely to deliver their written verdict for a number of weeks.

But Julian Knowles QC, a barrister specializing in extradition law based at Matrix Chambers, said the decision to might be more easily explained by the enormous public interest in Assange's case "to send the message that the highest court in the land has looked at this case, and it's had the attention of the best legal minds in the country".

Whether or not the supreme court rules Assange should face a Swedish investigation, this is far from the only legal process the WikiLeaks founder fears. The US government is prosecuting an army private, Bradley Manning, alleging he is the source of many of WikiLeaks's high-profile releases; it has also opened a grand jury investigation with the purpose of deciding whether to prosecute WikiLeaks or its founder. That process is carried out in secret, without any rights of access for Assange or his lawyers.

In Knowles's view, the law in this area— whether a public prosecutor is a valid judicial authority— has been comprehensively tested. "This point has been litigated before, and the courts have always reached the clear answer that while it may look odd to English eyes, common law eyes ... European systems don't have the same structure. The courts have always said that to make extradition work, you have to be flexible in your approach to what extradition is." The consequences if Assange were to win, he said, would be "very profound". "It would basically mean, until the law is rewritten, that extradition to Europe [would] become very difficult, if not impossible. Because in the vast majority of European extradition requests, the arrest warrant is issued not by a court, as it

would be in England, but by a prosecutor."

It is much easier to predict what will happen if Assange loses. Though he would still have the option to make an application to the European court of human rights (as he has hinted he may do at earlier stages of the process), this would not delay his extradition, since Sweden is also a signatory to that convention. Instead, the extradition unit at Scotland Yard would agree with their Swedish counterparts a date, within 10 days, for Assange to be handed over, according to Knowles. The Australian would be required to present himself at one of the main London airports, where he would be handed to Swedish police, who would escort him on a flight to Stockholm. Once on Swedish soil, he would immediately be arrested.

Whether or not the supreme court rules Assange should face a Swedish investigation, this is far from the only legal process the WikiLeaks founder fears. The US government is prosecuting an army private, Bradley Manning, alleging he is the source of many of WikiLeaks's high-profile releases; it has also opened a grand jury investigation with the purpose of deciding whether to prosecute WikiLeaks or its founder. That process is carried out in secret, without any rights of access for Assange or his lawyers. Many of the Australian's supporters fear the US will seek his extradition— from the UK, Sweden or elsewhere— with a view to prosecuting him for "conspiracy to commit espionage", based on a notional allegation that he may have "coached" Manning to leak documents to the site.

Whether Assange is sent to Sweden, or not, his image will remain immortalized in the US through the powers of the 'The Simpsons'. Reuters reports: Julian Assange on the 500th episode of The Simpsons

The activist/journalist— lauded by some and reviled by others for his leaking of classified government information— will make a cameo on the upcoming 500th episode of "The Simpsons."

During the episode— which airs February 19 at 8 p.m. and is titled "At Long Last Leave"— Homer, Marge and their lemon-hued brood are run out of Springfield and join an off-the-grid community outside of town, where they find themselves as new neighbors to Assange.

"Simpsons" executive producer Al Jean told Entertainment Weekly that Assange recorded his part from an undisclosed location last summer, while under house arrest in Britain.

Should his decision be favorable this week, Assange will continue as a TV personality on Russia Today (RT) network this March. The Wikileaks founder has announced plans for a new television series featuring ten weekly half-hour episodes featuring "in-depth conversations with key political players, thinkers and revolutionaries from around the world."

DN: 2012-01-31

Assange inleder sista striden

Hela systemet för överlämningar av misstänkta brottslingar inom Europa står på spel när brittiska Högsta domstolen på onsdagen inleder sin prövning av fallet med Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange, som är misstänkt för sexbrott i Sverige.

Om de sju domare som under två dagar ska höra ärendet i Högsta domstolen skulle besluta att Assange inte överlämnas till Sverige får det stora konsekvenser, enligt en expert som TT talat med.

Högsta domstolen anser att frågan är av "stor allmän betydelse" och vill därför pröva den.

– Syftet med hela systemet är att underlätta överlämningar mellan länder i Europa. Det måste vara tillräckligt flexibelt för att ta hänsyn till skillnader i de rättsliga systemen mellan olika länder. Annars upphör det att fungera, säger Julian Knowles, specialist på detta fält inom juridiken.

Högsta domstolen ska pröva om en svensk åklagare har juridisk behörighet att utfärda en så kallad europeisk arresteringsorder, vilket ligger till grund för beslutet i lägre instanser att överlämna honom till Sverige.

I ett drygt år har Assange utkämpat en juridisk strid i Storbritannien för att slippa åka till Sverige, där han riskerar att ställas inför rätta för sexbrott han ska ha begått mot två svenska kvinnor i augusti 2010.

Två brittiska domstolar, motsvarande tingsrätt och hovrätt, har beslutat att Assange ska överlämnas för att kunna höras av svensk åklagare. Assange och hans försvarsadvokater har överklagat beslutet på en rad punkter.

Julian Knowles, som representerar den kända advokatbyrån Matrix Chambers där han är kollega med två av Assanges försvarsadvokater, anser att historien bara kan sluta med att Assange överlämnas till Sverige. Skälet till att HD tar upp fallet, tror Knowles, är den omfattande uppmärksamhet det fått.

– Jag tror att Högsta domstolen beviljat prövning bara för att väldigt tydligt markera att en åklagare är behörig instans att begära överlämning inom Europa och att en gång för alla fastslå att systemet annars inte skulle fungera, säger Knowles till TT.

I en lång intervju i det kommande numret av den amerikanska tidskriften Rolling Stone säger Julian Assange att han inte litar på det svenska rättssystemet.

– Jag har inget förtroende för att det svenska rättssystemet är rättvist, säger Assange, som också fruktar att Sverige "ska hämnas" på honom för att han uttryckt denna kritik.

Assange kallar anklagelserna om våldtäkt för "absurda". Han säger vidare att hans fall "politiserats" för att USA är ute efter honom.

Fallet Assange

- Storbritanniens Högsta domstol (Supreme Court) har beviljat Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange prövning av beslutet att överlämna honom till Sverige.

- Högsta domstolen ska pröva frågan om en svensk åklagare kan anses ha juridisk befogenhet att utfärda en europeisk arresteringsorder, vilket ligger till grund för utlämningen av Assange.
- En europeisk arresteringsorder gäller inom EU och förpliktigar mottagande stat att gripa och utlämna en eftersökt person.
- Assange är misstänkt för våldtäkt och andra sexbrott mot två svenska kvinnor, åklagaren vill få honom utlämnad så att han kan förhöras om de misstänkta brotten.
- HD-förhandlingen hålls 1-2 februari i London, ett beslut väntas sedan inom en månad.
- *Anders Steinvall/TT*

DN: 2012-02-01

Assange går in i sista striden

I dag avgörs Julian Assanges öde i brittisk domstol. Hela systemet för överlämningar av misstänkta brottslingar inom Europa står på spel. Assanges advokat: "Han är väldigt förhoppningsfull".

I dag avgörs Julian Assanges öde i rätten. För tredje gången ska brittisk domstol, den här gången The Supreme Court som är högsta instans, pröva om den våldtäktsmisstänkte Wikileaksgrundaren ska utlämnas till Sverige eller inte.

– Han är väldigt förhoppningsfull och naturligtvis laddad för att vinna den här processen så att han slipper bli utlämnad till Sverige, säger Julian Assanges advokat Per E Samuelson.

Nästan exakt ett och ett halvt år har gått sedan Assange i samband med ett besök i Sverige anhölls i sin frånvaro misstänkt för våldtäkt mot och ofredande av två kvinnor.

Tidningen Expressen fick uppgiften bekräftad av jouråklagare och samma dag hade nyheten spritt sig som en löpeld över hela världen.

Assange, som sedan dess befunnit sig i London, hävdar att han är oskyldig och har överklagat den europeiska arresteringsordern i alla brittiska rättsinstanser men fått nej.

Nu ska frågan prövas en sista gång.

– Det här är ett unikt fall som innehåller hur mycket dynamit som helst. Men oavsett hur utgången blir finns det bara förlorare, säger tidigare överåklagare Sven-Erik Alhem.

Enligt Sven-Erik Alhem är det framför allt den europeiska arresteringsordern, i detta skede, som sätts på prov då fallet blir prejudicerande.

– Den europeiska arresteringsordern skulle underlätta för länderna i Europa att få till

stånd ett utrednings- och rättegångsförfaranden även om den misstänkte inte finns i landet. Och hittills tycker jag att den har varit värdelös, säger Sven-Erik Alhem.

Han är framför allt kritisk till hur lång tid utredningen tagit— och att jouråklagaren i det första skedet bekräftade misstankarna för allmänheten.

– De bästa förutsättningarna för att en utredning ska lyckas är att den sker snabbt med kompetens och att man relativt snabbt kan ta ställning till om man ska väcka åtal eller inte. Och det här utdragna förfarandet har varit till nackdel både för brottsoffren [???] och för den misstänkte. Sen rättvisa är ingen rättvisa, säger Alhem.

Enligt advokat Per E Samuelson, som tillsammans med advokat Thomas Olsson försvarar Assange i Sverige, är Wikileaksgrundaren öppen för att låta sig förhöras av svenska myndigheter.

– Det har han varit hela tiden, om det sker under ordnade former där två parter kan diskutera vad som hänt. Han tycker att det är orimligt att den ena parten ska kunna belägga den andra med frihetsberövande, säger Per E Samuelson.

Om Julian Assange utlämnas till Sverige kommer han inom kort att transporteras till Sverige och ställas inför en häktningsdomare i domstol, på sannolika skäl misstänkt för våldtäkt.

Därefter kommer åklagaren fullfölja utredningen med förhör av den misstänkte och därefter ta ställning till om bevisningen räcker för en fällande dom eller inte. Om åklagaren bedömer att bevisningen räcker väcks åtal och därefter följer en rättegång. Annars läggs förundersökningen ner.

Assange appeals 'invalid' warrant

U.K. Press Association
1 Feb. 2012

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has asked the Supreme Court to block his extradition to Sweden on the grounds that the European arrest warrant issued against him is "invalid and unenforceable".

A QC for the 40-year-old Australian said the Swedish public prosecutor who signed the warrant could not issue a valid document because she lacked "impartiality and independence".

Assange, who is on bail living with friends, was at the UK's highest court in person for his latest attempt to block his removal to face questioning on sex crime allegations. He is appealing against a High Court ruling that it would not be unfair or unlawful to extradite him. Some of his supporters had been queueing since 5.45am to attend the two-day hearing before a panel of seven judges.

The Swedish authorities want him to answer accusations of "raping" one woman and

"sexually molesting and coercing" another in Stockholm in August 2010 while on a visit to give a lecture.

Assange, whose WikiLeaks website published a mass of leaked diplomatic cables that embarrassed several governments and international businesses, says the sex was consensual and the allegations against him were politically motivated.

Dinah Rose QC, for Assange, told the judges that the appeal raised the single issue of law as to whether the Swedish public prosecutor constituted a "judicial authority" capable of issuing a valid warrant under the provisions of the 2003 Extradition Act. It was common ground that if she did not, "there is no legal basis for the extradition of Mr Assange to Sweden".

Ms Rose suggested it was "obvious" that a public prosecutor whose function it was to investigate and prosecute an individual "cannot exercise judicial authority in relation to that individual". As "a matter of fundamental legal principle dating back hundreds of years" a judicial authority had to be impartial and independent both of the executive and the parties in a case.

"Since the Swedish prosecutor cannot fulfil those conditions, she is not a judicial authority and not capable of issuing a warrant for the purposes of the 2003 Extradition Act," she said, adding that she was breaching the principle that "no-one may be a judge in their own cause".

In The Assange Case We Are All Suspects Now

Washington's enemy is not "terrorism" but the principle of free speech and voices of conscience within its militarist state.

*John Pilger
The New Statesman
February 1, 2012*

This month's Supreme Court hearing in the Julian Assange case has profound meaning for the preservation of basic freedoms in western democracies.

This is Assange's final appeal against his extradition to Sweden to face allegations of sexual misconduct that were originally dismissed by the chief prosecutor in Stockholm and constitute no crime in Britain.

The consequences, if he loses, lie not in Sweden but in the shadows cast by America's descent into totalitarianism. In Sweden, he is at risk of being "temporarily surrendered" to the US, where his life has been threatened and he is accused of "aiding the enemy" with Bradley Manning, the young soldier accused of leaking evidence of US war crimes to WikiLeaks.

The connections between Manning and Assange have been concocted by a secret grand jury in Virginia that allowed no defence counsel or witnesses, and by a system of plea-bargaining that ensures a 90 per cent conviction rate. It is reminiscent of a Soviet show

trial.

The Obama administration's determination to crush Assange is revealed in secret Australian government documents, released under Freedom of Information, which describe Washington's pursuit of WikiLeaks as "unprecedented". It is unprecedented because it subverts the First Amendment of the US constitution, which protects truth-tellers such as WikiLeaks.

In 2008 Barack Obama said, "Government whistleblowers are part of a healthy democracy and must be protected from reprisal." Obama has since prosecuted twice as many whistleblowers as all previous US presidents.

With US courts demanding to see the worldwide accounts of Twitter, Google and Yahoo, the threat to Assange, an Australian, extends to any internet user anywhere. Washington's enemy is not "terrorism" but the principle of free speech and voices of conscience within its militarist state and those journalists brave enough to tell their stories.

"How do you prosecute Julian Assange and not the New York Times?" a former administration official told Reuters.

The threat is well understood by the New York Times, which in 2010 published a selection of the WikiLeaks cables. The editor at the time, Bill Keller, boasted that he had sent the cables to the state department for vetting. His obeisance extended to his denial that WikiLeaks was a "partner"— which it was— and to personal attacks on Assange.

The message to all journalists was clear: do your job as it should be done and you are traitors; do your job as we say you should and you are journalists.

Much of the media's depiction of Bradley Manning illuminates this. The world's pre-eminent prisoner of conscience, Manning remained true to the Nuremberg principle that every soldier has the right to a "moral choice".

But according to the New York Times, he is weird or mad, a "geek". In an "exclusive investigation", the Guardian reported him as an "unstable" gay man who got "out of control" and who "wet himself" when he was "picked on".

Such psycho-hearsay serves to suppress the truth of the outrage Manning felt at the wanton killing in Iraq, his moral heroism and the criminal complicity of his military superiors. "I prefer a painful truth over any blissful fantasy," he reportedly said.

The treatment handed out to Assange is well documented, though not the duplicitous and cowardly behaviour of his own government. Australia remains a colony in all but name. Australian intelligence agencies are branches of the main office in Washington. The Australian military has played a regular role as US mercenary.

When Prime Minister Gough Whitlam tried to change this in 1975 and secure Australia's partial independence, he was dismissed by a governor general using archaic "reserve powers" who was revealed to have intelligence connections.

WikiLeaks has given Australians a rare glimpse of how their country is run. In 2010, leaked US cables disclosed that top government figures in the Labor Party coup that brought Julia Gillard to power were "protected" sources of the US embassy: what the CIA calls "assets". Kevin Rudd, the prime minister Gillard ousted, apparently had displeased Washington by being disobedient, even suggesting that Australian troops withdraw from Afghanistan.

In the wake of her portentous rise to power, Gillard attacked WikiLeaks's actions as "illegal" and her attorney general threatened to withdraw Assange's passport. Yet the Australian Federal Police reported that Assange and Wiki Leaks had broken no law.

Freedom of Information files have since shown that Australian diplomats have colluded with the US in its pursuit of Assange. This is not unusual. The government of John Howard ignored the rule of law and conspired with the US to keep David Hicks, an Australian citizen, in Guantanamo Bay, where he was tortured.

Australia's principal intelligence organisation, Asio, is allowed to imprison refugees indefinitely without explanation, prosecution or appeal.

Every Australian citizen in grave difficulty overseas is said to have the right to diplomatic support. The denial of this to Assange, bar the perfunctory, is an unreported scandal.

Last September his London lawyer, Gareth Peirce, wrote to the Australian government warning that Assange's "personal safety and security has become at risk in circumstances that have become highly politically charged". Only when the Melbourne Age reported that she had received no response did a dissembling official letter turn up.

In November, Peirce and I briefed the Australian consul general in London, Ken Pascoe. One of Britain's most experienced human rights lawyers, Peirce told him she feared a unique miscarriage of justice if Assange was extradited and his government remained silent. The silence remains

Wikileaks Founder Faces Extradition; Shadows of US Intention Loom

*Staff
Common Dreams
February 1, 2012*

The first day of Julian Assange's appeal hearing has come to a close after his legal team made arguments against efforts to extradite the Wikileaks' founder to Sweden. Assange's Lawyer, Dinah Rose QC, argued that the European arrest warrant (EAW) issued against Assange is invalid. A Swedish prosecutor had requested the warrant, not a judge, which Rose is arguing delegitimizes the arrest. The two-day hearing will continue tomorrow as the Swedish prosecution is set to offer rebuttal.

Dissenter / FireDogLake has been providing updates throughout the day:

The European arrest warrant (EAW) system has been the focus of the hearing. The hearing opened with Dinah Rose QC of Assange's legal team arguing, according to Alexi Mostrous, that European arrest warrants are "built on trust and a streamlining of such proceedings is to be balanced by protection of rights." She went over European extradition law going all the way back to 1957. She cited a case before the European Court of Human Rights on whether a Swedish public prosecutor is "proper judicial authority." And said that High Court judges nor Swedes have produced a definition of "judicial authority."

Rose called the lower court's ruling "inconsistent" with "judicial authority" and said it was obvious such authority must be independent of the executive and other parties.

Should Assange lose the case, he will be extradited for trial in Sweden, where he will face not only a 'closed door' hearing, but also possible 'surrender' to the US. John Pilger provides additional analysis at the New Statesman:

The Obama administration's determination to crush Assange is revealed in secret Australian government documents, released under Freedom of Information, which describe Washington's pursuit of WikiLeaks as "unprecedented".

The consequences, if [Assange] loses, lie not in Sweden but in the shadows cast by America's descent into totalitarianism. In Sweden, he is at risk of being "temporarily surrendered" to the US, where his life has been threatened and he is accused of "aiding the enemy" with Bradley Manning, the young soldier accused of leaking evidence of US war crimes to WikiLeaks.

The connections between Manning and Assange have been concocted by a secret grand jury in Virginia that allowed no defence counsel or witnesses, and by a system of plea-bargaining that ensures a 90 per cent conviction rate. It is reminiscent of a Soviet show trial.

The Obama administration's determination to crush Assange is revealed in secret Australian government documents, released under Freedom of Information, which describe Washington's pursuit of WikiLeaks as "unprecedented". It is unprecedented because it subverts the First Amendment of the US constitution, which protects truth-tellers such as WikiLeaks. In 2008 Barack Obama said, "Government whistleblowers are part of a healthy democracy and must be protected from reprisal." Obama has since prosecuted twice as many whistleblowers as all previous US presidents.

The Assange Extradition Hearing: Day 1

*Submitted by [GMason](#)
WL Central
2012-02-01*

On the night before the hearing began, one dedicated Assange supporter in London

told me that she planned to arrive at Court by 6 a.m., ahead of the throngs that she expected based on the turnout at Assange's hearing last November. No doubt the freezing February temperatures kept large crowds at home this morning; instead of the masses anticipated, there were only a few orderly lines segregated into cameramen, sign-wielding protesters, and the courtroom audience— a mix of media representatives, Assange faithfuls, and the curious.

I was in the latter line, which was also peppered with a few Occupy London luminaries. During the next hour of collective shivering, I met journalists from all over Europe and the U.S., who now braved frigid weather to witness this historic proceeding. Arriving at around 8:30, one hour before the Court opened to the public, I witnessed the expectant crowd devolve into a chorus of complaints as the early-morning, late-winter wind chill robbed our fingers of almost all feeling.

But, mercifully, 9:30 at last arrived— as did Assange, soon after. The white-haired WikiLeaks founder offered a spirited hello to the crowd and preceded us into the Court.

At the entry, Court staff had handed out a media briefing, which included the following details:

Issue: Whether a European Arrest Warrant ('EAW') issued by a public prosecutor is a valid Part I EAW issued by a 'judicial authority' for the purpose and within the meaning of sections 2 and 66 of the Extradition Act 2003.

Facts: The Appellant, a journalist well known through his operation of Wikileaks, visited Sweden to give a lecture in August 2010. He had sexual relations with two women. Both women went to the police who treated their visits as the filing of complaints. The Appellant was interviewed by police and subsequently left Sweden in ignorance of the fact that a domestic arrest warrant had been issued for him. Proceedings were brought in the Swedish courts in the Appellant's absence, although he was represented, in which a domestic warrant for the Appellant's detention for interrogation was granted and upheld on appeal. Subsequently, an EAW for the Appellant was issued by the Swedish Prosecution Authority that set out allegations of four offences of unlawful coercion and sexual misconduct including rape. The EAW was certified by the UK Serious Organised Crime Agency under the Extradition Act 2003. The Appellant surrendered himself for arrest in the UK and, following an extradition hearing, his extradition to Sweden was ordered. The order was upheld on appeal to the Divisional Court."

Inexplicably, the wifi in the entire court building died right after my third live-tweet, about 2 minutes into the proceedings. Also, this being England, no power outlets were in sight; and since, for the past 5 years, none of my laptops has held a charge for more than an hour or so, I was stuck taking hand-written notes throughout the hearing. Thus handicapped by the snail's pace of writing with benumbed fingers, lack of internet access, and minimal familiarity with EU law, during the next five hours I nevertheless took the following notes:

Assange, the Appellant in the 2-day proceedings, was represented by attorney Dinah Rose, who displayed stamina as she held the floor during a four-hour virtual monologue, interrupted only by questions from the seven Lords of the Court.

At the outset, Rose characterized the case as a "simple issue of law." Assange is fighting

extradition to Sweden following the issuance of an EAW by Swedish prosecutor Marianne Ny. The Extradition Act 2003 requires any arrest warrant to be issued by a judicial authority. Since, Rose asserted, Ny is not a "judicial authority," then there exists no legal basis for Assange's extradition. Though the term appears to be ill-defined, Rose averred that a "judicial authority" must exercise independent power granted by law; and, as a party to the proceedings, a Swedish prosecutor cannot be independent and is thus not competent to issue an EAW. The next five hours consisted mainly of exploration and variations of this theme.

Assange's team noted that the 2003 legislation (enacted soon after the 2001 U.S. terrorist attacks) restricted the ability of EU nations to refuse to extradite persons of interest to requesting nations. This new system, Rose argued, depends on mutual trust and confidence—confidence that is undermined if arrest warrants can be issued by a prosecutor, rather than the authority of a court. Moreover, she stated, the new streamlining, simplification, and acceleration of the extradition process must be balanced with protection of individual rights. Those subject to extradition under an EAW can suffer severe deprivations including detention, loss of employment, and separation from family members. Given the severity of the possible restrictions on individual freedom, Rose stated, substantial safeguards must be in place to make the pan-European system of arrest warrants acceptable, and only a court should hold authority to issue an EAW.

Also problematic, according to Rose, is the inconsistent application of the law in different EU nations. She stated that Sweden and other countries that allow issuance of an EAW by a public prosecutor or other person other than a competent judicial authority are in breach of the system. Assange's counsel argued further that, although nothing in the EAW framework decision prevents a state like Sweden from issuing a non-judicial EAW, other states are not obligated to honor that EAW; and legally, therefore, extradition is effectively discretionary. Nevertheless, in order to be valid, an EAW must have specific features. In addition to being a "competent judicial authority," an official who issues an EAW must be independent from both the executive and the parties. According to Rose, since Swedish prosecutors do not meet the independence requirement, by definition they cannot qualify as competent judicial authorities.

Throughout the proceeding, Rose exposed the balancing act involved in reconciling the different legal systems within the EU and the 2003 Act's requirement of consistency regarding the necessity of an independent, competent judicial authority to issue EAWs.

Over the course of the day, Rose ran through statutes, case law, and legislative history supporting her argument regarding the inability of a public prosecutor to fulfill the independence requirement. Assange's counsel pointed out that the initial draft of the EAW's framework decision did allow for prosecutors to issue EAWs, but this provision was omitted from the final, enacted version; Rose argued that this indicated that the EU member states deliberately rejected the idea of a public prosecutor acting as a judicial authority competent to issue EAWs. She averred that the "insistence on a true judicialization" of the EAW process demonstrated a concern for the seriousness of the individual rights that are impaired by the issuance of an EAW.

The Assange extradition hearing is scheduled to conclude tomorrow; according to the media briefing, opposing counsel Clare Montgomery will argue for the first 2.5 hours, followed by the Assange team's one-hour reply.

But no one expects a quick decision once the hearing wraps. The Court has signaled that it will likely reserve judgment for several weeks. In the event of an adverse decision,

Assange may appeal to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg— which may or may not decide to take his case. And whether or not Ny's EAW is upheld by a court, the U.S. may still seek Assange's extradition and prosecute the journalist in the US.

Asked last month whether the U.S. government will follow this course, U.S. Attorney General responded only: "We will see."

SvD: 2012-02-12

Assange i högsta domstolen

I morse inleddes vad som väntas bli Julian Assanges sista strid för att slippa förhör i Sverige, när högsta domstolen i Storbritannien tog upp fallet. Experter tror att Wikileaksgrundaren, som anlände till rätten till tonerna av Bob Dylans "I shall be released", kommer att förlora.

Sju domare i brittiska Högsta domstolen ska ta ställning till om Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange ska utlämnas till Sverige, där han är misstänkt för sexbrott mot två kvinnor.

Sju domare, i stället för sedvanliga fem, kommer under två dagar att höra Assange försvarare och svenska åklagarväsendets representant. Frågan som rätten ska ta ställning till är vilken ställning det svenska åklagarväsendet har i Storbritannien. Utgången följs noggrant av juridisk expertis på grund av dess principiella värde.

En liten skara trogna anhängare hade samlats utanför Supreme Court på parliament square i London när Assange anlände i morse. Enligt brittiska Guardian framförde några av av dem Bob Dylans "I shall be released". Strax innan förhandlingarna inleddes slog sig Wikileaksgrundaren ner på första bänk i rättsalen, omgiven av sina medarbetare, rapporterar SvD:s Jon Pelling som är på plats i rätten.

Assanges försvarsadvokat Dinah Rose, specialist på mål som gäller mänskliga rättigheter, inleder. När målet nu nått Supreme Court är försvarets huvudlinje att svenska åklagare inte kan betraktas som "oberoende". Enligt Rose står det klart att svenskt åklagarväsende inte är oberoende. Hennes mål är att visa att arresteringsordern därför skulle vara ogiltig. Olika länder uppger olika instanser som juridiska myndigheter och Rose hänvisar till en rapport från EU-kommissionen som uppger att detta kan vara ett problem.

De europeiska rättssystemen är olika uppbyggda. I England har domarna en viktigare roll och måste även godkänna många beslut. Dinah Rose, som även är specialiserad på europeisk lagstiftning, hävdar alltså att det kan ha funnits brister när arresteringsordern utfärdades i Sverige. Hon menar att svenskt åklagarväsende inte kan bedöma vad som är proportionerliga åtgärder eftersom de inte är ett oberoende juridisk myndighet, till skillnad från en domstol.

Rose menar också att arresteringsordern kan innebära ett oproportionerligt stort ingrepp i de mänskliga fri- och rättigheterna.

Clare Montgomery, som representerar den svenska åklagaren, fick ordet på

onsdagseftermiddagen och började med att bemöta Dinah Roses argument om att Sveriges åklagarväsende skulle vara partiskt och att arresteringsordern därmed är ogiltig.

Hon menar att det ska ses i sin kontext, att man måste se noggrant på vilka intressen åklagaren företräder, och får svara på frågor från domarna om legala tolkningar när det gäller åklagarväsendet eventuella oberoende från justitiedepartementet.

Montgomery ska fortsätta argumentera imorgon. Rättegången utmärker sig genom att två av landets mest välrenommerade kvinnliga jurister som företräder respektive sida. Domarpanelen, å sin sida, består av sex män och en kvinna.

Det har nu gått 421 dagar sedan Assange arresterades i slutet av 2010, efter att en svensk åklagare utfärdayt en europeisk arresteringsorder och häktat Assange i dennes frånvaro. Sedan dess har Assange suttit i husarrest. Den mesta tiden har han bott hemma hos journalistklubben Frontline Clubs grundare Vaughan Smith i Norfolk. Smith fanns på onsdagen också med i salen, på bänken precis bakom Assange. Däremot tycks de kändisar som fanns på plats vid de första rättsprocesserna ha stannat hemma.

I februari i fjol beslutade en domstol att Assange skulle utlämnas till Sverige. Han överklagade då till High Court, som stödde den första domstolens slutsatser.

Många bedömare anser att Assanges möjligheter att vinna målet är små. En av dem är juristen Julian Knowles.

– Jag tror att Högsta domstolen beviljat prövning bara för att väldigt tydligt markera att en åklagare är behörig instans att begära överlämning inom Europa och att en gång för alla fastslå att systemet annars inte skulle fungera, säger Knowles till TT.

Domarnas slutsatser vänta först om några veckor. Om Julian Assange misslyckas ska han föras till Sverige inom tio dagar efter att beslutet vinner laga kraft.

Förhandlingarna i Supreme Court har fått uppmärksamhet i England som en del i en moderniseringsprocess av domstolarna. Advokaterna bär inte de traditionella perukerna och rockarna, förhandlinegn direktsänds och media tillåts rapportera från rättssalen.

Assange misstänks för flera sexbrott mot två kvinnor under ett besök i Sverige i augusti 2010.

DN: 2012-02-01

”Assange kan inte överlämnas till USA”

Sverige kan inte överlämna Julian Assange till USA, vilket han hävdar.

– Sverige är bundet av något som heter specialitetsprincipen och kan inte lämna honom

vidare till USA utan tillstånd från Storbritannien, säger Karin Påle-Bartes, jur. dr. och rådmän i Södertörns tingsrätt. Hon doktorerade på en avhandling om utlämning för brott.

Specialitetsprincipen reglerar hur överlämning ska gå till och innebär att det land som vill ha någon överlämnad i detalj måste redogöra för misstankarna mot honom.

– Den är så sträng så att åklagaren inte ens får ändra moment i gärningsbeskrivningen utan att fråga avsändarlandet om lov, säger Påle Bartes.

Det innebär att Assange är lika trygg i Sverige som han nu är i Storbritannien.

Om Sverige får Assange "till låns" från Storbritannien är det för eventuell rättegång och fängelsestraff. Efter avtjänat straff har han en "immunitet" i Sverige som varar i 45 dagar då han inte heller får utlämnas.

– Om han stannar och immuniteten upphör så kan USA begära honom utlämnad, men då träder ju våra svenska regler om utlämning i kraft. De förbjuder bland annat utlämning för politiska brott, säger Påle-Bartes.

TT

[Det spelar förstås ingen roll vad som står i lagboken när USA sätter press på svenska regeringen, och USA kommer nog att begära utlämning för annat än "politiska brott". --- A.B.]

The Assange Extradition Hearing: Day 2

Submitted by [GMason](#)

WL Central

2012-02-01

During the second and final day of the U.K. Supreme Court's hearings on Julian Assange's extradition, Matrix Chambers attorney Clare Montgomery offered her rebuttal to arguments made yesterday by Assange's counsel. (Dinah Rose is representing Assange in his fight against extradition to Sweden for questioning on sex crime allegations.)

The week's proceedings have highlighted disparities of law among EU countries and the legal challenges involved in reconciling these conflicts. Assange's case may test the extent to which EU nations can maintain their legal autonomy under the rubric of a unified European system. It may also raise the question: to what degree will EU states have to harmonize their conflicting legal regimes in order to avoid this sort of continued legal wrangling in the future?

Montgomery presented Sweden's case against Assange for about four hours, during which time she appeared to reject EU-wide legal standardization— essentially arguing that respecting state sovereignty requires preserving the status quo. If it agreed with Montgomery's position, the Court would have to accept significant differences among

EU nations in implementing EU-wide legal standards. By contrast, Assange's legal team largely took the position that, while allowing for some variation and inconsistency, the Court should mandate certain universal principles in the extradition process, because of the seriousness of the potential risk that extradition may pose to individual rights.

Under EU law, only a competent "judicial authority" may legitimately issue a European Arrest Warrant (EAW). As presented by Montgomery, Sweden's case boiled down to two core arguments: (1) a Swedish public prosecutor qualifies as such a "judicial authority"; and (2) a state requesting extradition (the "issuing authority") should have sole discretion to decide who qualifies as a "judicial authority." Montgomery rejected Rose's argument that extradition requires court involvement. Stating that parties seeking arrest are partial by their very nature, she dismissed Rose's position that a person requesting extradition must be impartial and independent.

The heart of Montgomery's argument was that, because an EU state has discretion to determine who can issue EAWs, and this determination varies from state to state, "judicial authorities" in the issuing and responding states don't have to have the same qualifications. Montgomery stated that English custom that requires a court to issue arrest warrants is outside the norm; and she advocated for an expansive definition of the term "judicial authority" that could include anyone "who exercises authority under domestic law in connection with" the ministry of justice— from public prosecutors to police officers.

However, Montgomery's argument begs the question: if the U.K. is obligated to recognize Swedish custom— which, unlike the U.K., allows interested prosecutors to issue extradition requests— then isn't Sweden likewise obligated to recognize the U.K.'s right to refuse to extradite, based on the U.K.'s own application of the law? Logically, Montgomery's argument should make extradition discretionary on both sides. But Montgomery argued the opposite: she stated that, since the 2003 Extradition Act was intended to streamline the process, complying with an EAW is basically automatic and mandated upon request.

In response, the Court asked Montgomery: because of the nature of the individual rights potentially harmed by extradition, shouldn't issuance of an EAW demand a bit more than is needed to arrest someone domestically? One of the Lords opined that "anyone would think" that issuing an EAW should require the involvement of some kind of judge. But Montgomery responded that issuing a domestic arrest warrant— which is a prerequisite for issuing an EAW— involves enough court process to validate an extradition request.

Rose spent the final hour of the hearing mostly reasserting her arguments made yesterday— that, because Sweden's public prosecutor Marianne Ny is not a qualified "judicial authority," Ny's EAW demanding Assange's extradition is invalid. Her position echoed that of former Assange counsel Geoffrey Robertson, who [wrote earlier this week](#):

"The notion that a prosecutor is a 'judicial authority' is a contradiction in terms.... Judges must, as their defining quality, be independent of government. Police and prosecutors employed and promoted by the state obviously cannot be perceived as impartial if they are permitted to decide issues on the liberty of individuals. They are

expected to be zealous in working up evidence against a suspect, so they are the last people who can be trusted to weigh up impartially the evidence they themselves have drummed up. That is a matter for a court."

As Robertson also notes, Montgomery's insistence on an expansive definition of the term "judicial authority" is necessary to serve "the international purpose of... allowing a system that does not have harmonious practices and procedures." Robertson continues:

"It will be inconvenient if Assange's appeal succeeds, because 12 European countries will have to change their extradition procedures if they want to get their hands on suspects from the U.K. But the argument from inconvenience is the classic way for civil liberties to be lost."

The 2003 Extradition Act that lies at the heart of this hearing was a post-9/11 statute intended to facilitate the process of extraditing "persons of interest." One question raised by the week's proceedings is how well this post-disaster measure of expediency will hold up against future challenges based on encouraging legal consistency and protecting human rights.

DN. 2012-02-01

Besked om Assange inom en månad

Julian Assanges advokater lockade domarna i brittiska högsta domstolen till skratt under första dagen av fallets prövning. Dinah Rose, som talar för Assanges försvarsadvokater, ägnade nästan hela onsdagen åt att teckna en mycket detaljerad bakgrund till det juridiska regelverk som gäller för en europeisk arresteringsorder.

Assange och hans advokater driver linjen att en svensk åklagare inte kan anses ha juridisk befogenhet att utfärda en sådan order, som ligger till grund för den svenska begäran om utlämning av den sexbrottsmisstänkte förre Wikileaksledaren.

Rose underkände helt [???] det svenska systemet.

– En åklagare är inte en oberoende juridisk instans utan en part i målet, sade hon och hänvisade till en lång rad detaljer i systemets regelverk.

De sju HD-domarna, sex män och en kvinna, började till sist skratta när Rose hänvisade till dokument så långt tillbaka som 1400-talet.

Risken för att Assange ska utlämnas från Sverige till USA, något han själv ofta hänvisar till som skäl för att inte överlämnas, bedöms som närmast obefintlig av flera experter.

– Sverige är bundet av något som heter specialitetsprincipen och kan inte lämna honom vidare till USA utan tillstånd från Storbritannien, säger Karin Påle-Bartes, rådman i Södertörns tingsrätt. Hon doktorerade på en avhandling om utlämning för brott.

– Den är så sträng så att åklagaren inte ens får ändra moment i gärningsbeskrivningen utan att fråga avsändarlandet om lov, säger Pål Bartes. [*Är hon "flera experter"?* – A.B.]

Det innebär att Assange är lika trygg i Sverige som han nu är i Storbritannien.

Även Julian Knowles, en av Storbritanniens främsta experter på juridik kring utlämningsärenden, tvivlar på möjligheten.

– De kan aldrig skicka honom till USA utan Storbritanniens medgivande och jag kan inte se några uppenbara skäl till att det ska kunna ske, säger Knowles till TT.

Prövningen i HD avslutas under torsdagen, då advokat Clare Montgomery, som representerar det svenska rättssystemet, ska förklara varför en överlämning av Assange till Sverige sker helt i enlighet med regelverket.

Ett besked från HD väntas inom en månad.

• *Anders Steinvall & Ewa Tures / TT*

Extradition bid 'not a human rights violation'

AFP/The Local

2 Feb. 2012

Swedish authorities told Britain's Supreme Court on Thursday that a bid to extradite WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange for questioning over rape claims is valid and does not breach his human rights.

In his final avenue of appeal within the British legal system, Assange's entire case rests on the argument that the Swedish prosecutor who ordered his arrest in December 2010 was not a proper judicial authority.

But Clare Montgomery, a British lawyer acting on behalf of the Swedish prosecuting authorities, rejected claims made the previous day by lawyers for the 40-year-old Australian.

"The issuing member state has the task of identifying who it regards as the judicial authority competent to issue the European Arrest Warrant," she told the panel of seven judges.

Montgomery added that there was "nothing either shocking to the conscience or alternative to basic human rights" for a prosecutor or police officer to issue such a warrant. She told the panel of seven judges on Thursday that it would "undermine" the fast-track European Arrest Warrant system if Assange's appeal was allowed.

Citing legal examples from France, Denmark, the Netherlands, Ireland and even Cambodia, she said victory for Assange could lead to at least eight European countries being barred from using the warrant system— and there was laughter in the court

when one of the judges gently ribbed her after she attempted to say "judicial authorities" in Dutch.

But in her closing argument, Assange's lawyer Dinah Rose said Montgomery's case was "untenable", and that a prosecutor was not an independent, impartial judicial authority.

The white-haired Assange did not comment as he left the grand court building, which is opposite the Houses of Parliament in central London. He pushed his way through a hail of flashbulbs in the darkness before getting into a taxi, while dozens of supporters of his work on his anti-secrecy website shouted "Well done, Julian!"

It was the second and final day of the hearing at the wood-panelled courtroom in central London. The judges are expected to defer their decision on Assange's fate for several weeks.

Court officials said it would likely be handed down in person by the judges to the lawyers in the case, but it was unclear whether Assange would be there for the verdict.

Dozens of supporters were again in court to see the former hacker, who has become a cause celebre since his anti-secrecy website enraged Washington by leaking thousands of secret US documents.

Britain's Supreme Court only deals with cases that it decides raise a wider point of public interest— which in Assange's case would be an overturning of the whole fast-track European Arrest Warrant (EAW) system.

On Wednesday, Rose argued that extraditing him to Sweden on the basis of an EAW issued by a prosecutor would breach legal principles dating back 1,500 years. She said that only a judge or similar official should count as a proper "judicial authority."

One of the judges mentioned the fact that Britain's Serious Organised Crime Agency, which deals with EAW requests, turned down the original warrant issued by Sweden. The reason was because it did not include a mention of the maximum prison sentence, as stipulated by the EAW system. The detail was included on the second warrant, which was accepted.

Assange has spent most of the last year under virtual house arrest at the mansion of a supporter in Norfolk, eastern England, although he has now moved out. Assange denies the rape and sexual assault allegations made by two women in Sweden, and insists the sex was consensual.

He [???] has also claimed that the allegations against him are politically motivated. Assange has said he fears he will eventually be handed over to the United States, where Bradley Manning, a US soldier accused of handing documents to WikiLeaks, faces a court-martial.

If the court rejects his appeal, Assange will have exhausted all his options in Britain but he could still make a last-ditch appeal to the European Court of Human Rights, prosecutors have said. But if Assange wins his case it could call into question the entire EAW system.

While the legal battle has dragged on, Assange's celebrity status has grown. He is to host his own TV show— although Russia's state-run RT is the only channel to confirm it will broadcast it— and will also make an appearance as himself this month on the 500th episode of the US cartoon show "The Simpsons".

A lower court in Britain initially approved Assange's extradition to Sweden in February 2011. An appeal to the High Court was rejected in November, but he subsequently won permission to appeal to the Supreme Court.

DN: 2012-02-02

Assange nöjd efter HD-förhandling

Efter två dagars detaljerad argumentation i Storbritanniens Högsta domstol hänger Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assanges framtid nu på tolkningen av några få ord. Om svensk åklagare anses ha befogenhet att begära Assange överlämnad är han snart på väg till Sverige.

Expertis på utlämningsjuridik har inför prövningen i Högsta domstolen sagt sig vara ganska säker på att Assange har små chanser att gå segrande ur den slutgiltiga juridisk strid han utkämpar för att undvika att överlämnas till Sverige, där han är misstänkt för våldtäkt och andra sexbrott.

Två dagars förhandlingar inför sju HD-domare, sex män och en kvinna, har dock gett en delvis annan bild av förutsättningarna inför domstolens kommande beslut.

Dinah Rose, advokaten som fört Assanges talan i rätten, har på ett övertygande sätt argumenterat för att det finns luckor i regelverket som gör att omständigheterna kring beslutet att överlämna Assange kan ifrågasättas.

Clare Montgomery, som representerat det svenska rättssystemet, har pressats betydligt hårdare av domarna, som gång på gång ifrågasatt hennes resonemang.

När förhandlingen avslutades på torsdagseftermiddagen såg Assange belåten ut, men han valde att inte kommentera det som utspelats i rättssalen.

– Vi får se om jag kommer på något fyndigt, sade han, men valde sedan att inte göra något uttalande.

Högsta domstolen har en enda fråga att ta ställning till. Det är om svensk åklagare kan anses ha juridisk befogenhet att utfärda en så kallad europeisk arresteringsorder, som ligger till grund för tidigare domstolsbeslut att Assange ska överlämnas.

Advokaterna Rose och Montgomery har utkämpat en duell kring tolkningar av hur orden "juridisk" och "myndighet" ska tolkas och vad det europeiska regelverket egentligen säger. Argumentationen har bitvis förts på olika europeiska språk, vilket lockat till skratt i rättssalen.

Ett års juridisk strid är nu över för Assange. Högsta domstolens beslut väntas inom en månad.

• *Anders Steinvall/TT*

Julian Assange: The Rolling Stone Interview

Under house arrest in England, the WikiLeaks founder opens up about his battle with the 'Times,' his stint in solitary and the future of journalism

Michael Hastings
Rolling Stone
2 February 2012

It's a few days before Christmas, and Julian Assange has just finished moving to a new hide-out deep in the English countryside. The two-bedroom house, on loan from a WikiLeaks supporter, is comfortable enough, with a big stone fireplace and a porch out back, but it's not as grand as the country estate where he spent the past 363 days under house arrest, waiting for a British court to decide whether he will be extradited to Sweden to face allegations that he sexually molested two women he was briefly involved with in August 2010.

Assange sits on a tattered couch, wearing a wool sweater, dark pants and an electronic manacle around his right ankle, visible only when he crosses his legs. At 40, the WikiLeaks founder comes across more like an embattled rebel commander than a hacker or journalist. He's become better at handling the media— more willing to answer questions than he used to be, less likely to storm off during interviews— but the protracted legal battle has left him isolated, broke and vulnerable. Assange recently spoke to someone he calls a Western "intelligence source," and he asked the official about his fate. Will he ever be a free man again, allowed to return to his native Australia, to come and go as he pleases? "He told me I was fucked," Assange says.

"Are you fucked?" I ask.

Assange pauses and looks out the window. The house is surrounded by rolling fields and quiet woods, but they offer him little in the way of escape. The British Supreme Court will hear his extradition appeal on February 1st— but even if he wins, he will likely still remain a wanted man. Interpol has issued a so-called "red notice" for his arrest on behalf of Swedish authorities for questioning in "connection with a number of sexual offenses"— Qaddafi, accused of war crimes, earned only an "orange notice"— and the U.S. government has branded him a "high-tech terrorist," unleashing a massive and unprecedented investigation designed to depict Assange's journalism as a form of international espionage. Ever since November 2010, when WikiLeaks embarrassed and infuriated the world's governments with the release of what became known as Cablegate, some 250,000 classified diplomatic cables from more than 150 countries, the group's supporters have found themselves detained at airports, subpoenaed to testify before a grand jury, and ordered to turn over their Twitter accounts and e-mails to authorities.

Assange was always deeply engaged with the world— and always getting into trouble. Born in a small town in Queensland, he spent much of his youth traveling around Australia with his mother and stepfather, who ran a theater company. As a teenager, he

discovered computers— his first was a Commodore 64— and became one of the world's foremost hackers, going by the name Mendax, Latin for "nobly untruthful." After breaking into systems at NASA and the Pentagon when he was 16, he was busted on 25 counts of hacking, which prodded him to go straight. But as he traveled the world, working as a tech consultant through much of the 1990s, he continued putting his computer skills to use ensuring freedom of information— a necessary condition, he believes, for democratic self-rule.

"From the glory days of American radicalism, which was the American Revolution, I think that Madison's view on government is still unequaled," he tells me during the three days I spend with him as he settles into his new location in England. "That people determined to be in a democracy, to be their own governments, must have the power that knowledge will bring— because knowledge will always rule ignorance. You can either be informed and your own rulers, or you can be ignorant and have someone else, who is not ignorant, rule over you. The question is, where has the United States betrayed Madison and Jefferson, betrayed these basic values on how you keep a democracy? I think that the U.S. military-industrial complex and the majority of politicians in Congress have betrayed those values."

In 2006, Assange founded WikiLeaks, a group of hackers and activists that has been dubbed the first "stateless news organization." The goal, from the start, was to operate beyond the reach of the law, get their hands on vital documents being censored by governments and corporations, and make them available to the public. After a series of initial successes— publishing leaks about Iceland, Kenya and even a Pentagon document warning of WikiLeaks— Assange rocked the U.S. military in April 2010 with the release of "Collateral Murder," a video that revealed an American helicopter in Iraq opening fire on unarmed civilians, killing two journalists and several others. He quickly followed up with the release of hundreds of thousands of classified files related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, creating an international firestorm. But soon after he began releasing the diplomatic cables, which were widely credited with helping to spark the Arab Spring, he was detained and imprisoned after spending a week with two female supporters in Stockholm, entangling him in a yearlong legal battle to win his own freedom.

Assange agreed to a lengthy interview at his new home, on the condition that the location be kept secret, along with the identities of the core WikiLeaks staffers who have stuck by him since he ran into trouble in Sweden. Though he continues to run the group from captivity, working on what he calls a new set of scoops concerning the private-surveillance industry, the media furor over his personal life has turned him into a pariah among many former supporters, making it difficult for WikiLeaks to raise money. He's been called a rapist, an enemy combatant, and an agent of both Mossad and the CIA. His two most prominent collaborators— The New York Times and The Guardian— have repeatedly tarred him as a sexual deviant with bad personal hygiene, while continuing to happily sell books and movie rights about his exploits. His own personality has also proved divisive: He's charming, brilliant and uncompromising, but he has inspired intense hatred among former colleagues, who portray him as a megalomaniac whose ego has undermined the cause.

When I arrive for my last day with Assange, I'm 45 minutes early. Most of his staff have gone home for the holidays, and he's alone in the house with only his personal assistant to keep him company. Assange is huddled over a laptop in the dining room

he has turned into his office, monitoring what has become his sole focus over the past few days: the trial of Bradley Manning, the 24-year-old Army private alleged to have provided the diplomatic cables to WikiLeaks. Assange has two lawyers representing him in the Maryland courtroom, and his name has been mentioned virtually every day during the initial hearing. The government's strategy, it has become clear, is to pressure Manning to implicate Assange in espionage—to present his work at WikiLeaks as the act of a spy, not a journalist.

When Assange comes into the living room and sits on the couch, a small Jack Russell terrier jumps up onto his lap and remains there for most of the next five hours. "You use two recorders," Assange says, looking at the digital recorders I've put down on the small coffee table. "I usually use three." But as soon as we start the interview, the phone rings. It's Daniel Ellsberg, the man who leaked the Pentagon Papers, who had attended the Manning trial with Assange's lawyers. Ellsberg is in a car driving back to Washington, D.C. "I can hear you," Assange shouts, ducking into the dining room. "Can you hear me?"

Five minutes later he returns, energized by his talk with America's most famous whistle-blower. "Where were we?" he says. His assistant brings in two cups of coffee, and the interview begins.

Why is WikiLeaks so focused on defending Bradley Manning?

Manning is alleged to be one of our sources, regardless of whether those allegations are true or not. He has now sat in various U.S. military prisons for the past 600 days as a result of what we published. So we feel that we owe him a duty of care. I have heard from people close to his defense that it is their view that the abuse of him was in order to get him to testify against us.

I understand that you believe the Justice Department has been attending the hearing, to see how it impacts their investigation into WikiLeaks.

There are three gray-faced men who always show up. They're so furtive: They refuse to identify themselves, or to even make eye contact with our lawyers. They go into the classified hearings when everyone else is kicked out. One of them, we have discovered, is a prosecutor for the Department of Justice on the WikiLeaks investigation. I believe they are there to make sure that the government, in presenting its case against Manning, did not reveal information that was critical to its investigation into us.

In diplomatic cables, the investigation into WikiLeaks by the U.S. government has been called "unprecedented both in its scale and nature." How much do you know about it?

Since last September, a secret grand jury was empaneled in Alexandria, Virginia. There is no defense counsel. There are four prosecutors, according to witnesses who have been forced to testify before the grand jury. The jury itself is taken from the local area, and Alexandria has the highest density of government and military contractors anywhere in the United States. It is a place where the U.S. government chooses to conduct all national-security grand juries and trials because of that makeup of the jury pool.

The investigation has involved most of the U.S. intelligence apparatus, the FBI, the State Department, the United States Army. It has subpoenaed the records of most of my U.S. friends or acquaintances. Under what are called Patriot Act production orders,

the government has also asked for their Twitter records, Google accounts and individual ISPs. The laws which they're working toward an indictment on are the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986.

And they're going after Manning, who is facing a life sentence, to get him to say that you're a spy?

To be another chess piece on the board in the attack on us. The U.S. government is trying to redefine what have been long-accepted journalistic methods. If the Pentagon is to have its way, it will be the end of national-security journalism in the United States.

How so?

They're trying to interpret the Espionage Act to say that any two-way communication with a source is a collaboration with a source, and is therefore a conspiracy to commit espionage where classified information is involved. The Pentagon, in fact, issued a public demand to us that we not only destroy everything we had ever published or were ever going to publish in relation to the U.S. government, but that we also stop "soliciting" information from U.S. government employees. The Espionage Act itself does not mention solicitation, but they're trying to create a new legal precedent that includes a journalist simply asking a source to communicate information. A few years ago, for example, the CIA destroyed its waterboarding interrogation videos. In the Manning hearing, prosecutors described how we had a most-wanted list, which included those interrogation videos if they still existed.

The WikiLeaks site had a "most-wanted" list of stories you were eager to get?

This list was not put together by us. We asked for nominations from human rights activists and journalists from around the world of the information they most wanted, and we put that on a list. The prosecution in the Manning hearing has been attempting to use that list as evidence of our solicitation of information that is likely to be classified, and therefore our complicity in espionage, if we received such information.

From a journalist's perspective, a list like that would be the equivalent of a normal editorial meeting where you list the crown jewels of stories you'd love to get.

Exactly.

So if you're going to jail, then Bob Woodward's going to jail.

Individuals like Sy Hersh and Dana Priest and Bob Woodward constantly say to their sources, "Hey, what about this, have you heard anything about it? I heard that there's been an airstrike in Afghanistan that's killed a bunch of civilians— do you have any more details, and can you prove them with paper?" And all those would be defined as conspiracy to commit espionage under the Pentagon's interpretation.

Given the broader implications, it's surprising that you haven't received much support from what you call the "Anglo-American press." In fact, The New York Times and The Guardian, both of which collaborated with you on releasing some of the documents, have done their best to distance themselves from you.

The Times ran in the face of fire; it abandoned us once the heat started from the U.S. administration. In doing so, it also abandoned itself, and it abandoned all journalists working on national-security journalism in the United States.

What the Times was concerned about is being swept up in the government's investigation. If Bradley Manning or another U.S. government employee had collaborated with us to provide us with classified information, and we, in turn, collaborated with the Times to provide it to the world, then the argument would run that the Times had been involved in a conspiracy with us to commit espionage. This is something that the Times was deeply concerned about. It said to us that we should never refer to the Times as a partner— that was their legal advice.

Bill Keller, the former editor of the Times, wrote a widely read and lengthy piece that attacked you personally. In it, he says four or five times that "WikiLeaks is a source, they are not a partner."

Keller was trying to save his own skin from the espionage investigation in two ways. First, on a legal technicality, by claiming that there was no collaboration, only a passive relationship between journalist and source. And second, by distancing themselves from us by attacking me personally, using all the standard tabloid character-assassination attacks. Many journalists at the Times have approached me to say how embarrassed they were at the lowering of the tone by doing that. Keller also came out and said how pleased the White House was with them that they had not run WikiLeaks material the White House had asked them not to. It is one thing to do that, and it's another thing to proudly proclaim it. Why did Keller feel the need to tell the world how pleased the White House was with him? For the same reason he felt the need to describe how dirty my socks were. It is not to convey the facts— rather, it is to convey a political alignment. You heard this explicitly: Keller said, "Julian Assange may or may not be a journalist, but he's not my kind of journalist." My immediate reaction is, "Thank God I'm not Bill Keller's type of journalist."

The publishing mindset at WikiLeaks, it's fair to say, is radically different than that of the mainstream press. Where a newspaper that received 500,000 documents might release 20, you released all of them.

Cablegate is 3,000 volumes of material. It is the greatest intellectual treasure to have entered into the public record in modern times. The Times released just over 100 cables.

There are over 251,000 cables in Cablegate. So our approach is quite different to that of the Times. The Times in its security arrangements was only concerned with preventing The Washington Post from finding out what it was doing. But it told the U.S. government every single cable that it wanted to publish.

And in return, the Times has basically portrayed you as a pariah, despite being responsible for getting them all this incredible material, as well as setting up an innovative organization to gather and process all the leaked data.

Absolutely no honor or gratitude. I don't wish to make light of the difficulties the Times faces in working in the United States, but I do think it could have managed those difficulties in a more honorable way.

After the Afghan war diaries came out, the Times ran a hostile profile of Bradley Manning that psychologized him into being a sad, mad fag, and can only be described as a tabloid piece. Then, when we published the Iraq War logs, we discovered details about the deaths of more than 100,000 civilians, and details of the torture of more than 1,000 people. Every other paper ran the story. The United Nations and a number of countries investigated the allegations, and even the U.S. military's own internal documents referred to the abuses as torture. Yet the Times refused to use the word "torture" at all. Instead, they ran a sleazy hit piece against me on the front page that was factually inaccurate. It said, for instance, that I had been charged with sexual abuse when I had not, and that 12 people had defected from our organization when we had suspended one. I don't mind taking a hit, but it must be factually accurate. For the Times to descend into a tabloid hit piece on the front page when we had just exposed the deaths of more than 100,000 civilians was not commensurate.

"Collateral Murder" — the video you released in April 2010 showing a U.S. helicopter gunship firing on a group of Iraqi civilians, including two Reuters journalists and two children — was the first scoop that got you major media attention. You learned that The Washington Post actually had the video and had been sitting on it.

A Post reporter named David Finkel had the video. We had sources who explained that he had even shown them the video in his home. Yet he concealed it.

Finkel's response was, "There were a lot of bad days in Iraq." He had been embedded with ground troops in that area for some nine months on the ground. He had clearly developed too close an affinity for the people he was embedded with and came out essentially campaigning on their behalf after the release of the video.

Were those kinds of failings by the mainstream media what inspired you to start WikiLeaks?

The things that informed me most were my experiences in fighting for freedom of the press, freedom to communicate knowledge— which, in the end, is freedom from ignorance. Secondly, my experiences in understanding how the military-intelligence complex works at a practical level. I saw that publishing all over the world was deeply constrained by self-censorship, economics and political censorship, while the military-industrial complex was growing at a tremendous rate, and the amount of information

that it was collecting about all of us vastly exceeded the public imagination.

You first registered the domain name for leaks.org back in 1999, when you were working on encryption technology for dissidents and human rights workers. That was before the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon enabled the government to dramatically expand its power to keep information secret and spy on its own citizens.

Yes. On September 11th, I was on the phone with a friend, discussing encryption algorithms. Very quickly, within an hour, I saw what the counter-reaction would be, and that all the proposals that the military-industrial complex had to spy on everyone, to remove probable cause, to increase its funding, would be rushed forward again. That's precisely what happened.

Then, two years later, the U.S. invaded Iraq.

The creation of WikiLeaks was, in part, a response to Iraq. There were a number of whistle-blowers who came out in relation to Iraq, and it was clear to me that what the world was missing in the days of Iraq propaganda was a way for inside sources who knew what was really going on to communicate that information to the public. Quite a few who did ended up in very dire circumstances, including David Kelly, the British scientist who either committed suicide or was murdered over his revelations about weapons of mass destruction. The Iraq War was the biggest issue for people of my generation in the West. It was also the clearest case, in my living memory, of media manipulation and the creation of a war through ignorance.

Before the scoops that centered on the U.S. government — the logs and cables regarding Afghanistan and Iraq — your focus was on other countries.

Initially we thought that our greatest role would be in China and some former Soviet states and in Africa. We did have early successes in Africa. I lived in Kenya in 2007, and we were able to source a document that exposed billions of dollars of corruption by the former president Daniel arap Moi and his cronies. The evidence ended up swinging the vote by 10 percent and changing the Kenyan election. But Moi's corruption didn't exist in Kenya alone. The money looted from Kenya was deposited into London banks, properties and businesses, into New York properties. There is no large-scale corruption in the developing world without Western corruption. That was an important lesson to me.

Another important lesson was that, very quickly, we started receiving information from what we presumed to be disaffected U.S. government employees about the actions of the U.S. military. The United States has historically been a relatively open society. But within the United States, there is a shadow state, and that is the U.S. military, which, as of September, held 4.3 million security clearances. That is equal to the population of New Zealand. That is a closed, totalitarian society that gathers and stores more information than any other society in the world.

WikiLeaks has been credited, even by its critics, with fueling the Arab Spring, and even Occupy Wall Street. Was this your plan? Did you imagine you could have this kind of impact?

We planned for most of what has occurred over the past 12 months. It is fair to say we're unexpectedly delighted that those plans came to fruition.

In relation to the Arab Spring, the way I looked at this back in October of 2010 is that the power structures in the Middle East are interdependent, they support each other. If we could release enough information fast enough about many of these powerful individuals and organizations, their ability to support each other would be diminished. They'd have to fight their own local battles— they'd have to turn inward to deal with the domestic political fallout from the information. And therefore they would not have the resources to prop up surrounding countries.

Would you like to see those regimes fall? What's the end result you're looking for?

When you shake something up, you have a chance to rebuild. But we're not interested in shaking something up just for the hell of it. I believe that if we look at what makes a civilization civilized, it is people understanding what is really going on. When Gutenberg invented the printing press, the end result was that people who knew something of what was going on could convey that information to others. And as a result of the Internet, we are now living in a time where it's a lot easier to convey what we know about our corner of the world and share it with others.

Do you think governments should be allowed to keep some secrets?

This is a question that is much more interesting than the answer. In some cases— tracking down organized crime, say— government officials have an obligation to keep their investigations secret at the moment that they are performing them. Similarly, a doctor has an obligation to keep information about your medical records secret under most circumstances. This is a question about obligations. It is absurd to suggest that simply because a police officer may have the obligation to keep secret certain information relating to an investigation, that the entire world also must be subject to a coercive force.

When people talk about your childhood, the two main words used to describe you are "nomadic" and "hacker." You first got into trouble when you were 17 for hacking into Pentagon networks, as well as several Australian sites. It seems in some ways that you've been engaged in a lifelong campaign against authority.

I haven't had a lifelong campaign against authority. Legitimate authority is important. All human systems require authority, but authority must be granted as a result of the informed consent of the governed. Presently, the consent, if there is any, is not informed, and therefore it's not legitimate. To communicate knowledge, we must protect people's privacy— and so I have been, for 20 years, developing systems and policy and ideals to protect people's rights to communicate privately without government interference, without government surveillance. The right to communicate without government surveillance is important, because surveillance is another form of

censorship. When people are frightened that what they are saying may be overheard by a power that has the ability to lock people up, then they adjust what they're saying. They start to self-censor.

Growing up in Australia, what were the experiences that made you who you are? Was it getting into trouble as a hacker?

I lived a Tom Sawyer boyhood, which I think is a good childhood. Very physically adventurous on different islands and in the Outback and tropical regions, having small gangs of other boys, riding my horse, going into bat caves, exploring drainage systems and forests, hunting tropical fish.

I suppose the distinctive moments you have growing up, other than physical moments, are moral moments, so I designed and built a complex raft once. My plan at age 12 was to spend the night on the raft on the Richmond River, which is known to have bronze whaler sharks in it. All my friends said it was a great idea. So we went to do it, but all but one of them chickened out when it actually came to spending the night in the dark on the river.

A week later, the raft was stolen, and I managed to track down the people who took it. They were boys a couple of years older. We ran a mission at night to hijack it back, cut it loose, and let it drift downstream. The raft drifted out into the middle of the river. We paced along and the river got wider and wider, and I realized I'd have to dive in to get it, there in the middle of the night, with no one else. Thoughts of bronze whaler sharks started entering my head. I instructed my body to jump, but it refused to do so under those conditions. So even I have had that moment where I was a coward, but I think the situation called for it.

Did you like high school?

I went to many schools because I was touring with my parents' theater company. Some I did like, some I did not. I experienced a great variety of different types of people and educational systems, and it was hard to preserve some long-term childhood friendships, although I did develop some. It gave me a sense of perspective, which I think ultimately became important.

Did you go through a drug phase at university? Pot, or anything like that?

I was a bit of a stereotyped intellectual, other than being physically adventurous as a teenager. I'd do experiments on all my friends and write up the results, but I'd never take any myself.

So you never tried...

As for what happened subsequently, I think under the circumstances I'll just be quiet about my adult private life. There is something, actually. While not being a Calvinist, if you're striving to change the world in an important way, then it is beholden on you to,

if you're opposing the actions of companies like Philip Morris, to not actually buy their products.

Let's talk about some of the attacks on you. Even many of those closest to you say you're difficult to work with. Are you?

I think the question is very interesting.

Spoken like someone who's difficult to work with.

I think your question is very interesting, and where does it come from? Well, when The Guardian broke their Cablegate contract with us, when we told The New York Times to piss off because of them sucking up to the White House, then these two groups tried to say that the reason we told them to piss off is simply a matter of my character as opposed to a fundamental institutional incompatibility. We say The Guardian broke its contract, the Times engaged in shoddy, tabloid journalism, fearful, uncourageous journalism, and so to defend themselves against that, they say, "Oh, no, it's because Mr. Assange's socks were dirty," or, "He's an extremely difficult person to work with."

But some who have worked with you over the years also paint you in an unfavorable light. You wouldn't be the only person in the media to suffer from a massive ego.

I don't think I have a massive ego. I just am firm at saying no. No, we will not destroy everything we've already published. No, we will continue to publish what we have promised to publish. No, we will not stop dealing with U.S. military leaks. For some people, that comes across as a big ego, when it's just sticking to your ideals.

There has been something of a mini boom industry attacking WikiLeaks and Julian Assange.

There are actually about 100 books so far, but a good 80 of those are opportunistic books that have absolutely no real writing— they're just sort of collations of things. If you're talking proper books, books someone has actually written every word from scratch, there's over a dozen. One of the funniest is a Russian book, which accuses us of being in league to defame Putin.

One of the more interesting books is from Heather Brooke, a writer for The Guardian. She sounds almost like a scorned lover— she says she "swooned madly" when you first looked at her, then later concluded that you're an asshole. That seems to be a recurring narrative of these stories about you.

[Long pause] I don't think Heather Brooke is particularly interesting. The general phenomenon is interesting. Someone has an involvement to some extent in our work, which they then overstate tremendously to gain authority. They get something from the involvement— a reputation by proximity, information we've collected or some other item of value. Then we're not able to continue the relationship with them at the

same degree of involvement, so they feel rejected. When you become a celebrity— at various times, within the English language, I have been the most famous person being discussed in the news— people's behavior shifts. What they lose through the lack of an ongoing relationship seems to be so incredibly valuable to them, so their desire to keep it, or their feeling of loss when they are not able to preserve the interaction, is so extreme that it drives them to do things you would not normally expect people to do. I always thought that A-level celebrities and their complaints about the difficulties of being a celebrity were rather self-indulgent.

But now, being a celebrity yourself, you feel differently?

I've subsequently changed my opinion. Brad Pitt doesn't have a superpower at his back. He just has some crazed fans and paparazzi. But now, having had all three, I must say, I'm not terribly impressed with the experience.

There were stalkers at your previous location. That must have frightened you.

Yes, despite the remoteness of the location— being three hours out of London by fast train, plus another 40 minutes in a car through country roads, and then through a long private driveway into the country house. We had many people try to turn up at the front door or to ambush me at the police station. It coincided with many U.S. politicians, such as Sarah Palin and Newt Gingrich, calling for my assassination or kidnapping. Fortunately, nearly everyone who attempted to ambush me was supportive in one way or another. They were mostly women who thought they were my fiancée.

Women wanting to marry you? How many over the past year?
Hundreds.

Hundreds of women would show up?

Sometimes also men. We had one, Captain Morgan, who claimed to work for Intel, and was a sea captain. He sold his boat to turn up at the front door, saying we were the only organization on Earth worth working for. One woman from Catalonia took a black cab from London and turned up at our house on the edge of the estate with a £450 taxi bill, which she'd convinced the driver I would pay once our romantic dispute was sorted out. She and the taxi driver convinced one of the neighbors to let them stay the night— the taxi driver refused to leave until he got his money.

There have been groupies. No, I won't call them groupies. Young women who have flown from Norway and Sweden and turned up at the front door. When I was in prison, absurdly, the only people to get any mail through in the first week were six women who wanted to give me cakes and blankets, which I rejected. But apparently there are women who try and visit any famous prisoner of a certain age, and know how to get through the system. Whereas not a single journalist from around the world was able to do so.

Have you been in any serious or significant relationships over the past year?

For security reasons, I can't talk about my intimate private life. I want to make that clear. My children have received death threats and are in hiding. Many people I am close to in a familial way, I have to be extremely cautious about exposing.

What happened in Sweden with the two women who have accused you?

It's before the court, so I can't discuss the case. It is very difficult, being in the position where you can't tell your version of events. It's clear that the matter is absurd, and you can read all about what the prosecution says its case is on the Internet.

By calling it absurd, aren't you implying that these women are making it up?

That's not what I said. I've never criticized the women. I'm saying the allegations are absurd. People can read the allegations for themselves. They're not correct, but even as stated, they are absurd. What the prosecution successfully managed to do is use the word "rape." Although I've not been charged— and technically what they are investigating is called "minor rape," a Swedish concept— that hasn't stopped our opponents from constantly referring to "rape charges," which is false. Back when we last did a survey, in February, there were a total of 33 million references on the Internet to the word "rape" in any context, from Helen of Troy to the Congo. If you search for "rape" and my name, there were just over 20 million. In other words, perceptively, two-thirds of all rapes that have ever happened anywhere in the world, ever, have something to do with me.

So why not say, "Look, I did nothing wrong, but I'm sorry if I upset these people. These are very serious things, and I'm taking it seriously, and I'll come to Sweden and face these allegations." People who support you wonder why you haven't done that.

I have no faith in the Swedish justice system being just. The International Prison Chaplains Association says that Swedish prisons are the worst prisons in Europe. That covers even Romania, Estonia and so on. That's because in 47 percent of cases, prisoners in Sweden are held incommunicado. So to the degree that my ability to act would be severely if not completely eliminated by entering into a Swedish prison, I am concerned about it. In addition, if you criticize matters, such as that Swedes have the worst prison system in all of Europe, then it would be the worse for you, because the Swedish justice system will take its revenge.

If you knew that governments were looking to find a way to pull dirty tricks on you, didn't you feel like you were putting yourself at risk in Sweden when you were with the women? Weren't you pushing the envelope?

It's been falsely reported that I have said that the Swedish allegations are a result of a CIA trap. That's false. What I have said is that the case was instantly politicized by opportunists— instantly, within hours. That day, we did receive, from an intelligence source, a list of priorities that the U.S. government had in relation to me. Those included finding out what information we had, what we were going to publish, evidence in relation to the prosecution of Bradley Manning. It also included a view that

the U.S. would find the legal case against me very difficult, and that therefore I should be very cautious about extralegal means. Those extralegal means not being assassination, but rather the planting of drugs, child pornography or being otherwise embroiled in disgraceful conduct. So it was on my mind and everyone else's mind when the allegations arose.

Do you wish you'd done anything different?

In general? Of course. Many. I can't stand these people who say they would never do anything different. That simply means that they have not learned a single thing from their experiences.

I mean specifically, in terms of dealing with the two women.

I had never gone through a sex scandal before. There are certain ways, depending on culture, which one should handle a politicized sex scandal. I also didn't take it very seriously to begin with. I thought that it would disappear immediately.

Why didn't you hire a PR guy?

We tried. We hired someone in the U.K. to cope with the volume of media inquiries. He accepted at a very substantially reduced rate because we're activists, a *cause célèbre*. His largest clients were Virgin and Sony. After one week, it was clear that it was either us or them. His board, according to him, insisted that we be dropped, so we were. There have been about a dozen similar instances of pressure being applied to companies who we've been working with. When people say, "Why didn't Julian do this, why didn't Julian do that, why didn't WikiLeaks do this," in many cases we have actually tried. It's not so easy when you're fighting a superpower.

What forms has the pressure taken?

My personal bank account was shut down, and some of our people have also had their personal bank accounts closed. Many people have lost their jobs— even those who were quite indirectly connected. The person who registered our Swiss domain name lost their job when Bloomberg reported their name on the record. One of the board members of the German charity that collects donations for us lost their security contract with the Swiss stock exchange. The stock exchange even put in writing that the cause was his affiliation with us. The Tor Project, which protects people around the world from being spied on or censored, lost some \$600,000 to the U.S. government, as a result of one of their people, Jacob Appelbaum, having filled in for me once at a conference in New York. This type of indirect pressure has been applied to a great many people.

What happened when you were thrown in jail in England?

I had 10 days in solitary. I think everyone should have 10 days in solitary, especially politicians. I broke the back of solitary. It is a sensory-deprivation experience. So I have a lot of sympathy with Bradley Manning and other prisoners who are similarly

contained.

When you heard that door shut, were you worried that it might be 10 months or 10 years?

I had no idea how long it was going to be.

Was it terrifying?

No, I was rather excited and looking forward to the challenge of adapting to the new environment. I knew it would be helpful to our cause, politically, and it was. I told my lawyers, "Don't get me out too quickly." They disagreed.

So you saw yourself as a martyr to the cause.

There's been an observation of how the rest of the world was choosing to make my myth, positively and negatively. That process has been fascinating, horrifying and comical all at the same time. It's caused many laughs from the people who know me well, a subject of great mirth in the team. We're dealing with a situation where we're engaged in a historic endeavor that has very serious consequences for people's lives and political systems. It's extremely important, the consequences for everything from revolutions to individuals' jobs, and the gravity of that task is so great that I don't have time to consider how this celebritization affects me personally. The concern is always simply, is it helpful or harmful in being able to survive as an institution? Or will the character assassination wipe a million dollars off our budget or change political moods enough to cause us to lose a court case? Or will lionization mean that we have enough political support to survive?

How expensive has the legal battle been?

We have many legal cases. This personal case, the Swedish extradition case, I have to pay for myself. I don't think that is right. Actually, I think the organization should pay for it.

Why?

It is unquestionable that the case has been politicized as a result of my role in the organization. However, to avoid the attack that the funding would be spent on this case, which is effectively used by our opponents to assassinate my character, it's completely separate. Which means that I'm now completely bankrupt as a result.

Completely bankrupt?

Yeah. There have been all sorts of strange complications, such as that the previous

lawyers managed to get hold of all my book advances and keep them. So I have not received a cent from any publicity that I've done.

There's a rumor that you have £3.3 million in your bank account that you're keeping.

Yeah, sure. Our opponents like to spread these rumors to deny us our donations.

So that's not true?

It's absolute nonsense. They spread rumors that I'm living in a mansion, they spread rumors that I'm homeless. Two years ago, fabricated documents were spread saying that I traveled first class and lived in a castle in South Africa, and I've never even been to South Africa. If you want to attack an organization, how do you attack it? You attack the cash flow and leadership. The character assassinations are dangerous, but taken as a whole, they're absurdly comical. We have, on the one hand, some 700,000 references to me being an anti-Semite, and on the other hand, some 2.5 million references to me being a member of the Mossad. I'm accused of everything from being a cat torturer to being a rapist to being overly concerned about my hair to being too rich to being so poor that my socks are dirty. The only ones I have left now to look forward to are some kind of combination of bestiality and pedophilia.

From a legal standpoint, it seems that you're in a no-win situation. If you lose your appeal on February 1st, you will be extradited to Sweden to face questioning, and the United States can ask to extradite you from there. But even if you win your appeal, there's the possibility that the U.S. could just come in and extradite you from England.

Yeah. And the ability to resist extradition here in England is not good.

The conventional wisdom— both in Sweden and the U.S.— is that you won't be extradited. Why are you convinced you will?

Extradition is a political matter. The extradition treaties— those from the U.K. to the U.S. and from Sweden to the U.S.— are both very dangerous for me. Every day that I remain in England, it is dangerous, and if I am in Sweden, it will be at least as dangerous as it is here, and very probably more so. The Swedish foreign minister responsible for extradition, Carl Bildt, became a U.S. Embassy informant in 1973 when he was 24 years old. He shipped his personal effects to Washington, to lead a conservative leadership program, where he met Karl Rove. They became old friends and would go to conferences together and so on.

Karl Rove? How do you know this?

Cables. Although I have not been charged with anything, there is an active allegation against me of rape and sexual molestation against Swedish women. So the political environment in Sweden to defend me against extradition to the United States is quite

adverse. Some people have said, "Look, both the United Kingdom and Sweden and many countries say that there is not to be extradition for political offenses." But the United States government is not trying to indict me for a "political" offense— it is trying to indict me for espionage, or conspiracy to commit espionage, and computer

hacking. The U.S. grand jury is looking at indicting us for charges which are not, on their face, political. But of course, the reasons are political, and that is a different matter.

So you think the government is going to try to lay the groundwork by saying you're a spy, claiming you're putting soldiers at risk, and then nabbing you after the Swedish allegations are resolved?

These are people used to laying the political ground and laying the media ground. I imagine what they would do is say that this material we published had adversely affected the United Kingdom or adversely affected Sweden. Perhaps they could introduce or leak to the press, under the surface, false speculations that we had killed Swedish soldiers in Afghanistan, or that we had sold information to the Iranians.

What has the low point been for you in all this? Were there any mornings you woke up saying, "What have I got myself into?"

I understood that the significance of what we were doing was greater than WikiLeaks as an institution and greater than our personal lives. In November, I told our people, perhaps to their surprise, that what we were doing was more significant than the life of any one of us. To that degree, the battles that we've had, the severity of the battles that we've had, is not something I have found to be difficult to deal with. Their severity is a reflection of the quality and importance of our work. That said, the betrayals are hard to take. This confrontation that we have had with the Western national-security state— it's not quite right to call it the U.S. national-security state, because it's a transnational phenomenon— has brought out the best and worst in people. It has brought out opportunism, weakness, other negative qualities. It's brought out greed and cowardice, but it has also brought out strength and loyalty in people. We have lost friends and colleagues, but we have also made very loyal friends, and we have seen the strength of old friends revealed. There's an old military saying: It's not the length of the war but the depth of the trench. For the past year, we have been in a very deep trench, and so the friendships have become deep.

Who has been your most critical public supporter?

John Pilger, the Australian journalist, has been the most impressive. And the other is Dan Ellsberg. It's the amount of time I've spent with him, both in front of and behind the scenes. When people are working in front of the scenes, in public, it is often because it is helpful to them. One never really knows what the true allegiance is. But when someone puts it on the line both publicly and privately, that's a sign of true character. Ron Paul did come out and make an impassioned and rational speech. It has not been the soft liberal left, the pseudo left that has defended us. In fact, they have run a mile. It has been strong activists who have a long record of fighting for what they believe in, both on the libertarian right and on the left.

What do you make of Anonymous? They've supported you.

We were involved with Anonymous from 2008. They were providing us with material related to our investigations into abuses by the Church of Scientology. It was a young pranksterish Internet culture, not something at all to be taken seriously. What's wonderful about what has happened over the last few years is that through engaging with forces much larger than themselves, starting with the Church of Scientology, they have been educated about how the world actually works. Then, reading information we've released and also seeing the attacks on us, they've been further educated. Now they have become politicized, they've come to understand some of where the big powers are. This was a very apolitical group that had absolutely no understanding about the military-industrial complex whatsoever, and no understanding about international finance. As a result of joining our battle and trying to protect themselves, they have come to see that the threats related to Internet freedom come from the military-industrial complex, the banking system and the media. The media is the third big power group, because when you're involved in something like this, it becomes newsworthy.

What advice do you have for journalists, based on your experience?

I have a lot of sympathy for journalists who are trying to protect their sources. It's very hard now. Unless you're an electronic-surveillance expert or you have frequent contact with one, you must stay off the Net and mobile phones. You really have to just use the old techniques, paper and whispering in people's ears. Leave your mobile phones behind. Don't turn them off, but tell your source to leave electronic devices in their offices. We are now in a situation where countries are recording billions of hours of conversations, and proudly proclaiming that you don't have to select which telephone call you're intercepting, because you intercept every telephone call.

So what's the future of WikiLeaks? Is the organization going to survive?

This week, I think we'll make it. We'll see what happens next week.

Where do you want to end up, when all the legal battles are over?

I don't want to end up anywhere. I want to do what I was doing before. I lived in Egypt when we had important things that needed to be done, or in Kenya or the United States or Australia or Sweden or Germany. When we have opportunities, then that's where I am.

When do you think you'll be able to regain that freedom to do that?

In relation to the United States, we'll have to wait for the revolution.

- *Michael Hastings is a contributing editor to Rolling Stone and the author, most recently, of The Operators: The Wild and Terrifying Inside Story of America's War in Afghanistan.*

UK Law Firm Sues WikiLeaks Founder Assange Over Pending Fees

Ravi Mandalia
IT ProPortal
2 February, 2012

Julian Assange, the founder of the whistle blower website WikiLeaks, has been reportedly sued by the UK based law firm that he had hired after his arrest back in 2010.

The law firm has taken this stance just a day before Assange was supposed to file an appeal in the UK Supreme Court to block his extradition to Sweden. The WikiLeaks founder had been charged with a rape case by Sweden's law-enforcement agencies just a couple of years back— a charge that Assange has been denying right since the first day.

According to reports, Finers Stephens Innocent LLP, the law firm in question, dragged the 40 years old Australian national to court over pending legal fees. Apparently, the firm which mainly specialises in commercial litigation was replaced by Assange last year when a UK court overruled his defence and upheld the Swedish arrest warrant.

"It's always regrettable when we find ourselves in a dispute with a former client about fees. We tried to resolve this amicably with Mr. Assange and we still hope to be able to," Tim Bignell, a lawyer at the firm, said in a phone interview to Business Week.

WikiLeaks aside, Assange case strikes core of civil liberty

Geoffrey Robertson
Sydney Morning Herald
February 3, 2012

JULIAN Assange's current court appearance in Britain has nothing to do with sex or United States diplomatic cables or even with WikiLeaks. But it may make an important contribution to European law.

The United Kingdom Supreme Court will be considering the point I raised on his behalf when a Swedish prosecutor claimed to be a "judicial authority" empowered to issue a warrant to have him extradited to prison in Stockholm. My written argument began quite bluntly: "The notion that a prosecutor is a 'judicial authority' is a contradiction in terms."

Judges must, as their defining quality, be independent of government. Police and prosecutors employed and promoted by the state obviously cannot be perceived as impartial if they are permitted to decide issues on the liberty of individuals.

They are expected to be zealous in working up evidence against a suspect, so they are the last people who can be trusted to weigh up impartially the evidence they

themselves have drummed up. That is a matter for a court.

So how comes it that in Sweden **and many other European countries**, prosecutors and even policemen and women are allowed to issue a so-called European arrest warrant, which has the draconian effect of requiring the arrest of people in another country and dragging them for trial in the state which has issued the warrant?

The answer partly derives from the lack of principle in the historical development of European criminal law, where for centuries prosecutors and ministers of justice have exercised powers that in the UK and Australia would need judicial approval. That **Napoleonic figure, the "investigating magistrate" — a judicial official who conducts a pretrial investigation — has helped to muddy the distinction between law enforcement agencies and judges.**

So when the major European countries got together 12 years ago to devise a fast-track extradition process, and decided that European arrest warrants requiring the arrest and surrender of individuals could be issued by "judicial authorities", there was some confusion about what that term meant, and whether police and prosecutors might qualify. Sweden and some other countries thought they did.

It will be inconvenient if Assange's appeal succeeds, because European countries will have to change their laws. But the argument from inconvenience is the classic way for civil liberties to be lost.

The principle of judicial independence is especially important in the Assange case, where an allegation of what Swedes describe as "minor rape" (another contradiction in terms) was dismissed by a very experienced Stockholm prosecutor.

It was later revived (in an unfair process from which Assange was excluded) by another prosecutor with a gender agenda who was given to issuing self-promoting press statements and withholding exculpatory evidence. She was, therefore, an inappropriate person to take what should have been an impartial decision about whether a European arrest warrant should be issued against her quarry. So the point is important, as the UK's Supreme Court said in December when granting leave to appeal. Its decision can be expected in April or May this year.

A ruling in Assange's favour would not prevent Sweden from extraditing him eventually, but it would have to change its procedures and have his European arrest warrant issued by a court. Other countries — France and Germany among them — would have to change their practice of having police and prosecutors issuing European arrest warrants as well, if they want to get their hands on suspects in the UK.

The case comes at an interesting time in Britain, where there is a debate over whether the country's acceptance of the European Convention on Human Rights should be supplemented or replaced with a British Bill of Rights which would strengthen traditional liberties. You cannot get anything more traditional than the liberty that flows from the independence of the judiciary.

The notion that anyone in the UK can be arrested, deported, denied bail and then tried in secret (the procedure for dealing with sex crime charges in Sweden), all on the say-so of an obviously prejudiced foreign prosecutor, could strike many as oppressive.

• *Former UN appeal judge Geoffrey Robertson, QC, advises Julian Assange and is the author of Crimes Against Humanity and The Justice Game.*

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/politics/wikileaks-aside-assange-case-strikes-core-of-civil-liberty-20120202-1qvj2.html>

Interpol accused after journalist arrested over Muhammad tweet

Saudi Arabia used Interpol's system to get journalist arrested in Malaysia for insulting the Prophet Muhammad on Twitter

*Owen Bowcott
The Guardian
10 February 2012*

Interpol has been accused of abusing its powers after Saudi Arabia used the organisation's red notice system to get a journalist arrested in Malaysia for insulting the Prophet Muhammad.

Police in Kuala Lumpur said Hamza Kashgari, 23, was detained at the airport "following a request made to us by Interpol" the international police cooperation agency, on behalf of the Saudi authorities.

Kashgari, a newspaper columnist, fled Saudi Arabia after posting a tweet on the prophet's birthday that sparked more than 30,000 responses and several death threats. **The posting, which was later deleted, read: "I have loved things about you and I have hated things about you and there is a lot I don't understand about you ... I will not pray for you."**

More than 13,000 people joined a Facebook page titled "The Saudi People Demand the Execution of Hamza Kashgari". Clerics in Saudi Arabia called for him to be charged with apostasy, a religious offence punishable by death. Reports suggest that the Malaysian authorities intend to return him to his native country.

Kashgari's detention has triggered criticism by human rights groups of Malaysia's decision to arrest the journalist and of Interpol's cooperation in the process. Jago Russell, the chief executive of the British charity Fair Trials International, which has campaigned against the blanket enforcement of Interpol red notices, said: "Interpol should be playing no part in Saudi Arabia's pursuit of Hamza Kashgari, however unwise his comments on Twitter.

"If an Interpol red notice is the reason for his arrest and detention it would be a serious abuse of this powerful international body that is supposed to respect basic human rights (including to peaceful free speech) and to be barred from any involvement in religious or political cases."

He called on Interpol to stand by its obligations to fundamental human rights and "to comply with its obligation not to play any part in this case, which is clearly of a religious nature".

Interpol, which has 190 member countries, has a series of coloured notice systems that police forces around the world use to pass on requests for help. Contacted at its headquarters in Lyon, France, the organisation did not immediately reply to requests

for comment on the Kashgari case.

In response to past criticisms of the red notice system, it has said: "There are safeguards in place. The subject of a red notice can challenge it through an independent body, the commission for the control of Interpol's files (CCF)."

Last year Interpol was accused by Fair Trials International of allowing the system to be abused for political purposes when it issued a red notice for the arrest of the Oxford-based leader of an Asian separatist movement, Benny Wenda, who has been granted asylum and has lived in the UK since 2003.

[They also issued a red notice for Julian Assange, at the behest of the Swedish prosecutor. —A.B.]

Borgström rasar mot Assanges advokat

Advokaten sa att det finns ett politiskt tryck för att lyssna på kvinnan i våldtäktsmål. Nu slår den tidigare JämO tillbaka.

Nyheter24

2012-02-13

Okunnigt och okänsligt. Så sammanfattar målsägandebiträdet och tidigare Jämställdhetsombudsmannen Claes Borgström advokaten Per E Samuelsons uttalanden om hur det svenska rättssystemet behandlar våldtäktsfall.

– Att beskriva vad mina två klienter berättat för polisen som "ett skämt" är så okänsligt så jag vet inte vad, säger Borgström till Nyheter24.

Det var i en intervju med brittiska The Guardian som Samuelson försvarade sin klient, Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange, med att kritisera det svenska rättsväsendet. Han hävdade att det finns ett politiskt tryck att lyssna på kvinnorna vid våldtäktsfall och kallade hela processen för just "ett skämt".

– Det är okunnigt. Det finns inte några domare i Sverige som faller under något politiskt tryck. Sen är det dessutom så att han missar att det snarare är så att det ännu är för få kvinnor som anmäler— det finns ett stort mörkertal, säger Claes Borgström.

I sitt hopp att få ut sin version av fallet har Assange anlitat en PR-byrå i Sverige där Harald Ullman fått i uppgift att påverka medierna. Detta utöver det team av advokater som Wikileaksgrundaren har.

– Jag har aldrig tidigare hört talas om att en misstänkt anlitat en PR-byrå. Det talar sitt egna språk, säger Borgström.

Tror du att kommentarerna om Sverige från Assanges håll påverkat bilden av vårt rättsväsende?

– De som vet vad det handlar om tar ingen lärdom av uttalandena.

Den tidigare JämO vill i stället vända på kritiken från brittiskt håll mot Sverige. Han tycker att processen i Storbritannien tagit alldeles för lång tid.

– Man undrar ju vad de gör egentligen, det här borde ha tagit ett par månader, säger

han.

• *Viktor Adolfsson*

Assange ingen modern Robin Hood

Ulrika Knutson

Journalisten

14 februari 2012

Om ett par veckor kan vi ha Julian Assange i stan. Det blir ett muntert västgötaklimax. I Stockholm väntar ett kort förhör med åklagaren, som möjligen väljer att lägga ner åtalet. Varpå Assange kan lämna Sverige som en fri man, och dra så långt vägen räcker.

Om han däremot befinns skyldig till sexuellt ofredande med mera, så kommer han sannolikt att dömas till ett mindre straff, som han redan anses ha suttit av under de drygt 420 dagar han befunnit sig i husarrest i England. Utfallet blir detsamma. Julian Assange kan dra så långt vägen räcker.

Varför ska vi alls bry oss om Julian Assange? Visst är han en psykologisk gåta. Hur kan man vansköta sin ära, eller uttryckt på nyekonomiskt språk, sitt personliga varumärke, så till den milda grad? Grundaren av Wikileaks, som verkligen är ett fantastiskt projekt för yttrandefrihet, förvandlades efter sitt Sverigebesök till riddaren av den solkiga skepnaden, med en stråt kantad av spräckta kondomer. Sedan dess har han hyllats som global rättshaverist av idealistiska knäppstarar.

Han har febrilt kämpat för att framställa sig som martyr för den korrupta svenska rättvisan. Detta vore enbart skrattretande, om inte den svenska rättvisan faktiskt hjälpt honom på traven, helt i onödan.

Jag tänker bland annat på ett polisförhör med misstänkt jävsituation, på åklagarnas motstridiga bud och på att åklagaren var trög i starten och sjabblade bort en möjlighet att förhöra Assange medan han ännu befann sig i Sverige. [*Alltså, Assanges kritik av den svenska rättvisan är fel därför att det är rätt? —A.B.*] Allt detta buller har placerat den verkliga martyren i skuggan. Bradley Manning, som nu ska ställas inför krigsrätt i USA.

Medan Julian Assange har avverkat advokater på löpande band för **sin pseudosak**, har Wikileaks inte fullföljt sin utlovade hjälp till Manning, som verkligen behöver goda advokater. Manning hotas av livstids fängelse! För att han möjligen har läckt uppgifter om amerikanska krigsförbrytelser. För vad kan man annars kalla videon där USAs soldater prickar civila irakier från helikopter?

Enligt Daniel Domsheit-Berg har Wikileaks lovat Manning 100 000 dollar i rättshjälp, men hittills har man inte fått ihop mer än 15 200 dollar.

Julian Assange å sin sida fortsätter att slåss mot väderkvarnar. Kanske har han överklagat sig in i ett hörn. Alla experter tror att den engelska högsta domstolen inte kommer **att försvåra den svenska åklagarens arbete**— eller EUs interna rättspro-

cedur. Alltså finns det inget hinder för att britterna lämnar ut honom till Sverige.

Självklart ligger det i den svenska regeringens intresse att inte lämna honom vidare till USA, om nu den frågan skulle väckas. Assange har ju gjort sitt bästa för att misstänkliggöra regeringen på den punkten. Tyvärr har hans smutskastning av Sverige och svensk rättvisa varit rätt framgångsrik.

Julian Assange vill framstå som en modern Robin Hood, och spelar rollen som människorättskämpe och god granne till den tecknade familjen Simpson. Men i verkliga livet är han inte en god granne till Bradley Manning, han är skyldig sina advokater pengar, **låter sig uppvaktas av en antisemitisk debattör som Israel Shamir och applåderas av Rysslands Vladimir Putin. Assanges nästa projekt är en talkshow, enligt egen uppgift såld på licens till den ryska statstelevisionen! Planerade första gäster är Noam Chomsky och Tariq Ali.**

Den som vill kallas det fria ordets förkämpe och samtidigt lierar sig med Rysslands statliga television borde ha bitit sig i tummen för sista gången.

För ett par år sedan toppade Ryssland listan över mördade journalister. Det gör man inte längre. Däremot leder man ligan av misshandlade, lemlästade och tystade journalister. [*Vad?! – A.B.*]

Vad säger Wikileaks?

Kommentarer

Vilken krönika! Vilken oförmåga att skilja på sak och person, på huvudsak och bisak. Vilken otäck användning av *guilt by association*. "Självklart ligger det i den svenska regeringens intresse att inte lämna honom vidare till USA, om nu den frågan skulle väckas," skriver Ulrika Knutson. Så det har inte hänt förut? Kommer hon från något departement eller polis/åklagare? Jaså, ordförande i publicistklubben! Och förmår ändå inte skriva ett tydligt stöd för hans demokratiska och juridiska rättigheter. Vilken krönika.

— *Lars Johansson*

Menar Ulrika Knutson verkligen att hon vill att Sverige ska överlämna Julian Assange till USA? Det är lätt att tolka det hon skriver som så, vilket känns väldigt otrevligt.

Assange som person beskriver Knutson som "riddaren av den solkiga skepnaden, med en stråt kantad av spräckta kondomer", vilket känns mest som förtal. Jag skulle föreslå Ulrika Knutson att bistå rättsväsendet med sina uppgifter om hon anser sig sitta på sådana som kan vara nytta vid ett eventuellt åtal eller försvar.

Och har Ulrika Knutson på något sätt helt missat att USA har strypt alla sätt för Wikileaks att få in donationer vilket är orsaken till att Assange nu är skuldsatt upp över öronen och att det förstås gör det omöjligt att bidra med 100.000 dollar till Bradley Mannings försvar?

Sedan förstår jag inte heller att hon förlitar sig ensidigt på uppgifter från Daniel Domscheit-Berg (som förövrigt är felstavat i krönikan). En person som förstört bevis, saboterat för Wikileaks i samband med att han blev avstängd från organisationen, och tar alla chanser han får att svärta ner Wikileaks och Assanges rykte.

Och hur kommer det sig att Ulrika Knutson tycker så illa om Russia Today? Den må vara statsägd. Är det något fel i att vara statsägd? Har Ulrika Knutson tittat på

kanalen? Är det Assanges fel att "han låter sig uppvaktas", eller blir applåderad av tveksamma personer? Är det då också Englands fel att Kina applåderade deras hanterande av upploppen förra året?

Så här svarar RT på alla påhopp från massmedia om "Assange på Kremlin-TV":
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_qCnRUNCpE

— Erik Söderström

SvD: 2012-02-15

"28-åringen kan göra som Assange"

► Kan motsätta sig överlämning. Det är oklart när mannen, som misstänks ha knivskurit en tioårig flicka i Göteborg, kommer till Sverige.



Foto: Scanpix

Ny sajt ska rentvå Assange

DagensMedia.se

15 feb. 2012

Nordic News Network, som jobbar för att fria Wikileaks-grundaren Julian Assange, skapar en sajt som ska ge en "detaljerad redogörelse" över fallet.

Dagensmedia.se har tidigare berättat om Nordic News Network—ett svenskt nätverk arbetar för att få Julian Assange frikänd från anklagelserna om sexbrott. Bland gruppens medlemmar finns bland andra psykoanalytikern och debattören Rigmor Robért och Assanges svenska pr-representant Harald Ullman, vd på Ullman PR.

Enligt ett pressmeddelande från Ullman PR innehåller den nya sajten "en fallhistoria med en kronologisk redogörelse av de svenska anklagelserna och det brittiska utlämningsförfarandet".

Dessutom finns "protokollen från det ursprungliga polisförhör som innehåller väsentliga bevis som allvarligt underminerar den svenska åklagarens ställningstagande i fallet".

Madeleine Östlund

madeleine@dagensmedia.se

08-545 222 03

[Obs! Nordic News Network är en oberoende webbplats som tar upp diverse frågor med anknytning till Sverige och till Norden i stort. EN av dessa frågor är Assange-fallet. —A.B.]

Kommentarer

Assange måste möta propagandan

Jag antar att Julian Assange mer eller mindre är tvungen till detta med tanke på den kampanj som drivits mot honom här i Sverige bland annat genom twittverkampanjen "#prataomdet"

— *Katarina församling*

Vinnare 2011 i kategorin Årets Förnyare för twitterkampanjen #prataomdet.

Kampanjen #prataomdet kopplades till Julian Assange namn och rykte. Denna kampanj är ett ställningstagande för målsägarna i rättsprocessen. Målsägarnas advokat är delaktig i kampanjen. Om målsägarna blir anmälda för falsk tillvitelse vore det oetiskt att starta en kampanj mot falskanmälningar för våldtäkt och sexuellt ofredande med utgångspunkt i namnen på de anmälda. Lika oetisk är kampanjen #prataomdet. En propagandakampanj orkestrerad av målsägarsidan i en pågående rättsprocess. Nomineringen borde ha gått till Flashback, som avslöjade falskspelet bakom kampanjen.

— *Olof*

Skummis

Varje krona som läggs på att försöka rentvå honom genom PR och annat liknande skit talar mot hans oskuld.

— *Kalle*

Hmmm....

Ytterligare ett exempel på att många PR-konsulter är i total avsaknad av moral. Det spelar ingen roll huruvida Assange är skyldig eller oskyldig. Rättsprocesser är något som PR-konsulter borde ha vett att hålla sig ifrån. Förhoppningsvis slår detta tillbaka på Ullman själv.

— *Pjotr Szut*

Bra där

Det är uppenbart att det finns många märkligheter i dessa anklagelser. Och att någon svensk åklagare aldrig någonsin tidigare begärt någon utlämnad från ett annat land på så lösa bolliner.

— *Thomas R*

Förr och nu

Förr: Rentvådd = en domstol befinner mig icke skyldig.

Nu: Rentvådd = jag anlitar konsulter och advokater som lägger ut all dokumentation om mitt fall på nätet, inklusive detaljerad information om min motpart.

— *Joker*

Svar till Joker

Nu — Lobbyister och PR-folk som lägger ut kraftigt vinklade och subjektiva påståenden om fallet för att påverka en domstolsprocess till min egen fördel. Vi som trodde att egenmäktigt förfarande i rättsak var brottligt.....

— *Sixth*

Svar till Sixth

Du verkar inte veta vad du talar om din pajas. Att journalister, lobbyister, PR-folk och allsköns löst folk lägger ut kraftigt vinklade och subjektiva påståenden om rättsfall för att påverka en domstolsprocess är inget nytt. Göran Grosskopf skrev om detta redan för 30 år sen. Detta ska då inte påverka domstolen då dom skall fatta sitt beslut endast på vad som är visat i målet och inte på grundval av vad

någon journalistpajas eller pr-konsult skrivit. Det finns dom som haft framgång genom att driva sina fall i medier. Men domstolarna är mera uppmärksamma på det i dag så jag tror nog att dom i detta fall kommer att kunna hålla reda på vad som är relevant och inte.

— George H

Subject: Lite fakta
Date: 16 Feb 2012
From: Al Burke <editor@nnn.se>
Organisation: Nordic News Network
To: madeleine@dagensmedia.se

Madeleine Östlund,

Nordic News Network är en oberoende webbplats som tar upp diverse frågor med anknytning till Sverige. EN av dessa frågor är Assange-fallet. Andra får man ganska enkelt upptäcka genom att botanisera i webbplatsen, vars hemsida finns på:
<http://www.nnn.se>

Något "svenskt nätverk [som] arbetar för att få Julian Assange frikänd" är det inte. Vilket märkligt påhitt.

Hälsningar,

Al Burke
Ansvarig utgivare för NNN

[Obs! Inget svar från DagensMedia.]

Expressen: 2012-02-17

Ett fall för Ullman

Karin Olsson om ett smaklöst eldunderstöd till Julian Assange.

Det kommer ett trevligt litet mejl från Ullman PR. Jag uppmanas att gå in på en ny sajt för den som vill "förkovra sig i Assange-fallet". Där ska erbjudas "gedigna kunskaper i ämnet" på svenska. Vem vill inte förkovra sig, så jag följer instruktionen från Julian Assanges svenska PR-byrå.

Det är som om någon har rört vid Flashback med ett trollspö. En välredigerad och lättnavigerad hemsida med polisförhör, historik och länklister. Allt går ut på att visa hur "egendomligt", som Ullman PR skriver, detta fall är. Kvinnorna namnges och citat som berättar att en av dem var starkt attraherad av Assange lyfts fram redan på förstasidan. PR-byrån menar att sajten presenterar bevis som "allvarligt underminerar" åklagarens ställningstagande.

Vd:n Harald Ullman sa redan när han åtog sig uppdraget att Assange är oskyldig. Han får förstås jobba åt vem han vill. Men det ger Ullman PR dålig PR att föregripa en

rättsprocess. Det juridiska arbetet är alls inte heligt, utan ska granskas som allt annat. PR-byråer är bara inte särskilt lämpade för uppgiften.

Den där andra sajten som Assange brukade förknippas med, Wikileaks, är i behov av både pengar och goodwill. Det vore en verklig, och mer hedervärd, utmaning för Mr Ullman



Wikileaks founder Julian Assange appeared in "At Long Last Leave", The Simpsons' 500th episode

The Simpsons' 500th episode airs

The Simpsons has reached a major television milestone with the broadcast of its 500th episode on Sunday.

It saw the cartoon family exiled to a community of outsiders where they met Wikileaks founder Julian Assange.

Fox TV said Assange recorded his lines from the UK, where he is fighting extradition to Sweden over alleged sex offences— charges he denies.

The animated comedy is in its 23rd season, making it the longest-running prime-time scripted programme on TV.

The show is contracted to run for another two seasons.

In the 500th episode, entitled *At Long Last Leave*, the Simpsons are shown sneaking into a secret town hall meeting where they hear they are about to be thrown out of town.

They subsequently find a welcome in "The Outlands", where Assange is their neighbour.

Previous guest voices on the programme include former Prime Minister Tony Blair, graffiti artist Banksy and novelist Thomas Pynchon.

Once the show's 25th season has been completed, the number of episodes made will

stand at 559.

Expressen: 2012-02-22

Wikileaks hot om Assange utlämnas

LONDON. Hemliga regeringsdokument ska offentliggöras, ambassader och konsulat blockeras av demonstranter och svenska företag utsätts för en internationell bojkottningskampanj.

Så planerar Wikileaks— enligt organisationens egna interna dokument— att slå tillbaka mot Sverige om Julian Assange utlämnas till USA.

- Det här kommer att skada Sverige mycket mer än debatten om Muhammed-teckningarna, uppger en källa med insyn i Wikileaks planering.

De interna Wikileaksdokumenten beskriver planer på ett omfattande opinionsbildningsarbete för att förhindra en utlämning av Assange till USA.

Av den sammanfattning av promemorian som Expressens källor inom Wikileaks ger tidningen framgår:

"Att svenska myndigheter inte tar saken på allvar utan underlättar för den amerikanska regeringen gör att Sverige hamnar på listan över de länder som inte stöder öppenhet, individens rätt och mänskliga rättigheter. De försätter Sverige och landets rykte i stor fara och den svenska regeringen kommer att tvingas svara inför en global opinion som håller dem ansvariga för att människor runt om i världen hindras ta del av information som de har rätt till"

- Utlämnas han fruktar vi för hans liv, det ska Sverige betala ett högt pris för, hävdar en person med insyn i Wikileaks.

Wikileaks kritiker beskriver i dag organisationen som svårt skadeskjuten, dels på grund av de svenska anklagelserna mot Julian Assange om misstänkta sexbrott, men framför allt på grund av att Wikileaks finansiering strypts efter bojkott från amerikanska finansiella institut.

Assanges propagandasajt

Men flera av de åtgärder som listades i den Wikileaks-PM som Expressen fick se i december har sedan dess offentliggjorts eller redan blivit verklighet. Bland annat Assanges TV-intervjuer med internationella, USA-kritiska makthavare— och så sent som för några dagar sedan lanserades den propagandasajt som Assanges svenska PR-konsult Harald Ullman ligger bakom.

Av PM:n framgår också att Wikileaks planerar att starta ett stort forum bestående av

journalister, jurister och människorättsgrupper och inleda en "upplysningskampanj".

- Jag har inga kommentarer till uppgifter som ni fått från källor. Men det är väl ganska självklart att personer som stöder Julian Assange kommer att vidta åtgärder, så i går kväll Wikileaks talesman, Kristinn Hrafnsson, till Expressen.

Aktioner mot ambassader

Enligt den sammanfattning av den interna promemorian som Expressen tagit del av konstaterar Wikileaks ledning:

"Juridiskt görs ett utomordentligt stort arbete av vänner i Sverige för att bevisa att anklagelserna om sexuella övergrepp och våldtäkt är fabricerade och har dolda politiska motiv, samt att det finns svenska grupper som är direkt involverade i saken".

- Det handlar om polisen, personer inom media och politiker, uppger en person inom Wikileaks.

En rad aktioner som Wikileaks listar i det interna dokumentet är riktade mer direkt mot Sverige och svenska intressen:

Släppa hemligstämplade dokument om den svenska regeringen.

Omfattande global kampanj för bojkott av svenska produkter.

Aktioner mot svenska ambassader och konsulat.

- En del av åtgärderna går ut på att bilda mänskliga murar kring svenska ambassader och konsulat och försöka hindra svenska politiker och regeringstjänstemän från att kunna röra sig fritt, uppger Expressens sagesmän inom Wikileaks.

"Djävulska åtgärder"

Av den sammanfattning av promemorian som Expressens källor inom Wikileaks ger tidningen framgår:

"De grupper som är involverade i diskussionerna om vilka åtgärder som bör vidtas mot svenska myndigheter är inställda på att få den svenska regeringen och svenska beskickningar världen över att isoleras och att utsättas för så stora problem att makthavarna tvingas känna ett direkt ansvar för det som Assange utsätts för. Man har i detalj diskuterat de steg man ska ta för att omringa svenska ambassader i de flesta av världens huvudstäder och för att hindra svenska diplomater från att utföra sitt arbete."

I promemorian säger Wikileaks att påtryckningarna ska vridas upp "så långt det går" och att man inte är främmande för att vidta "djävulska åtgärder för att få den svenska regeringen att förstå att den är en partner i en kriminell handling".

Statministern Fredrik Reinfeldt vill inte kommentera uppgifterna:

- Jag säger inte någonting om detta, av det skälet att det används hela tiden i rättsprocessen och det vill jag inte vara en del av, säger han till Expressens Karl-Johan

Karlsson.

Av Christian Holmén och Christian Holmén
Publicerad 22 feb 2012 06:02

Expressen: 2012-02-22

Wikileaks: Carl Bildt är USA-informatör

LONDON. Wikileaks planerar en massiv smutskastningskampanj mot Sverige för att förhindra att den svenska regeringen går med på att utlämna organisationens frontfigur Julian Assange till USA.

I ett internt Wikileaks-dokument som Expressen tagit del av hotar Wikileaks att offentliggöra en hittills okänd amerikansk diplomatrapport där utrikesminister Carl Bildt pekas ut som informatör för USA sedan 1970-talet.

- Han kommer att tvingas avgå. Det kan innebära slutet på hans politiska karriär, hävdar en person med insyn i Wikileaks material och planering.

Carl Bildt, som i går var i London, ville då inte svara på Wikileaks anklagelse.

- Vi avvaktar med kommentarer. Vi vill se vad det är för dokument det handlar om innan vi kommenterar, sa i natt UD:s presschef Anders Jörle till Expressens Niklas Svensson.

På onsdagsmorgonen bloggade och twittrade utrikesministern om saken:

"Jaha. Nu väntar vi bara på att man också kommer att från att publicerar denna enligt deras mening ytterligt graverande rapport. Ty när det sker kommer denna del av den planerade "smutskastningskampanjen" snabbt att falla sönder och samman", skriver utrikesministern.

Expressen har tillgång till innehållet i en intern Wikileaks-promemoria.

I den listar organisationens ledning i detalj vilka åtgärder som ska vidtas om Julian Assange lämnas ut från Storbritannien till Sverige för att förhöras om de sexbrottsmisstankar som Expressen tidigare avslöjat.

Det handlar om en rad motåtgärder riktade mot svenska intressen som Wikileaks anser ingå i en konspiration riktad mot Wikileaks och Assange.

Wikileaks uppger sig ha tillgång till hittills okänd och ännu opublicerad amerikansk diplomatpost där det ska beskrivas hur Carl Bildt sedan 1973 fungerat som "informatör" åt USA.

- Det finns hemliga dokument som avslöjar att Bildt samarbetat med den amerikanska administrationen på ett sätt som strider mot svenska lagar, hävdar en person med insyn i Wikileaks material och planering.

- Dokumentet ska användas mot den svenska regeringen och Carl Bildt om Julian Assange utsätts för fara eller riskerar att utlämnas till USA.

Assanges rådgivare är, enligt Expressens uppgiftslämnare, övertygade om att den svenska regeringen redan gjort upp med amerikanska myndigheter om att lämna ut Assange till USA.

En person med insyn i Wikileaks säger till Expressen:

- Med all sannolikhet kommer Julian Assange att frias från sexbrottsmisstankarna, det är bara en fälla. Vad Assange fruktar är att han antingen med tvång kallas som vittne till rättegången mot den gripne soldaten och misstänkta Wikileaks-källan Bradley Manning, eller att han grips och överlämnas till amerikansk domstol för att ställas inför rätta för spionage mot USA.

Personen som pekats ut som Bildts ursprungliga kontaktperson är Karl Rove, amerikansk politisk konsult, för detta chefsrådgivare och vice stabschef hos USA:s förre president George W Bush.

I en lång intervju i senaste numret av den amerikanska tidskriften Rolling Stone återger Julian Assange precis de uppgifter som fanns i den interna Wikileaks-PM som Expressen fick se redan för två månader sedan.

Julian Assange vill inte intervjuas. Men Wikileaks talesman, Kristinn Hrafnsson, sa i går kväll till Expressen om det påstådda dokumentet om Carl Bildt.

- Det kommer att avslöjas snart. Men jag kan inte diskutera det just nu.

Han vill inte säga någonting om dokumentens ursprung:

- Jag kan bara bekräfta att vi har dokument som visar den nära relationen mellan Carl Bildt och insiders i Washington. Jag är säker på att uppgifterna snart kommer att göras tillgängliga för allmänheten, sa Hrafnsson.

Carl Bildt själv har aldrig gjort någon hemlighet av att han känner Karl Rove, de brukar "träffas regelbundet" och Bildt har beskrivit Rove som en av "mina äldsta vänner". Men Wikileaks interna PM går längre:

- Dokumenten listar tydligt vilken typ av "tjänster" Carl Bildt gjort USA, säger Expressens källa med insyn i Wikileaks planering.

*Av Christian Holmén och Christian Holmén
Publicerad 22 feb 2012 06:02*

Expressen: 2012-02-22

Carl Bildt sågar Wikileaks anklagelser

Carl Bildt pekats ut som informatör åt USA i en diplomatrapport som Wikileaks uppger

att man har, och hotar att publicera.

Nu kommenterar utrikesministern Expressens avslöjande:

"Medieuppgifter om att Wikileaks förbereder vad de kallar "en smutskastningskampanj". Bra att veta", skriver Carl Bildt på Twitter på onsdagsmorgonen.

Julian Assange befinner sig nu i England, men hotas av utlämning till Sverige där han misstänks för sexbrott.

Om Wikileaks-grundaren utlämnas så planerar Wikileaks en rad åtgärder för att påverka fallet.

I en intern Wikileaks-promemoria som Expressen tagit del av listas åtgärderna, som bland annat innefattar spridandet av en ännu opublicerad diplomatpost där det påstås att Carl Bildt varit informatör åt USA sedan 1973.

Expressen har sökt Carl Bildt för en kommentar om saken i går tisdag och på onsdagsmorgonen, men utrikesministern har inte gått att nå.

På onsdagsmorgonen skrev Bildt ett inlägg på engelska på Twitter där han länkar till Expressens artikel om saken:

"Medieuppgifter om att Wikileaks förbereder vad de kallar 'en smutskastningskampanj'. Bra att veta."

Bildt tar även upp Expressens avslöjande på sin blogg, Alla dessa dagar:

"Jaha. Nu väntar vi bara på att man också kommer att från att publicerar denna enligt deras mening ytterligt graverande rapport. Ty när det sker kommer denna del av den planerade 'smutskastningskampanjen' snabbt att falla sönder och samman", skriver Carl Bildt.

Av Oscar Julander

Publicerad 22 feb 2012 09:20

Expressen: 2012-02-22

Assange tror Sverige gjort upp med USA

LONDON. Julian Assange är övertygad om att hans liv är i fara om han utlämnas till Sverige. I flera intervjuer har han talat om sin skräck för att Sverige ska överlämna honom till USA— där han riskerar att åtalas för spioneri.

– Jag har inget förtroende för att det svenska rättssystemet är rättvist, säger Julian Assange till amerikanska magasinet Rolling Stone.

Assange har i över ett år slagits i brittiska domstolar för att stoppa en överföring av honom till Sverige och det svenska rättsväsendet. Han har begärts utlämnad av

Marianne Ny, överåklagare vid åklagarmyndighetens utvecklingscentrum i Göteborg, för att höras om misstänkta sexbrott mot två kvinnor under ett besök i Sverige i augusti 2010.

Assange har varit häktad i sin frånvaro sedan november 2010.

Han är misstänkt för en våldtäkt, två fall av sexuellt ofredande och ett fall av olaga tvång.

Två engelska domstolar har redan slagit fast att Assange ska utlämnas till Sverige.

Inom kort väntas ett slutgiltigt besked från den brittiska motsvarigheten till Högsta domstolen.

*Av Christian Holmén och Christian Holmén
Publicerad 22 feb 2012 06:02*

Bildt 'worried' over WikiLeaks smear plans

*The Local
23 Feb. 2012*

Swedish foreign minister Carl Bildt said on Thursday he is taking very seriously WikiLeaks' plans to launch a smear campaign against Sweden to stop the potential extradition of founder Julian Assange to the United States.

"I have noted what (daily) Expressen has written about Wikileaks preparing a smear campaign. You can imagine my thoughts on that," Bildt told the paper from a press conference in London.

According to an internal WikiLeaks memo reviewed by the paper, WikiLeaks is planning to release more classified documents, organize blockades of Swedish embassies and consulates as well as boycotts of Swedish companies.

"It worries me that there are those who pursue smear campaigns and if WikiLeaks does, that says more about WikiLeaks than anything else," said Bildt to Expressen.

However, Bildt also said that he was not worried about a document WikiLeaks claims to have in its possession which shows he acted as an informant for the US since the 1970s.

"I haven't got a clue what it could be about. But let's see if they have something to publish," said Bildt to the paper.

"If they do publish these documents we'll probably see a quick end to this story."

Assange is currently in Britain fighting extradition to Sweden where he is wanted for questioning on rape and sexual assault allegations, and WikiLeaks has long expressed

concern that if he is sent to Sweden, Stockholm would quickly send him on to the United States.

Washington is eager to lay hands on the WikiLeaks founder after the organization's publication of hundreds of thousands of classified US diplomatic files, and according to Expressen the group's "smear campaign" against Sweden would be aimed at blocking Assange's further extradition.

"Julian Assange will most probably be freed from the sex crime suspicions, because that is just a trap," the unnamed person with insight into WikiLeaks told Expressen on Wednesday.

Speaking on Thursday, Bildt also completely repudiated WikiLeaks' claims that US political consultant Karl Rove, a former adviser to President George W. Bush and someone who Bildt previously has referred to as "an old friend", had recruited him as an informant.

"No, of course he didn't. I know very many people around the globe. It is part of the duties of a foreign minister to brief other countries about sensitive topics," Bildt told Expressen.

AB: 2012-02-25

Staffan Heimerson: Jag läser just nu ...

... "Assange & Sweden. Alla protokollen från polisförhören" som välvilligt har läckts till mig. Häktningspromemorian innehåller förhör med de tre huvudrollsinnehavarna i Assangefallet samt med nio vittnen. Jag läser dem som ett filmmanus. Replik för replik. Det är som en Mankell en söndagskväll på fyran: svensk vardagsrealism. En lätt korkad groupie från förorterna blir betuttad i en narcissistisk världscelebritet. [*Obs! Jag känner inte till någon större narcissist inom svensk journalistik än just Heimerson. --A.B.*]. En politisk aktivist raggar upp honom. Det blir några slarvknall, kräftska, trångboddhet, intriger och polisanmälningar. Några reportrar virrar runt i handlingen som Dupond och Dupont i en Tintinfilm. Pliktskyldigt har polisen redovisat samlagens frekvens, längd och antalet orgasmer. Filmens folkliga titel: "En sprucken kondom." Det blir ingen Oscar men den visar att tanken på åtal om våldtäkt mot Julian Assange är idioti. Lägg ner målet. Det drar löje över svensk vardag.

<http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/kolumnister/staffanheimerson/article14429286.ab>

Ämne: PRESS RELEASE
Datum: 28 Feb 2012
Från: Sunshine Press <sunshinepress@this.is>

1) WIKILEAKS' STATEMENT — ASSANGE INDICTMENT

STRATFOR EMAILS: US HAS ISSUED SEALED INDICTMENT AGAINST JULIAN ASSANGE

Confidential emails obtained from the US private intelligence firm Stratfor show that the United States Government has had a secret indictment against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange for more than 12 months.

Fred Burton, Stratfor's Vice-President for Counterterrorism and Corporate Security, is a former Deputy Chief of the Department of State's (DoS) counterterrorism division for the Diplomatic Security Service (DSS).

In early 2011, Burton revealed in internal Stratfor correspondence that a secret Grand Jury had already issued a sealed indictment for Assange: "Not for Pub— We have a sealed indictment on Assange. Pls protect." (375123) **According to Burton: "Assange is going to make a nice bride in prison. Screw the terrorist. He'll be eating cat food forever."** (1056988). A few weeks earlier, following Julian Assange's release from a London jail, where he had been remanded as a result of a Swedish prosecutor's arrest warrant, **Fred Burton told SkyNews: "extradition [to the US is] more and more likely"**. (373862).

Emails from Fred Burton reveal that the US Government employs the same counterterrorism strategy against Julian Assange and WikiLeaks as against Al Qaeda: **"Take down the money. Go after his infrastructure. The tools we are using to nail and de-construct Wiki are the same tools used to dismantle and track aQ [Al Qaeda]. Thank Cheney & 43 [former US President George W. Bush]. Big Brother owns his liberal terrorist arse."** (1067796)

Ten days after the CIA reportedly assassinated Osama bin Laden, Burton writes in an email sent to Stratfor's "Secure" mailing list that he "can get access to the materials seized from the OBL [Osama bin Laden] safe house." (1660854)

Burton states: "Ferretting out [Julian Assange's] confederates is also key. Find out what other disgruntled rogues inside the tent or outside [sic]. Pile on. Move him from country to country to face various charges for the next 25 years. But, seize everything he and his family own, to include every person linked to Wiki." (1056763)

Along with the FBI, the Diplomatic Security Service and the Department of Defense (DoD) form a multi-agency US Government outfit seeking to criminally indict and prosecute WikiLeaks and Julian Assange. According to the Department of State, the DSS handles the investigation of all leads that involve the DoS and assists the DoD in forensic analysis of hard drives seized by the US Government in its ongoing criminal investigation.

Burton also says he "would pursue [c]onspiracy and [p]olitical [t]errorism charges and declassify the death of a source someone which [he] could link to Wiki" (1074383). Burton's strategy is to: "[b]ankrupt the arsehole first," Burton states, "ruin his life. Give him 7-12 yrs for conspiracy." (1057220)

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange said: "For over a year now, the US Attorney General Eric Holder has been conducting a "secret" Grand Jury investigation into WikiLeaks. This neo-McCarthyist witch hunt against WikiLeaks may be Mr Holder's defining legacy. Any student of American history knows that secret justice is no justice at all.

Justice must be seen to be done. Legitimate authority arises out of the informed consent of the governed, not Eric Holder's press secretary. Secret Grand Juries with secret indictments are apparently Eric Holder's preferred method of dealing with publishers who hold his administration to account. Eric Holder has betrayed the legacy of Madison and Jefferson. He should drop the case or resign. Should he continue, however, the Obama administration may not— Democrats and Republicans alike believe in the right to tell the truth."

As early as June 2010, after the release of the Collateral Murder video but prior to the Afghan War Diaries release, the emails talk of a sealed indictment. In an email conversation between Shane Harris, a National Security journalist, and Burton, Harris is surprised that Assange was reported to be attending a Las Vegas Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) conference. Burton remarks: "As a foreign national, we could revoke [Julian Assange's] travel status and deport. Could also be taken into custody as a material witness. We COULD have a sealed indictment and lock him up. Depends upon how far along the military case is" (391504). Julian Assange cancelled his appearance at the IRE conference due to security concerns.

In another email to Stephen Feldhaus, Stratfor legal counsel, about Ronald Kessler, a "pro-FBI journalist", Burton remarks: "I look forward to Manning and Assange facing a bajillion-thousand counts [of espionage]."

In July 2010 alleged WikiLeaks source Bradley Manning was moved from Camp Arifjan, Kuwait to the Quantico Brig in the Military District of Washington at the request of Maj. Gen. Terry Wolff, then Commanding General of the 1st Armored Division/US Division— Center in Iraq.

Wolff requested Manning's move, the Pentagon reported, "due to a potentially lengthy pre-trial confinement because of the complexity of the charges and an ongoing investigation." Three days before Manning arrived at Quantico Brig, Burton wrote to George Friedman, Stratfor CEO and founder:

"We probably asked the ASIS [Australian Secret Intelligence Service] to monitor Wiki coms and email, after the soldier from Potomac was nabbed. So, it's reasonable to assume we probably already know who has done it. The delay could be figuring out how to declassify and use the Aussie intel on Wiki... **The owner [Julian Assange] is a peacenik. He needs his head dunked in a full toilet bowl at Gitmo.**" (402168)

The GI Files: <http://wikileaks.org/the-gifiles.html>

Please donate: <http://shop.wikileaks.org/donate>

WHO TO GO TO FOR COMMENT

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2) CENTER FOR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS' STATEMENT

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CCR Condemns Reported Sealed Indictment Against WikiLeaks Founder Julian Assange

Leak of Private Intelligence Firm Documents Confirm Existence of Secret Indictment by Secret Grand Jury

February 28, 2012, New York— Leaks published today from Stratfor, a private intelligence corporation, indicate the United States Department of Justice has issued a secret, sealed indictment against Julian Assange, the founder of Wikileaks. In response, the Center for Constitutional Rights issued the following statement:

A sealed indictment against Julian Assange would underscore the very thing Wikileaks has been fighting against: abuses the government commits in an environment of secrecy and expansive, reflexive calls for "national security." From the shocking, inhumane treatment of Bradley Manning, to secret grand jury proceedings, to Stratfor's apparent knowledge of the existence of a sealed indictment before either Mr. Assange

or the American public had such knowledge, the government's conduct in this case reveals why more transparency, not more secrecy, is essential. This would also mark perhaps the first time a journalist has been prosecuted for allegedly receiving and publishing "classified" documents. Indicting Julian Assange would represent a dramatic assault on the First Amendment, journalists, and the public's right to know.

Rather than promoting transparency as promised, the Obama administration has aggressively pursued whistleblowers and dissenters, launching Espionage Act prosecutions twice as many times as all previous administrations in the last century combined. Attorney General Eric Holder should rethink this dangerous course. Instead of pursuing Julian Assange, Mr. Holder should investigate the serious crimes and abuse of government authority exposed by Wikileaks.

The Center for Constitutional Rights legally represents Wikileaks and Mr. Assange in the Bradley Manning hearings.

The Center for Constitutional Rights is dedicated to advancing and protecting the rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Founded in 1966 by attorneys who represented civil rights movements in the South, CCR is a non-profit legal and educational organization committed to the creative use of law as a positive force for social change. Visit www.ccrjustice.org. Follow @theCCR.

Revealed: US plans to charge Assange

*Philip Dorling
Sydney Morning Herald
February 29, 2012*

"If I thought I could switch this dickhead off without getting done I don't think I'd have too much of a problem." ... Stratfor's Chris Farnham on Assange.

UNITED STATES prosecutors have drawn up secret charges against the WikiLeaks founder, Julian Assange, according to a confidential email obtained from the private US intelligence company Stratfor.

In an internal email to Stratfor analysts **on January 26 last year**, the vice-president of intelligence, Fred Burton, responded to a media report concerning US investigations targeting WikiLeaks with the comment: "We have a sealed indictment on Assange."

He underlined the sensitivity of the information— apparently obtained from a US government source— with warnings to "Pls [please] protect" and "Not for pub[lication]".

Mr Burton is well known as an expert on security and counterterrorism with close ties to the US intelligence and law enforcement agencies. **He is the former deputy chief of the counter-terrorism division of the US State Department's diplomatic security service.**

Stratfor, whose headquarters are in Austin, Texas, provides intelligence and analysis to corporate and government subscribers. On Monday, WikiLeaks began releasing more

than 5 million Stratfor emails which it said showed "how a private intelligence agency works, and how they target individuals for their corporate and government clients".

The Herald has secured access to the emails through an investigative partnership with WikiLeaks.

The news that US prosecutors drew up a secret indictment against Mr Assange more than 12 months ago comes as the Australian awaits a British Supreme Court decision on his appeal against extradition to Sweden to be questioned in relation to sexual assault allegations.

Mr Assange, who has not been charged with any offence in Sweden, fears extradition to Stockholm will open the way for his extradition to the US on possible espionage or conspiracy charges in retaliation for WikiLeaks's publication of thousands of leaked US classified military and diplomatic reports.

Last week the US Army Private Bradley Manning was committed to face court martial for 22 alleged offences, including "aiding the enemy" by leaking classified government documents to WikiLeaks.

In December the Herald revealed Australian diplomatic cables, declassified under freedom of information, confirmed WikiLeaks was the target of a US Justice Department investigation "unprecedented both in its scale and nature" and suggested that media reports that a secret grand jury had been convened in Alexandria, Virginia, were "likely true".

The Australian embassy in Washington reported in December 2010 that the Justice Department was pursuing an "active and vigorous inquiry into whether Julian Assange can be charged under US law, most likely the 1917 Espionage Act".

In recent answers to written parliamentary questions from the Greens senator Scott Ludlam, the former foreign affairs minister Kevin Rudd indicated Australia had sought confirmation that a secret grand jury inquiry directed against Mr Assange was under way.

Mr Rudd said "no formal advice" had been received from US authorities but **acknowledged the existence of a "temporary surrender" mechanism that could allow Mr Assange to be extradited from Sweden to the US.** He added that Swedish officials had said Mr Assange's case would be afforded "due process".

The US government has repeatedly declined to confirm or deny any reported details of the WikiLeaks inquiry, beyond the fact that an investigation is being pursued.

The Stratfor emails show that the WikiLeaks publication of hundreds of thousands of US diplomatic cables triggered intense discussion within the "global intelligence" company.

In the emails, an Australian Stratfor "senior watch officer", Chris Farnham, advocated revoking Mr Assange's Australian citizenship, adding: "I don't care about the other leaks but the ones he has made that potentially damage Australian interests upset me. If I thought I could switch this dickhead off without getting done I don't think I'd have too much of a problem."

But Mr Farnham also referred to a conversation with a close family friend who he said knew one of the Swedish women who had made allegations of sexual assault against Mr Assange, and added: "There is absolutely nothing behind it other than prosecutors that are looking to make a name for themselves."

While some Stratfor analysts decried what they saw as Mr Assange's "clear anti-Americanism", others welcomed the leaks and debated WikiLeaks's longer-term impact on secret diplomacy and intelligence.

Stratfor's director of analysis, Reva Bhalla, observed: "WikiLeaks itself may struggle to survive but the idea that's put out there, that anyone with the bandwidth and servers to support such a system can act as a prime outlet of leaks. [People] are obsessed with this kind of stuff. **The idea behind it won't die.**"

Stratfor says it will not comment on the emails obtained by WikiLeaks. The US embassy has also declined to comment.

<http://www.smh.com.au/technology/technology-news/revealed-us-plans-to-charge-assange-20120228-1u14o.html>

SvD: 2012-02-29

"Snabb rundgång i Assanges filosofi"

Ett sätt att förstå Wikileaks är som en konspiration för att ta död på världens konspirationer. Julian Assanges självbiografi är spännande men tillför inte så många nyheter. Det är en ojämn bok med otydlig avsändare, skriver Sam Sundberg.

Bilden av Julian Assange gick från hjälte till fundamentalistisk hackare till sociopatisk playboy inom loppet av några månader 2010. När hans organisation Wikileaks avslöjade korrupktion och krigsförbrytelser betraktades han som en informations-ålderns Robin Hood och New York Times och Guardian sällade sig till beundrarskaran.

Men snart kom invändningen att han är en farlig fiende till den västerländska världshegemonin och framträdande amerikanska politiker förespråkade att han borde jagas och oskadliggöras. Därefter: de svenska sexbrottsanklagelserna.

Medan Assange **klamrat sig fast i chesterfieldfåtöljerna i en engelsk herrgård** för att slippa utlämnas till det laglösa landet Sverige (som han vid sitt besök här hyllade för dess rättstraditioner) har hans image förvridits så att han mest liknar en narcissistisk rättshaverist. Det är med andra ord på tiden att vi får höra Julian Assanges egen syn på sitt liv och värv, och boken "Memoarer är prostitution" är en intressant men problematisk inblick i den vithårige it-schamanens huvud.

Biografen är skriven i första person och Julian Assange står som författare. **Men faktum är att han har tagit sin hand från boken efter att ha läst det första utkastet. Flera gånger under läsningen blir jag således irriterad på hans självförhärlikande tonfall, bara för att komma på att han själv inte skrivit eller godkänt texten, det har en skotsk författare vid namn Andrew O'Hagan gjort, baserat på 50 timmar intervjuer.**

Att läsa denna icke-auktoriserade självbiografi är som att försöka skapa en personlig relation med en buktalardocka. [Så sant som sagt, varför denna recension bygger på en falsk premiss. —A.B.]

Julian Assange kallas ibland för konspirationsteoretiker och det är även så han framställs i boken. Men medan hans fiender använder begreppet som ett skällsord betyder det i Assanges fall att **han har grubblat över hur konspirationer uppstår, vilka intressen de tjänar, och hur man bäst underminerar dem. Han kallar själv Wikileaks för "folkets egna underrättelsetjänst" och ett sätt att förstå organisationen är som en konspiration för att ta död på världens konspirationer. Genom att avslöja konspirationernas lögn hoppas Julian Assange kunna ta ifrån dem deras makt.**

Boken är full av funderingar kring just makt, hemligheter och informationsflöden. I de mer esoteriska passagerna får vi veta att Julian Assange vill utforska "den moraliska spännvidden inom kvantmekaniken" och "sticka hål på verklighetens väv". Andra delar dryper av galla: "En tidningsjournalists högfärd fyller samma funktion som parfymen horor använder: den är ett sätt att slippa känna stanken av sig själv."

Advokater kallas för tjuvar, journalister för sorgliga, nonchalanta idioter. Mest av alla avskyr han New York Times före detta chefredaktör Bill Keller, och att döma av den kolumn tidningsmannen skrev för en vecka sedan— "Wikileaks, a post-script"— så är känslorna besvarade.

För den som följt dramatiken kring Wikileaks och Assange i pressen är det inte mycket nytt som framkommer i boken. Hans barndom i Australien skildras schablonartat som en "Tom Sawyer-uppväxt", men ungdomsåren förpestas av en man med anknytningar till sekten Familjen, som jagar Julian Assange och hans mor. Redan där, noterar han, får han en smak av den förföljelsetmani som följt honom genom livet.

När Assange fick sin första dator, en Commodore 64, öppnades en ny värld. Med hjälp av ett telefonmodem inledde han en karriär som hackare, och ruset av att krångla sig in i system som han inte borde ha tillträde till är välbekant för många av oss som är av samma generation och fortfarande får en adrenalinrusch när vi hör det (numer obsoleta) pipande och sedan kraschande ljudet av ett modem som får kontakt. Han dömdes för hackande, han startade en datasäkerhetsfirma, han pluggade lite och startade så småningom organisationen som skulle bli Wikileaks.

Vad gäller privatlivet, där man kunnat hoppas på bland annat lite insikter i hans relation till kvinnor, informeras vi summariskt om att han har en son och att "det finns andra barn vars mammor jag har tyckt om". Episoderna är skissartade, Andrew O'Hagan har inte gjort några oberoende efterforskningar för att kunna levandegöra platser, människor och möten. Det här är varken en innerlig, utlämnande memoar eller en välresearchad biografi.

Att träda in i Assanges tankevärld är spännande, men snabbt blir det rundgång i filosoferandet. Högravande information-är-frihet-tugg varvas med välvässade små formuleringar som "De flesta organisationer lever på makt och förbindelser och försvarar sig med marknadsföring" och "Vänskap räcker till ungefär nio timmars obetalt arbete".

Det är med andra ord en ojämn bok med otydlig avsändare och har man läst Julian Assange-porträtten i The New Yorker och Rolling Stone (båda finns som gratisläsning på webben) tillför den inte mycket. Förlaget Canongate betalade över fyra miljoner

kronor för rätten att skriva om en av världens mest uppmärksammade män. Att den ombytliga nätaktivisten skulle blotta sin själ var det kanske ingen som trodde, men oavsett hans nycker borde de ha kunnat klämma ur sig något mer helgjutet.

DN: 2012-02-29 (upprepas på flera sidor under flera dagar)

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Naken i sitt rättshaveri

► **Assanges självbiografi.** Med denna bok blir det tydligt att Assange är en djupt problematisk person.

LEDARE



I solkad rustning

► **Dagens huvudledare.** Julian Assange krumbukter blir allt märkligare.

DN: 2012-02-29

Julian Assange: "Memoarer är prostitution"

Julian Assanges biografi börjar som en normal levnadsteckning men övergår snart i ett genant babbel, skriver Jens Liljestrand.

Den verkligt geniala komiken i BBC:s redan klassiska humorserie "The office" uppstår inte i de scener där David Brent interagerar, utan där han är ensam. Den sjukligt narcissistiske chefen Brent (Ricky Gervais) sitter bakom sitt skrivbord och pratar i plågsamt utdragna tagningar rakt in i kameran. Ingen avbryter, ingen klipper, ingen annan syns i bild. Tittaren möter David Brent ofiltrerad, naken, framställd precis så som han vill framstå. Det på samma gång hjärtskärande och sinnessjukt roliga ligger därför inte i det han säger, utan i att han säger det; i Brents naiva omedvetenhet om att det som kameran registrerar inte är en självsäker och dynamisk chef, utan en odräglig, pompös idiot.

Att jag gång på gång under läsningen av Julian Assanges självbiografi "Memoarer är prostitution" får David Brents malande röst i huvudet, är knappast ett gott tecken.

Det finns många åsikter om Assange, den fyrtioårige australiske programmeraren och internetaktivisten som blev världsberömd över en natt i egenskap av grundare och talesman för Wikileaks. När jag talar med personer inom den internetaktivistiska

rörelsen får jag bilden av en man vars rockstjärnestatus— på sistone i kraftigt dalande— främst blåstes upp av kändisfixerade "gammelmedier". Medan han alltid har setts med viss skepsis av dem som snarare velat fokusera på Wikileaks och den nya tidsanda av information, transparens och demokrati som det manifesterar.

Det är lönlöst att på det här utrymmet försöka reda ut den komplicerade härvan kring Assange och hans organisation. Den får nya dimensioner varje vecka, nu senast med det påstådda hotet om att läcka komprometterande uppgifter om utrikesminister Carl Bildt och Expressens uppgifter om att Wikileaks har kartlagt svenska journalister.

Till raden av de paradoxer som omger berättelsen om Julian Assange kan nu läggas hans självbiografi, som når offentligheten i form av— vad annars!— en piratkopia. Assange ska ha skrivit kontrakt på boken för ett mångmiljonbelopp i syfte att lösa skulderna till sina advokater och låtit sig intervjuas av spökskrivaren Andrew O'Hagan (som dock inte finns omnämnd någonstans i den svenska utgåvan). Sedan går uppgifterna isär om vad som inträffat; klart är dock att Assange inte har godkänt den utgivna versionen och med juridiska medel har försökt stoppa den. "Memoarer är prostitution" är alltså något för genren så ovanligt som en icke-auktoriserad självbiografi.

Den relativt tunna och snabbblästa boken är i ungefär hundra sidor en ganska traditionell levnadsteckning, där huvudpersonens barndom och uppväxt i Australien skildras flyhänt och engagerande. Pojken växte upp hos sin mamma och lärde först senare känna sin far. En av mammans pojkvänner, med vilken hon fick sitt andra barn, var medlem i en galen sekt och började jaga familjen. Berättelsen om hur den lilla familjen tvingades bila kors och tvärs över kontinenten, på flykt undan den stalkande expojkvännen, blir en på sätt och vis gripande prolog till den senare historien om den vuxne Assanges nomadtillvaro.

Den unge mannen växer på 80-talet upp till en duktig programmerare och hackare, döms för dataintrång, blir tidigt pappa och hamnar i vårdnadstvist, pluggar som ung medelålders fysik och matematik och startar som trettiofemåring Wikileaks. Men historien om den förföljande styvfadern fortsätter eka genom boken, där stråken av auktoritetshat, paranoia och flyktbehov för varje sida växer sig starkare.

Det som börjar som en ganska alldaglig självbiografi glider helt enkelt över— det finns inget snällare sätt att säga det på— i rättshaveristiskt babbel. Det är, och har alltid varit, fruktansvärt synd om Julian Assange. Det finns till slut nästan ingen som inte har svikit honom, ingen som inte är korrumberad av makten, ingen som ger honom den uppskattning han förtjänar.

Ett exempel: i ett tidigt skede avslöjade Wikileaks dokument som visar på korruption och maktmissbruk i Kenya. För denna berömvärda gärning fick de ett fint pris av Amnesty. Detta pris nämns endast i förbigående, på en rad. I stället väljer Assange att gräva ner sig i det otroligt irriterande faktum att författaren Michaela Wrong, författare till en regimkritisk reportagebok om Kenya, hade mage att känna sig förolämpad när Wikileaks utan att fråga lade upp en pdf på hennes bok på sin hemsida.

Särskilt starkt är hatet mot tidningen The Guardian, vars förräderi ägnas ett helt kapitel. "Jag föraktar dem inte", skriver Assange om journalisterna (efter att några rader tidigare ha jämfört dem med horor). "Däremot sörjer jag, och hoppas de gör

detsamma, över hur deras övertygelsers ljus slocknar i ett sista försök att brinna.”

Just så uppskruvat patetisk är tonen. Den uppenbart litteraturintresserade Assange citerar såväl Shakespeare (”det är i vildmarken som ett djur lär känna sina verkliga vänner”) och Milton, och hänvisar flera gånger till Solzjenitsyn, i den grandiosa framställningen av sig själv som en förföljd visionär, omgiven av fega uslingar vars otacksamhet är bottenlös.

Sin tydligaste referenspunkt har han dock i Bibeln: ”Den ende Jesus jag bryr mig om är han som förbereder sitt uppror genom att äta bär i fyrtio dagar och stirra djävulens frestelser i ansiktet”, heter det på ett ställe. När New York Times chefredaktör Bill Keller förråder och smutskastar Wikileaks inför publiceringen av Irakloggarna, likställs han med en lärjunge som svikit sin Messias— ”Tuppen gol tre gånger”, konstaterar författaren sorgset.

Och våldtäktsanklagelserna? I beskrivningen av händelserna i Sverige i augusti 2010 är det i ena stunden en konspiration av CIA som ligger bakom, i nästa ”statsfeminismen”, som kopplas till det svenska beslutet att skicka trupper till Afghanistan på grund av talibanernas behandling av kvinnor. Det politiska är alltid personligt för stackars kärlekstörstande Assange, som ju bara ville vara med om ”något fint nu när allt annat var så dystert”.

Med denna märkliga, lika fascinerande som genanta bok, blir det tydligt att Assange är en djupt problematisk person. Att han har försökt stoppa utgivningen är i sammanhanget ett friskhetstecken. Att han misslyckats och nu står lika naken som de makthavare han velat avslöja, är själva definitionen av poetisk rättvisa.

DN: 2012-02-29

Lars Linder:

Uppgifterna pekar på ett besvärande mönster i kraftfältet kring Wikileaks

Det är svårt att förstå att det är bara ett och ett halvt år sedan Wikileaks började läcka amerikanska diplomatdokument i stor skala. Världen höll andan medan Julian Assange, makthavarnas fiende och mediernas nya hjälte nummer ett, tog steget från hackervärldens källarmörker ut i strålkastarljuset.

Det som utspelats kring honom sedan dess hade räckt för att fylla ett par liv, och spelplanen har kastats över ända både två och tre gånger. Men om CIA haft planer på att sabotera Wikileaks trovärdighet så har Assange själv gjort en del av jobbet åt dem.

I går rapporterade Expressen att Wikileaks kartlagt svenska journalister, däribland Publicistklubbens ordförande Ulrika Knutson. Bilder har smygtagits och hemliga uppgifter från olika myndigheters databaser har samlats in i hopp om att bekräfta misstanken att de fått betalt för att smutskasta Assange.

Om uppgifterna stämmer pekar de på ett återkommande, alltmer besvärande mönster i det ständigt vibrerande kraftfältet kring Wikileaks karismatiska grundare. Hans avhoppade partner Daniel Domscheit-Berg vittnade i boken ”Wikileaks” om hans

starkt narcissistiska drag som lätt slår över i ren konspirationsnoja. Assange tycks producera fiender på löpande band, och främst bland dem är ofta gårdagens vänner—mycket riktigt skriver Jens Liljestrand i artikeln här intill att tidningen Guardian, nyss allierad, nu blivit ett av hans främsta hatobjekt.

Och inte för att man måste tro medierna om allt gott, men Assange får ursäkta: om han tror att Ulrika Knutson och Guardian står på CIA:s lönelista så bekräftar han alla illasinnade rykten om en fatal omdömesbrist.

Egentligen skulle ju alla vettiga människor önska att Wikileaks kunde bli en pålitlig kanal för all världens whistleblowers, helt nyss hoppades många också på Julian Assange själv som ett slags global Bamsefigur med krafter att ensam besegra övermaktens hemlighetsmakeri.

Men någon borde upplysa honom om att den som är väldigt smart också måste vara väldigt klok, annars får man inte världen på sin sida och Krösus Sork slipper undan.

Time for Government to Stand Ground and Protect Assange

*Jennifer Robinson
Sydney Morning Herald
February 29, 2012*

WikiLeaks's latest release of confidential emails obtained from the US private intelligence firm Stratfor indicate the US Department of Justice has issued a secret, sealed indictment against Julian Assange. While the Department of Justice has refused to confirm the existence of the Assange indictment— it refuses to comment upon any alleged sealed indictment— the Stratfor email is the best confirmation we have of the long-stated concerns about the risk of Assange's extradition to the US to face criminal prosecution for his publishing activities with WikiLeaks.

The email was from Fred Burton, Stratfor's vice-president for counterterrorism and corporate security, and former deputy chief of the Department of State's counterterrorism division for the Diplomatic Security Service. On Australia Day last year, Burton revealed in internal Stratfor correspondence: "Not for Pub— We have a sealed indictment on Assange. Pls protect."

Following the announcement by the US Attorney-General, Eric Holder, of criminal investigation into Assange in December 2010, the US government has refused to give further comment on its plans to prosecute him. The grand jury is secret. Our appeals to military courts for access to the Bradley Manning proceedings were denied. The Australian government has consistently claimed to have no information from the US as to whether they will prosecute Assange and seek his extradition.

The question we must now ask: if a Texas private intelligence firm knew of the sealed indictment for more than a year— why doesn't our government? Did the government know? Was its denial of knowledge dishonest?

It is rather ironic, and an embarrassing indictment of the US-Australia alliance, if the

Australian government learnt this information, as we have, through a WikiLeaks release. Indicting Assange represents a dramatic assault on the First Amendment, journalists and the public right to know. Assange, recently awarded the Walkley Award for most outstanding contribution to journalism, faces criminal prosecution—marking the first time a journalist has been prosecuted for allegedly receiving and publishing "classified" documents.

The Australian government must rectify the damage to its international reputation by our failure so far to acknowledge—and protect—our most celebrated journalist and be mindful of the impact it will have on free speech in Australia and around the world. The Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, has bent to US pressure on WikiLeaks and wrongfully accused an Australian citizen of illegal conduct, and the former attorney-general Robert McClelland pondered cancelling Assange's passport but Kevin Rudd, as foreign minister, told the pair to back off. He may be on the backbench now, but Rudd was right.

The correct legal analysis, provided by other lawyers in Parliament, Malcolm Turnbull and the shadow attorney-general George Brandis, SC, is that **publication of classified material of foreign powers— even friendly ones— is not a crime in Australia; nor is it a crime in the US.** That is also the legal advice of the Australian Federal Police, who concluded Assange had committed no crime here. Prominent academics in the US agree Assange is entitled to the protections of the First Amendment.

But any constitutional challenge for Assange will come years down the track. The Stratfor emails disclose a strategy: "move him from country to country to face various charges for the next 25 years" and "[bankrupt] the asshole first ... ruin his life. Give him 7-12 years for conspiracy".

What happens to Assange in the US in the meantime? We need only look to the treatment of WikiLeaks's alleged source, Manning, who has been kept in degrading conditions, including solitary confinement, for more than 18 months pending trial. According to Burton, in another Stratfor email disclosed yesterday: "Assange is going to make a nice bride in prison. Screw the terrorist. He'll be eating cat food forever."

The Australian government must learn from its mistakes in the David Hicks case and act now. Assange is an Australian citizen and we must protect him, and protect our country from international condemnation for our failure to act, knowing the treatment Assange will receive in the US.

National sovereignty and the protection of Australians abroad have so far been sacrificed to US interests in this case. A real friend of the US will, at times, criticise, as all friends must. Australia must ask serious questions of the US about its plans to prosecute Assange. Australia should exercise diplomatic protection and seek undertakings regarding his treatment. Assange deserves the protection any of us as Australian citizens deserve. What if it were your son or brother or friend? Would you feel satisfied with our government's response?

In the case of Schapelle Corby, the former attorney-general Philip Ruddock sent senior lawyers to Indonesia on our government's behalf to arrange her defence. They said, "the fact is, she is an Australian national in trouble overseas, and the consequences are extremely severe, so there just wasn't any hesitation". Assange is surely as worthy of

our protection as the "Bali boy" who, having admitted drug possession, received a phone call from Ms Gillard and the highest level of consular assistance. Assange has not received anywhere near that support. Quite the opposite.

Whether or not the government knew before, it certainly knows now. The Prime Minister, the Attorney-General and the new foreign minister must take action. Nicola Roxon, the Attorney-General, campaigned hard in opposition to bring Hicks home, urging the Howard government "to take urgent action to protect this Australian citizen they have so far neglected for such a long period of time". She has so far remained silent. But if she can go into bat for Hicks, she can go into bat for Assange. The government must protect Assange, not just because of who he is, but because he is Australian. And, as the Stratfor emails confirm, an Australian is at risk.

• *Jennifer Robinson is a London-based human rights lawyer. You can follow her on Twitter @suigenerisjen.*

STRATFOR SYDNEY-BASED WATCH OFFICER CHRIS FARNHAM CONNECTION TO SWEDISH WOMAN IN ASSANGE CASE

*WikiLeaks
28th February 2012*

On February 27, 2012, WikiLeaks began publishing The Global Intelligence Files, over five million e-mails from the private intelligence organization Stratfor, a US company based in Texas. Confidential emails obtained from the US private intelligence firm, Stratfor, reveal that **the firm's Sydney based watch officer, says he has connections with a friend of one of the Swedish women in the Assange case.**

In a late 2010 email exchange with George Friedman, Stratfor CEO and founder, Farnham writes, **"BTW, close family friend in Sweden who knows the girl that is pressing charges tells me that there is absolutely nothing behind it other than prosecutors that are looking to make a name for themselves. My friend speaks rather disparagingly about the girl who is claiming molestation.** I also think the whole rape thing is incorrect for if I remember correctly rape was never the charge." (1657727)

Farnham elaborates in another email: "If it really matters I can look into it, but from what I am hearing that is not the case. That's not to say that my friend is foolproof either. She knows nothing of law or politics, she just knows the girl in question and follows the news." (1681746)

Assange has not been indicted in the Swedish case, but recently released emails have revealed that the United States Government has had a secret inditement against the WikiLeaks founder for more than twelve months: "Not for Pub — We have a sealed indictment on Assange. Pls protect." (375123)

A few weeks earlier, following Julian Assange's release from a London jail, where he had been remanded as a result of a Swedish prosecutor's arrest warrant, Fred Burton, Stratfor's Vice-President for Counterterrorism and Corporate Security, and a former

Deputy Chief of the Department of State's (DoS) counterterrorism division for the Diplomatic Security Service (DSS), told SkyNews: "extradition [to the US is] more and more likely". (373862).

Moreover, the bilateral agreement between the United States and Sweden allows Julian Assange to be extradited to the US as soon as he arrives in Sweden. Sweden has not opposed an extradition to the US since 2000.

Julian Assange has been under house arrest for 448 days with no charge, since he was released from solitary confinement at Wandsworth prison in the UK on 7 December 2010. He awaits a ruling on his extradition appeal v. the Swedish Judicial Authority which was heard before the UK Supreme Court's on February 1 and 2, 2012.

Assange's appeal questioned whether the Swedish prosecutor, who issued the European Arrest Warrant, can claim to be called a 'judicial authority.' As Geoffrey Robertson QC, Australian born human rights lawyer, has argued: "The notion that a prosecutor is a 'judicial authority' is a contradiction in terms."

The decision to issue a European Arrest Warrant (EAW) and an INTERPOL Red Notice for the purpose of questioning a person, fully cooperating with authorities is highly suspect, as is the refusal of the Swedish prosecutor to interview Assange in London, as has been offered, and since doing so would be in accordance with the rules set forth under the terms of Mutual Legal Assistance.

At a February 7 and 8, 2011 hearing on the extradition case, Assange's lawyers also argued that the UK should not extradite him to Sweden because Assange would not face a fair trial.

If extradited to Sweden, Assange will not be judged by an 'independent and impartial tribunal', a fundamental requirement under the European Convention of Human Rights (article 61.) Three out of the four judges are lay judges, appointed by political parties with no formal, legal training.

On December 8, 2010 The Independent, a UK newspaper, reported that Sweden and the United States were already holding informal negotiations about Assange's onward extradition.

On February 20, 2011, Louis Susman, US Ambassador to the UK said in a BBC interview with Andrew Marr, "[A]t this point in time, we have brought no action against Mr. Assange and we will have to see how it plays out in the British court."

United States vs. Manning & Assange

Michael Ratner: Army is trying to pressure Manning into implicating Julian Assange so that he too can be charged and extradited to US

*The Real News Network
February 29, 2012*

Michael Ratner is President Emeritus of the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) in New York and Chair of the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights in Berlin. He is currently a legal adviser to Wikileaks and Julian Assange. He and CCR brought the first case challenging the Guantanamo detentions and continue in their efforts to close Guantanamo. He taught at Yale Law School, and Columbia Law School, and was President of the National Lawyers Guild. His current books include "Hell No: Your Right to Dissent in the Twenty-First Century America," and "Who Killed Che? How the CIA Got Away With Murder." *NOTE: Mr. Ratner speaks on his own behalf and not for any organization with which he is affiliated.*

Transcript

JAY: So you represent Julian Assange and WikiLeaks, and you were just at the arraignment of Bradley Manning. What happened at the arraignment? And what's going on with that process?

RATNER: Well, I'm sure, as most of your listeners— well, viewers know, Bradley Manning is accused of being the source for much of the material that WikiLeaks put out with regard to the "Collateral Murder" video, the video about murders that took place in Iraq from a helicopter; hundreds of thousands of war documents about Afghanistan, as well as Iraq; as well as the so-called quarter million diplomatic cables. And he's accused of doing that as a 22-year-old in the military. He's now 24. He was treated very, very harshly, actually under torture conditions for a long time. And now he's being referred to a court-martial, which is the military trial. He's been given 22 charges, including a most serious charge, which is called aiding the enemy, which carries a death penalty. But at this point, they've only— they're saying, the government's saying, we're not going to charge him with death penalty; we're going to, you know, try and get a conviction for life.

So the arraignment is the process in which Manning appears before the judge and is asked to plead guilty or not guilty or defer his plea. And I went down to the hearing. It was a short hearing, about an hour, at Fort Meade, which is, of course, somewhat near where you're broadcasting from these days, Paul, somewhat near Baltimore, an hour or so outside— maybe 40 minutes— at Fort Meade. It's a huge, sprawling military fort. Very hard to get access to it. The car I drove in was inspected. You had to have insurance for the car, all kinds of other things. You then have to get in line.

You can't bring any materials into the courtroom at all, other than a pencil and paper. I couldn't do any Blackberry Twitters or anything else. And I'm in this very antiseptic looking courtroom. It's hard to describe how antiseptic. It has cheap industrial carpeting, celotex ceilings with the little holes in them, and it only holds about 20 people. There are about ten of us spectators, ten people from press. And then Bradley Manning, a very short 5'2", thin, slight soldier in a green uniform, walks in with his civilian lawyer— who was formerly a military lawyer— walks in, sits at the table. And you just had this amazing feeling in this antiseptic courtroom.

And here's this man, accused of really revealing massive war crimes, alleged war crimes by the United States, I mean, sitting in this place in Fort Meade. And I had this feeling when I'm sitting here: the real people who should be sitting there are all the victims of what the U.S. has been doing in Iraq and Afghanistan. But, of course, that's not who was there. Who's there are the prosecutors with more brass on their chest that you can't even stand up. And of course he's accused, as I said, of these very serious crimes.

So the judge is a new judge that's been appointed, and Bradley Manning was asked to plead. His answers were always—the only thing he said in court was, yes,

Your Honor, or no, Your Honor. His lawyer spoke for him when it came time to plead, and he said he's deferring the plea. And they set a date for the next hearing, which is going to be in March.

The trial date: they're asking for a date in August—at least, the military's asking for a date in August. And that means by the time he's tried— and I don't think it's going to be tried in August— Bradley **Manning will have been in pretrial confinement for 800 days**. And, of course, while in that confinement, he was subject to what many of us believe was torture, stripped completely, put into solitary confinement a period of nine months, until there was incredible international outcry and he was finally moved to general population at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas in the United States.

He also is being, as I said, heavily charged— 22 counts. And at the last hearing, his lawyer, a man named David Coombs, said he was being so heavily charged and treated so badly because to the extent the government thinks he might know something about WikiLeaks and Julian Assange, because he was the alleged source for WikiLeaks, they're trying to get him to speak out, and to not just confess, but to really implicate Julian Assange and WikiLeaks.

JAY: Because the point here is if it's a leak, then Manning's responsible, and he somehow just handed it over; but if Julian somehow assisted, advised, or was involved in the original gathering of the material, then they could charge Julian. That's what's at stake here?

RATNER: You know, it's a very important point you're making. That's exactly what's at stake. I mean, I wouldn't characterize it the way you did, but it's roughly that. If—it's roughly what you said. What they're trying to say is that somehow— or the government wants to be able to prove that Julian Assange was in a conspiracy or aiding and abetting Bradley Manning to get these documents. It's as if the two were working together, not that Bradley Manning simply furnished the documents to Julian Assange.

And when I say it's not as— not the way I would say it, exactly. But let's take a case. New York Times reporter James Risen, who's the one who disclosed the warrantless wiretapping that Bush was running, he got those documents from somebody in the national security agency or some agency of the United States government. They didn't— I presume— I don't know this, but I presume the documents were not just dropped on James Risen's desk at The New York Times or that they simply were mailed to him. I presume there was constant contact. I don't know this. There may have been contact with Risen and the source. There may have been more.

So the point is that at some point it perhaps crosses into conspiracy. But if I say to my source, well, meet me at the corner of, you know, Hollywood and Vine and there's a restaurant there and would you drop off the documents, that doesn't make me a conspirator. If I tell him— you know, hide him under a rock, it doesn't make me a conspirator.

So the United States is reaching for straws here, because they realize they have a problem. If they can't get Julian Assange and WikiLeaks in a conspiracy where he actually is aiding and abetting Bradley Manning, they have no case, because then what's the difference between Julian Assange and The New York Times or WikiLeaks and The New York Times? **Every day you pick up your newspapers, they're filled with classified material that's been leaked.** And so the government has to try— as you said, the key point is for them to turn Bradley Manning on the expectation that he—

which may not be true at all— that he, Bradley Manning, can somehow implicate Julian Assange.

JAY: Right. Now—

RATNER: That's what the lawyer himself for Bradley Manning said. That's why Manning is being treated so badly. Sure, he downloaded all these documents and they want to punish him because he did that as a soldier, but they really want— their big fish here is WikiLeaks and Julian Assange.

JAY: Now, in the press they've been talking about the defense strategy, and it seems mostly about that the psychological state of Bradley Manning was such that he shouldn't have had access to secrets in the first place. There doesn't seem to be a case being made that if a soldier comes upon evidence of war crimes and there's no other way than to go public to expose it, there's some right, or even duty, to do such a thing. They don't seem to be going on that tack. They seem to be simply saying that there's something psychologically, you know, weak, or problems with Bradley, and so he should be excused.

RATNER: You know, at the end of the court hearing last week, I was there with, I said, ten spectators, and one of them was a person who's, you know, in— was actually in prison— in Baltimore, no less— with Father Berrigan during the— he was the first person to help, I think, pour blood on the draft files in the '70s and was eventually released from prison. And he was— you know, he's resister type, you know, plowshares, whatever he— you know, the pacifist resisters. At the end of the court hearing, he— and this is relevant to your question— **at the end of the court hearing, he yells out: isn't it the obligation of a soldier to reveal war crimes when he sees them?** And I think that's exactly the point. It's the obligation of a soldier to reveal war crimes when he sees them. And that's, in my view, what Bradley Manning was doing. And so he's a very sympathetic character for, certainly, people like me who believe that the U.S. has been committing war crimes all over the place without any accountability for them. And Manning has played— obviously, assuming he did what the government says— a crucial role in exposing them.

Now, as you said, the defense has been much more narrow. The defense, at least at the— what they call the Article 32 hearing, which is a preliminary hearing to see if there's enough evidence to stand trial, he took a sort of psychological defense. He took a twofold defense, really, one that, look it, you would— the government was just allowing millions of documents to be seen by some 3.5 million people who have the same level of security clearance that Bradley Manning had. And so what did they really expect?

JAY: Yeah. Just to remind people, the security system that Bradley Manning had access to, just to reinforce what you just said, was— something like 3.5 million people had access to it. It does seem completely crazy that anyone would've put anything in that system that was sensitive anyway, knowing so many people had access. But, anyway, go on.

RATNER: Yeah. I mean, the material was all level secret or lower. **There was nothing top secret in there.** So that's why you get all this stuff in the diplomatic cables. You did get the "Collateral Murder" video, which was quite important. But it is secret. But it was— 3.5 million people had access, and they were— and even though Manning and others had no reason for their work, I think, to have access to all those diplomatic

cables, somehow they were given access. So a very sloppy security system. But I'm less concerned by the sloppiness of the security system than I am by the fact that, yes, there's crimes that were revealed even within that low-level security system.

So one of the defenses here is, look it, this stuff was secret, yes, but it was accessed to everybody. And then they get into Bradley Manning's psychology. He was gay when he went in, apparently, was harassed very heavily in the military for being gay, for being 5'2", you know, for just not fitting in. And then they found some— then there were complaints made to his upper people that he shouldn't be sent to Iraq, to the upper command. But he was sent anyway, and he was sent into this computer room where he worked. And then there were some emails found about him being—looking at gender issues and being very, you know, worried about his gender and thinking about a gender change operation. And there were times when he was—apparently, crawled on the floor in a fetal position, etc.

The point is that the lawyer's taking not a political defense, not a defense that there's a right, if not an obligation (which there is), to reveal war crimes and if you can't get anywhere with your commanding officer you have to reveal them somehow. The lawyer's not taking that. He's taking what he thinks is going to do Bradley Manning the best, which is to try and get him— assuming they can prove that he did it— the lowest possible sentence he can. At least that's my perspective without—

JAY: And I suppose from the narrow point of view of Manning's well-being, maybe he's right, 'cause I suppose it's hard to imagine a military court is going to agree soldiers can reveal secrets if they think it's a war crime.

RATNER: You know, this— of course, this is a decision the lawyer is making, and it may very well be in Bradley Manning's best interest. One could make the argument, which if he ran a completely political defense, yes, you're right, he's going to get killed in the court-martial, but in the end he would have growing support, and eventually he might force the government into some kind of a pardon for him or to not try him or not treating him as severely. But that's somewhat speculative. I admit that might be a position I might take. But he has a lawyer who is taking— who is experienced lawyer, who's a good lawyer, who's actually trying, I think, to do the best possible thing he can for Bradley Manning.

Now, obviously, it's relevant to my client, to WikiLeaks and Julian Assange, for a couple of big reasons. One is because, as I said, as Bradley Manning's lawyer himself has said, they are trying to compel Bradley Manning to testify against Julian Assange. And that's why he was tortured. That's why he's being charged like this. That's why they're going ahead with a full court-martial. That's why he's being treated the way he is. So it's relevant to WikiLeaks for that.

The second reason it's relevant is the United States is actively trying to indict Julian Assange. There's a grand jury sitting in Alexandria, Virginia. It's been sitting for a year. I haven't heard much about it lately. But they have an investigation into WikiLeaks. And pursuant to that, we think ultimately that the United States' goal will be to extradite Julian Assange from either England if he remains there, or Sweden if he winds up in Sweden as a result of the ongoing sex issue with Julian Assange, sexual harassment and rape issue that's going on in Sweden. So the goal of United States is to get him extradited.

JAY: And is there any reason why he'd be more likely to be extradited from Sweden than England?

RATNER: I want to go to that in one second. That's a very, very important point. But the second point about Bradley Manning's treatment that's interesting and important with Julian Assange is, if they attempt to extradite Julian Assange, one question will be in the European Court how will he be treated in the United States. Well, if he's— can he be treated as an enemy combatant? That's possible— I mean, unlikely, but possible. Will he be put into solitaire like Bradley Manning was, stripped, not allowed access to people? That certainly seems much— you know, very, very likely. Will he be facing a death penalty charge under the Espionage Act? All of that is out there. So when you compare Bradley Manning's treatment, one of the defenses for Julian Assange, wherever he's extradited from, would be look at how they treat people in the United States.

Now, your question of will it be easier to extradite him from Sweden than from England, you know, the answer is— I think— my personal opinion I think's yes, it will be. And I think one of the reasons that I think we see what's going on, the extradition to Sweden and the fight about that, is the United States would like him in Sweden. I only know that in England (and I know the lawyers well who are— Julian Assange's lawyers; I know the extradition situation in London), that it is not so easy to get people out of London. It's a very— it's a legal system that has very strong defense lawyers. There's one case of a hacker who went into the Pentagon computer as a young man. He has— the U.S. has been trying to extradite him for eight years. And I'm not saying it's going to take that long. I don't know. **But he has a lot of support in England, Assange does. I think it's a much harder case for the U.S. Sweden's a much smaller country. It's—even though it has this nice image in the United States, it's a much more cooperative government with the United States than most people might expect.** And it's the belief of many people that it will be easier for the United States to get Julian Assange out of Sweden.

Now, that brings us to where is Julian Assange's case. Interestingly, we expected, because it's within the European context, that a European-wide extradition warrant or an extradition warrant from Sweden to England would be honored quickly. And then, you know, like going from Maryland to New York, you know, interstate, that's practically what the European system is. And we didn't expect there to be much difficulty with that extradition. But his lawyers have actually fought hard, and the case was recently argued in the highest court in England, which only takes cases (like the U.S. Supreme Court) when it wants to— it doesn't have to take them. And the argument was before seven judges who heard this case— I think it was seven; it might've been five judges who heard this case— and it was a vigorous argument. And the issue is an important one that's being raised, and it sort of implicates what's wrong with the Swedish system. The Swedish asked for his extradition. A prosecutor in Sweden asked for the extradition from England. And under the arrest warrant system, it has to be a judicial authority. Obviously [???], a judicial authority is neutral. Prosecutor wants the first case. And so the argument is: is a prosecutor in Sweden a judicial authority? And I thought the court went— you know, took it— they obviously took it seriously. And I'm somewhat hopeful for Julian that he will not have to— for Julian Assange that he will not have to wind up in Sweden. But, you know, it is a European arrest warrant— I mean, a European extradition warrant, so we don't know.

JAY: Okay. Just quickly, what is the legal basis or precedent, if any, for Manning to take a position that a soldier who comes across evidence of war crimes has some obligation or right to go public?

RATNER: You know, well, it comes out of— it goes back many years, but it certainly

goes to Nuremberg. There's— the legal liability under Geneva Conventions, under our own laws, is that you can't commit war crimes and you can't tolerate them being committed; or if you find out information, there's a legal obligation to actually report it. Now, we would say in the United States, in a narrow way, you have to report it up the chain of command. But, of course, up the chain of command in the United States military is essentially a useless act. It's useless even if— you know, I've seen issues around rape in the military and women who report it. They get totally harassed, essentially drummed out. Much less war crimes. This is— it's like a wall. There's no way.

So I don't think there was any way for Bradley Manning to do anything but what he did. And, you know, the first video, apparently, according to— you know, which we don't know (again, these are all allegations)— but according to what we read was— that really got him was, you know, there were these two Reuters journalists killed in Iraq, and from a helicopter, and there were a couple of kids wounded. And that's the video, apparently, he saw and said, this has to come out. And if you look at why it didn't come out, why are these documents secret, a majority of those documents are secret because the United States wants to hide what its own crimes and problems and issues are. And that was certainly true of the "Collateral" war video....

http://therealnews.com/t2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumival=8001

Assange: 'They want to destroy us'

Stefania Maurizi
L'Espresso
1 March 2012

Freedom seems to be just a happy memory for Julian Assange, who used to disappear into thin air, flying from one country to another and living a life out of a backpack. He spent the last fifteen months wearing an electronic bracelet tracking all his movements: indeed an ironic turn for a man who became a world icon for his fight against the Orwellian dystopia.

Now he seems to have his back against the wall: he risks to be extradited to Sweden in a matter of days, his organisation has powerful enemies and is suffering as a result of a serious banking blockade unleashed by credit cards. But when you look Mr. WikiLeaks in the eyes, you understand he has no intention of giving up. He keeps planning his 'media insurgency', a kind of guerrilla based on the sudden release of millions of files. He is calm, very focused on his goals and obsessions, but he can be passionate and indignant, he has an acute sense of humor and a strong sense of justice.

Nonetheless the man who shook the White House is neither a hard man nor the autistic Peter Pan depicted by newspapers. "He is a charismatic figure precisely because of his contradictions" and because of "the romantic view that he holds of the world", as recently wrote the New Yorker. He is almost a sort of revolutionary of the 19th century.

He meets 'L'Espresso' in a club at the center of London, to talk about his life and his

creature while enjoying a cappuccino. "WikiLeaks will continue", he tells in a confident tone of voice, "when I was in prison before, WikiLeaks continued publishing, to that degree the organization is robust at least in the medium term. Of course to remove the founder and the most visible public person would damage the organization in a number of ways, **but its practical components is now strong enough to survive at least for a couples of years, without me, not to the same degree of vigour perhaps, nonetheless it is robust institution.**

In a recent conversation with the "Rolling Stone", you were depicted as 'an embattled commander', a description which seems to hint to a sort of Che Guevara under siege. Do you feel so?

"The organization has a list of very powerful groups that are unhappy with the exposure that we have given to them in the past two years and those groups have set in motion various attempts to take us down, they are in the legal process through political mechanisms, through the media, through a financial blockade. All those need to be individually addressed. It is a lot of work. **So far we are winning in the sense that our ability to publish the majority of our material has been unbroken, our promise to our sources to publish the most significant material in relation to the US government have been kept, but that said the attacks are serious and ongoing**".

Behind the success of WikiLeaks there is your idea for an internet platform allowing whistleblowers to submit anonymous leaks of very sensitive files. That platform is currently not available and due to its work WikiLeaks is likely to be the target of intelligence agencies and security firms all around the world. Don't you think that these problems could discourage whistleblowers to the extent that high profile leaks could be less and less likely?

"We have all sorts of platforms: it has been an oversimplification of the way this organisation work to describe it as a platform. The technological method, the problem for us and for the rest of the world, has become more difficult, for us it is because of the incredible surveillance around us, for everyone it is because of the increased deployment of spy technologies around the world. That makes protecting whistleblowers more difficult. We have been working on many different ways of doing that and on a number of other supporting networks, such as Friends of WikiLeaks".

WikiLeaks is seriously hit by the financial blockade. How are you fighting against this embargo?

"It has been some seven months since the formal complaint was submitted by us to the European Commission: they say that they are still investigating, that they have not forgotten about the matter, they are overdue to announce a formal investigation, so we have currently moved into other areas, we have filed a lawsuit against Visa intermediary in Iceland this month. Some lawsuits also have been taken by credit card holders on their own, for example in Colombia, because they perceive their rights had been violated by credit card companies as they cannot associate with the organization of their choice".

<http://espresso.repubblica.it/dettaglio/assange-they-want-to-destroy-us/2175691>

Stratfor on the Australian, Assange

WikiLeaks
2nd March 2012

On February 27, 2012, WikiLeaks began publishing The Global Intelligence Files, over five million e-mails from the private intelligence organization Stratfor, a US company based in Texas.

In a late 2010 email exchange between George Friedman, Stratfor's CEO and founder, and the firm's Sydney-based watch officer, Chris Farnham, **Farham discusses revoking Assange's Australian citizenship and his desire to murder the WikiLeaks Editor in Chief.**

Farnham asks Friedman: "Is it possible to revoke someone's citizenship on the grounds of them being a total dickhead? I don't care about the other leaks but the ones he has made that potentially damage Australian interests upset me. If I thought I could switch this dickhead off without getting done I don't think I'd have too much of a problem." (1050427)

CEO George Friedman responds: "It is possible to revoke citizenship on the grounds of being a dickhead except in Australia, where all of Queensland and a good part of South Australia, along with all of Sydney Uni would lose their passports." (1050427)

In another email, a **former Australian Senator from Queensland, William (Bill) O'Chee cheers Assange's London arrest.** O'Chee writes to Fred Burton, Stratfor's Vice-President for Counterterrorism and Corporate Security, and a former Deputy Chief of the Department of State's (DoS) counterterrorism division for the Diplomatic Security Service (DSS): "Hooray!... Sadly [Assange] didn't have a car accident on the way there." (370352)

The emails were written a week after the Australian Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, announced that he had asked the Australian Federal Police (AFP) to investigate if the Assange had broken any laws. McClelland did not rule out that the Australian Government was considering cancelling Assange's passport.

The AFP inquiry found soon after that no Australian law had been broken by WikiLeaks' publication of secret US State Department Cables: "The AFP examined material relevant to potential Australian offenses whether an official investigation is warranted. The AFP has completed its evaluation of the material available and has not established the existence of any criminal offense where Australia would have jurisdiction."

The AFP statement forced Australian Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, to backtrack on her earlier public comments that the Wikileaks publication of the embassy cables was "illegal."

Gillard continued refusal to formerly recant her "illegal" statement, as well her later, highly prejudicial remarks that that the WikiLeaks disclosures were "an illegal act that breached the laws of the United States of America" have gravely endangered Assange, especially in light of the recent WikiLeaks disclosure, obtained in another confidential Stratfor email, that the US has had a secret indictment against WikiLeaks for more than 12 months. (375123)

Yesterday, Australian Greens Senator Scott Ludlam called on the Australian Government to reveal what it knows about the sealed US indictment: "The Australian Government needs to take a very straight line on this with the Obama administration that we will not permit and we will not tolerate his transfer to the United States to face charges that could potentially land him in prison or in a hole like Guantanamo Bay."

In December 2011, Former Australian Prime Minister Malcom Fraser and tens of prominent public figures including Noam Chompsky, Julian Burnside, QC, and the Greens leader, Bob Brown called on former Australian Foreign Affairs Minister, Kevin Rudd to protect Assange from rendition to the US:

"Given the atmosphere of hostility in relation to Mr.Assange, we hold serious concerns about his safety once in US custody. We note that Mr. Assange is an Australian citizen, whose journalistic activities were undertaken entirely outside of US territory"

Julian Assange has been under house arrest for 449 days with no charge, since he was released from solitary confinement at Wandsworth prison in the UK on 7 December 2010. He awaits a ruling on his extradition appeal v. the Swedish Judicial Authority which was heard before the UK Supreme Court's on February 1 and 2.

Following Julian Assange's release from a London jail, where he had been remanded as a result of a Swedish prosecutor's arrest warrant, Burton told SkyNews: "extradition [to the US is] more and more likely". (373862).

The bilateral agreement between the United States and Sweden allows Julian Assange to be extradited to the US as soon as he arrives in Sweden, and Sweden has not opposed an extradition to the US since 2000.

Julian Assange is an award winning international publisher, and the recipient of the Sydney Peace Prize, the Walkley Award for Most Outstanding Contribution to Journalism in Australia, the Martha Gelhorn Prize for Journalism in the US, Liberty Victoria's Voltair Award for Free Speech, among others.

Stratfor, WikiLeaks and the Obama administration's war against truth

Thanks to WikiLeaks and its media partners, we have a disturbingly vivid picture of the intelligence-industrial complex

*Amy Goodman
The Guardian
1 March 2012*

WikiLeaks, the whistleblower website, has again published a massive trove of documents, this time from a private intelligence firm known as Stratfor. The source of the leak was the hacker group Anonymous, which took credit for obtaining more than 5m emails from Stratfor's servers. Anonymous obtained the material on 24 December 2011, and provided it to WikiLeaks, which, in turn, partnered with 25 media organizations globally to analyze the emails and publish them.

Among the emails was a short one-liner that suggested the US government has produced, through a secret grand jury, a sealed indictment against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange. In addition to painting a picture of Stratfor as a runaway, rogue private intelligence firm with close ties to government-intelligence agencies serving both corporate and US military clients, the emails support the growing awareness that the Obama administration, far from diverging from the secrecy of the Bush/Cheney era, is obsessed with secrecy, and is aggressively opposed to transparency.

I travelled to London last Independence Day weekend to interview Assange. When I asked him about the grand jury investigation, he responded: "**There is no judge, there is no defense counsel, and there are four prosecutors.** So, that is why people that are familiar with grand-jury inquiries in the United States say that a grand jury would not only indict a ham sandwich, it would indict the ham and the sandwich."

As I left London, the Guardian newspaper exposed more of Rupert Murdoch's News Corp phone-hacking scandal, which prompted the closing of his tabloid newspaper, the largest circulation Sunday newspaper in the UK, the News of the World. The coincidence is relevant, as the News of the World reported anything but what its title claimed, focusing instead on salacious details of the private lives of celebrities, sensational crimes, and photos of scantily-clad women. Through this and his other endeavours, Murdoch amassed a reported personal fortune of \$7.6 bn.

Meanwhile, Assange— who, like Murdoch, was born in Australia (Murdoch abandoned his nationality for US citizenship in order to purchase more US broadcast licences)— had engaged in one of largest and most courageous acts of publishing in history by founding wikileaks.org, which allows people to safely and securely deliver documents using the internet in ways that make it almost impossible to trace. He and his colleagues at WikiLeaks had published millions of leaked documents, most notably about the US wars and occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and thousands of US diplomatic cables, true "news of the world".

The Sydney Peace Foundation awarded Assange a gold medal for "exceptional courage and initiative in pursuit of human rights". **In contrast, the US government targeted him, possibly under the Espionage Act. Rupert Murdoch is hailed as a pioneering newsman, while a pundit on Murdoch-owned cable-television outlets has openly called for Assange's murder.**

The Stratfor emails will be released over time, along with context provided by WikiLeaks' media partners. Already revealed by the documents are the close, and potentially illegal, connections between Stratfor employees and government-intelligence and law-enforcement officials. Rolling Stone magazine reports that the US Department of Homeland Security was monitoring Occupy Wall Street protests nationally, and the Texas Department of Public Safety has an undercover agent at Occupy Austin who was disclosing information to contacts at Stratfor.

Stratfor also is hired by multinational corporations to glean "intelligence" about critics. Among companies using Stratfor were Dow Chemical, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon and Coca-Cola.

Fred Burton, Stratfor's vice-president of intelligence, and a former head of counterintelligence at the US State Department's diplomatic corps, wrote in an email, "Not for Pub— We have a sealed indictment on Assange. Pls protect." Burton and others at Stratfor showed intense interest in WikiLeaks starting in 2010, showing intense dislike for Assange personally. Burton allegedly wrote: "Assange is going to make a nice bride in prison. Screw the terrorist. He'll be eating cat food forever." According to another leaked email, a Stratfor employee wanted Assange water-boarded. In a statement, Stratfor would neither confirm nor deny the provenance of the leaked material.

Michael Ratner, legal adviser to Assange and WikiLeaks, told me: "The Obama administration has gone after six people under the Espionage Act. That's more cases than happened since the Espionage Act was actually begun in 1917 ... What this is about is the United States wanting to suppress the truth."

1917 is also the year when US Senator Hiram Johnson famously said, "The first casualty when war comes is truth." The White House is holding a gala dinner this week, honoring Iraq war veterans. Bradley Manning is an Iraq war vet who won't be there. He is being court-martialed, facing life in prison or possibly death, for allegedly releasing thousands of military and diplomatic documents to WikiLeaks revealing the casualties of war. President Barack Obama would better serve the country by also honoring Assange and Manning.

We should pursue the truth, not its messengers.

Wikileaks: Vi tänker inte smutskasta Sverige

SVT-Debatt
5 mars 2012

WIKILEAKS Förra veckan hävdade Expressen att Wikileaks skulle ha "förberett en förtalskampanj mot Sverige" och kartlagt svenska journalister. Som källor angav man både en "insider" i WikiLeaks och ett "internt PM" från WikiLeaks. Trots att vi kategoriskt avfärdade Expressens påståenden om "Wikileaks storkrig mot Sverige" lade Expressen ut historien. WikiLeaks har inga som helst planer på att föra ett "förtalskrig" mot Sverige. WikiLeaks har nu en enkel begäran till Expressen: Publicera det påstådda WikiLeaks-PM:et, skriver Kristinn Hrafnsson, talesperson för WikiLeaks.

Medan WikiLeaks jobbat med förberedelser för att släppa "the GI Files", (The Global Intelligence Files/De globala underrättelsefilerna) där vi i samarbete med 25 tidningar publicerar autentiska dokument från den privatiserade spionvärlden, har Expressen varit sysselsatt med att fylla sin tidning med falska, påhittade rapporter. Förra veckan hävdade Expressen att Wikileaks skulle ha "förberett en förtalskampanj mot Sverige". Som källor angav man både en "insider" i WikiLeaks och ett "internt PM" från

WikiLeaks.

Jag befann mig i brådska på Paddingtons järnvägsstation i London när Expressen ringde. Det var sent, kvällen innan Expressen skulle publicera sin stora uppdiktade historia. Trots att omgivningen var bullrig är jag säker på att journalisten fick svar på sina frågor. Nämligen att WikiLeaks inte vill ha strid med svenskar och att organisationen absolut inte planerat någon "förtalskampanj mot Sverige". När frågan sedan upprepats gång på gång sa jag att ingen bör bli förvånad ifall det kommer starka reaktioner från WikiLeaks supporters om USA skulle försöka få Assange utlämnad från Sverige. WikiLeaks har starkt stöd från svenska folket, dock inte från Expressen. Om någon betvivlar att USA:s regering redan för ett år sedan hade för avsikt att få WikiLeaks grundare, Julian Assange, utlämnad så läs de mail som nu släpps från Stratfor: meddelanden i de läckta "GI files" bevisar att USA haft ett hemligt åtal mot honom.

Trots att vi kategoriskt avfärdade Expressens påståenden om "Wikileaks storkrig mot Sverige" lade Expressen ut historien. Det uppstod storm i ett vattenglas med reaktioner från utrikesminister Carl Bildt, som blivit illa berörd inför utsikten att bli utsatt för personlig smutskastning. Denne store man med oklanderligt anseende! Vilken fars. Viftar hunden med sin svans— eller tvärt om?

Carl och Karl

Om nu denna historia varit till någon nytta så är det för att utrikesminister Bildt fått tillfälle att uttrycka sin stolthet över att räkna Karl Rove som en gammal och nära vän. För dem som inte känner till Rove, så tillhör han de mest ökända spinndoktorerna i USA:s neokonservativa läger. Han är mannen som fick lämna sin tjänst vid Vita huset sedan han anklagats för att systematiskt få de justitieministrar avsatta som Bush-administrationen inte gillade. Han är mannen som vägrat vittna inför ett kongressutskott genom att gömma sig bakom regeringens åtalsimmunitet.

Denne nära kompis till Bildt är känd som en mästare på spinn. Han drar i trådar och vrider runt lättlurade medier som vore de marionettdockor. För alla som har en hjärna större än en jordnöt ter det sig groteskt att en seriös politiker skulle skryta med att ha Rove som sin nära vän. Det är som om en stolt trädgårdsmästare skulle annonsera att han grävt ned giftigt avfall under sina tulpaner.

Var finns beviset?

Expressen-episoden är skrattretande, men det får erkännas att den visar prov på ett visst roveskt handlag (man har använt spinndoktors knep att fabricera en story och sedan "låta de jävlarna förneka den!").

Expressen har inte tillmötesgått WikiLeaks enkla begäran: Publicera det påstådda WikiLeaks-PM:et där riktlinjer dras upp för den påhittade förtalskampanjen. Men Expressen vägrar och kommer att vägra av den enkla anledningen att PM:et inte finns. Och lika säkert är det att de inte har någon "insiderkälla inom WikiLeaks". De åberopar källskydd, men denna ursäkt duger inte. Visst kan de publicera det påstådda interna PM:et och samtidigt skydda sin källa. Det är vad WikiLeaks och andra medier ständigt gör.

Den senaste utvecklingen med Expressens befängda saga om "WikiLeaks krig mot Sverige" är påståendet att vi spionerar på svenska journalister. Återigen har inget bevis lagts fram— bara en "hemlig källa".

Var så snälla och lyssna nu, journalister på Expressen, vi har faktiskt (som ni kanske lagt märke till) viktigt arbete att utföra, och vi kan helt enkelt inte bekymra oss om era personliga detaljer. Vi sysslar nämligen inte med er sorts rännstensjournalistik. Vi är upptagna med att ställa regeringar och stora bolag till svars.

Men vad som kom som en stor och bedrövlig överraskning är att andra journalister faktiskt tycks ha tagit Expressens Rove-spinn på allvar. Detta är djupt oroande. Men svenska läsare är väl vana vid Expressens påhitt (de falska påståendena om Persbrandt, de fabricerade fotona av kungens påstådda besök på sexklubb, med mera).

Ni får andas ut— inget krig

WikiLeaks har inga som helst planer på att föra ett "förtalskrig" mot Sverige. Det finns mycket att beundra i Sverige. Men alla demokratier måste rannsakas, och vår utgivare Julian Assange har behandlats orättvist av vissa delar av det juridiska och politiska systemet i Sverige. Dessa system är dessutom sammanflätade.

Det finns beundransvärda lagar i Sverige till skydd för journalister. Dessa bör inte missbrukas för att skydda slarvig journalistik. Illvilja är ingen bra praxis inom journalistik. Vår (skyddade) insiderekälla på Expressen har berättat följande för en av våra medarbetare: Efter det att Expressen häromdagen offentligt fick skämmas vid pressmötet om "the GI Files", har tidningen internt förklarat krig mot WikiLeaks.

Den enda kamp som WikiLeaks utkämpar på svensk mark är en kamp för sanning och öppenhet, för ansvarsskyldighet och rättvisa. Den kampen har inga gränser. Vi gör detta därför att det är vårt uppdrag som journalister.

I stället för att fabricera historier om WikiLeaks, bör Expressen ägna sig åt det lyckliga tillskottet i kungafamiljen. Kanske bör de även reflektera över de kloka ord som Elisabeth Tarras-Wahlberg, hovets förra informationschef, använde för att beskriva Expressen: "Denna tidning har byggt in sensationer och skandaler i sitt system, som ett sätt att tjäna pengar"; och "Det är snarare regel än undantag att de anlitar så kallat pålitliga källor. Källor som ibland bara finns i reporterens huvud, eller om de existerar är uppenbart opålitliga."

Jag har inte mycket tillägga där, faktiskt.

Med varma hälsningar till det svenska folket,

Kristinn Hrafnsson, talesperson för WikiLeaks

(Translation of foregoing article by Kristinn Hrafnsson)

The Great WikiLeaks war on Sweden?

While WikiLeaks has been preoccupied with preparing its new release 'The Global Intelligence Files' where we are releasing actual documents from the privatized spying world in collaboration with 25 newspapers, Expressen has been preoccupied with filling their paper with false reports based on thin air.

Last week Expressen claimed that WikiLeaks was preparing a 'slander campaign against Sweden' and cited as sources both a WikiLeaks 'insider' and a WikiLeaks 'internal memo'.

As I was hurrying through Paddington rail station in London the night before the publication of Expressen's grand fictitious story, I received a phone call from Expressen. Although the environment was noisy I am certain the journalist got the answer to his question; namely that WikiLeaks had no beef with Swedes and the organization was absolutely not planning a 'slander campaign against Sweden'. After being repeatedly asked, I did add that it should not come as a surprise to anybody if WikiLeaks supporters react strongly if the US attempts to extradite him from Sweden. The Swedish people are strong WikiLeaks supporters— bar Expressen. Anyone who doubts the US Government's intention to extradite WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange should read the Stratfor emails: news from the GI Files release shows that the US already a year ago had a sealed indictment against him.

Despite categorically refuting Expressen's allegations of a 'Great WikiLeaks war against Sweden', Expressen ran the story. It became a storm in a teacup with reactions from Foreign Minister Carl Bildt who was genuinely hurt that he might personally be slandered. That great man with impeccable reputation! What a farce. Is the dog wagging the tail or is it the other way around?

Carl and Karl

If anything, the story was useful because in it Foreign Minister Bildt expressed that he was proud to have Karl Rove as an old and close friend. For those who don't know him, Rove is one of the most disreputable spin doctors in the neocon ranks of the US. The man who resigned from his White House post due to being implicated in the systematic removal of those attorney generals the Bush administration did not like. The man who refused to testify before a congressional committee by hiding behind executive privileges. This close pal of Bildt is acknowledged to be a great spin master, twisting the gullible media around like puppets on a string. For any person with a brain bigger than a peanut, it seems grotesque for a serious European politician to brag about having Rove as a close friend. It is like a proud gardener announcing he keeps toxic waste buried underneath his tulips.

Where is the evidence?

The Expressen episode is laughable but admittedly has a Rove-esque touch to it (using his spin doctor tactic: fabricate a story then 'let the bloody bastards deny it!').

Expressen has not met WikiLeaks simple request: publish the so-called 'WikiLeaks memo' which outlines this imagined slander campaign. Expressen will not— and they will not for the simple reason that it does not exist. Also it is certain that they have no

'insider WikiLeaks source'. They claim source protection. That is an unacceptable excuse. Surely they could print the alleged internal memo while protecting their source. WikiLeaks and other papers do it all the time.

The latest development in the outlandish Expressen Saga on the 'Wikileaks war on Sweden' is a claim that we have been spying on Swedish journalists. Again, no proof produced— just a secret source. Listen, good journalists at Expressen, we do have serious work to do as you might have noticed, and we just could not be bothered with your personal details. In other words— we don't do your kind of tabloid journalism. We are busy holding governments and corporations to account.

What comes as a great and unfortunate surprise is that other journalists actually seem to take Expressen's Rove-spin seriously. That is of great concern. But the Swedish readers are used to fabrications by Expressen (the Persbrandt debacle, the fabricated photos of the kings alleged sex club visit, and others).

Breathe easy— no war.

WikiLeaks has no plan to wage a 'slander war' with Sweden. There are many things to admire of Sweden. But all democracies must be scrutinised, and our publisher Julian Assange has been unfairly treated by certain elements in the judicial and political system in Sweden. These systems are intertwined.

There are admirable laws in place in Sweden protecting journalists. They should not be abused to protect sloppy journalistic work. Malice is not a good practice in journalism. Our insider source at Expressen (protected) told one of our associates that, following the public shaming of Expressen in the GI Files press conference earlier this week, the paper has internally declared it is at war with WikiLeaks.

The only fight WikiLeaks is fighting on Swedish soil is a war for truth and transparency, accountability and justice. That war has no borders. We do this because this is our role as journalists.

Instead of fabricating stories on WikiLeaks, Expressen should instead focus on the happy addition to the royal family. Perhaps they should also reflect on the wise words that Tarras-Wahlberg, the former press director for the Swedish royal family, used to describe Expressen: "The newspaper has incorporated sensation and scandal into its system as a way of earning money"; and, "It is more the rule than the exception that they rely on so-called reliable sources. Sources that sometimes only exist in the reporter's head, or which perhaps sometimes do exist but are clearly unreliable."

I have little to add to that really.

With warm regards to the Swedish nation,
Kristinn Hrafnsson, WikiLeaks spokesperson

Dagens Media. 2012-03-06

Wikileaks och Expressen i nytt storbråk

Efter att Expressen tackat nej till att möta Wikileaks i SVT Debatt på torsdag har ett nytt storbråk blossat upp. Nu anklagar organisationens talesperson Kristinn Hrafnsson Expressen för att fabricera bevis.

– Jag fick höra att Expressen bara ville komma om Julian Assange var där, vilket är löjligt. Alla vet att han inte kan resa. Jag var däremot redo att ta debatten. Det är viktigt att sanningen kommer ut, men Expressen är inte tillräckligt modiga.

Kristinn Hrafnsson är märkbart upprörd när dagensmedia.se når honom. I morse fick han beskedet att Thomas Mattsson tackat nej till att medverka i SVT Debatt, där uppgifterna om en planerad smutskastningskampanj mot Sverige skulle debatteras. Varför Expressen tackade nej till debatten har han sin egen teori om.

– Det här ett bevis på att de har dåligt samvete för den kampanj som tidningen har bedrivit mot Wikileaks. De har påstått att vi bedriver en smutskastningskampanj mot Sverige och att vi kartlägger svenska journalister, men har inte kunnat publicera några bevis. Nu skäms de.

Thomas Mattsson ger inte mycket för utspelet.

– Wikileaks söker bara uppmärksamhet för sina teorier om en komplott iscensatt av regeringar och redaktioner, men **jag behöver inte ge Wikileaks talesperson en scen för sådana falsarier**. Jag är chefredaktör för Expressen och om Wikileaks ledare, Julian Assange, vill debattera nyhetsjournalistik med mig så möter jag gärna honom i en SVT-studio, säger Thomas Mattsson till dagensmedia.se.

Kristinn Hrafnsson kontrar med att anklaga Expressen för att ha fabricerat bevismaterial i samband med tidningens publiceringar om Wikileaks.

– Antingen det, eller så har de blivit lurade av en bedragare. De påstår att de kan bevisa smutskastningskriget med ett hemligt Wikileaks-PM, men **än så länge har jag inte sett något PM, trots att jag bett dem publicera det**.

"Trams", replikerar Thomas Mattsson.

– Man börjar ju bli luttrad, men Wikileaks ljuger om Expressen också i Kristinn Hrafnssons debattartikel på SVT:s sajt. När Ullman PR erbjöd oss en text signerad av Wikileaks talesperson tackade vi ja, men med förbehållet att den skulle innehålla en ursäkt, eftersom Wikileaks påstått att vi aldrig talat med dem om "Bildt-dokumentet" [när och var? –A.B.] trots att vi till och med i tidningen publicerade en bandinspelad intervju med just Kristinn Hrafnsson.

När dagensmedia.se frågar Kristinn Hrafnsson om det inte ligger någon sanning i att

organisationen ska ha kartlagt svenska journalister blir han irriterad.

– Det är absolut felaktigt. Anklagelserna är så löjväckande och absurda. Varför i hela friden skulle Wikileaks kartlägga svenska journalister? Tänk bara på det. Julian Assange vill ha stöd av Sverige, varför skulle han då göra landets journalister till sina fiender? **Det hela har börjat likna en Kafka-process.**

Du låter upprörd?

– Jag har arbetat som journalist i tjugo år och vet att vi har både en stor makt och ett stort ansvar. Därför blir jag upprörd när kollegor använder sin position för att hitta på saker eller är lättlurade. Det irriterar mig väldigt mycket, säger han och fortsätter:

– Hade det varit en brittisk tabloid som publicerat de här uppgifterna hade jag inte blivit förvånad. **Jag trodde vi hade högre standard i Norden. Därför är det extra illa.**

Expressen är däremot inte den enda tidningen som Wikileaks svingat mot sedan Julian Assange först greps misstänkt för våldtäkt.

– I helgen anklagade Wikileaks Le Monde, El Pais, The Guardian och The New York Times för att vara "korrupta" och i sin debattartikel så falskciterar talespersonen nu också Expressen. Man kan inte ta allt detta seriöst, det är ju som om CIA spelar Wikileaks ett spratt genom att göra alla dessa galna utspel i organisationens namn, säger Thomas Mattsson. [*Och beviset som Hrafnsson efterlyser, Mattson? —A.B.*]

Den debattartikel som hänvisas till är publicerad på SVT Debatts sajt. Artikelnen skickades först till Expressen som dock tackade nej.

Fakta Kristinn Hrafnsson

Kristian Hrafnsson arbetade som journalist i drygt tjugo år. 2004, 2007 och 2010 utnämndes han till årets isländska journalist.

Han har bland annat arbetat för tv-kanalen Stöð 2 och public service-bolaget RUV. I juli 2010 fick han sparken från RUV och började istället arbeta för Wikileaks.

• *Dante Thomsen*

<http://www.dagensmedia.se/nyheter/print/dagspress/article3423726.ece>

Press release

WikiLeaks on Recent Fabricated Stories in the Swedish Press

WikiLeaks
6 March 2012

Over the past week various media in Sweden have been critically discussing WikiLeaks affairs. Much of these discussions have been based on two fabricated reports that

originate from the daily tabloid Expressen.

The recent fabrications picked up in the Swedish media about alleged WikiLeaks plots on Swedish journalists and the Swedish state are completely false. WikiLeaks does not know who is behind this defamation, but **perhaps those fearful of the impact of the cables referred to in the *Rolling Stone* article have attempted to disarm future exposures relating to Sweden's Foreign Minister.**

Expressen's fabricated stories attempt to twist the publication of authentic materials about government, into a "smear campaign against all Sweden". **Attempting to equate the reputation of one Moderate party politician, Carl Bildt, with the reputation of the entire Swedish nation is a clear manipulation** and must be challenged. Expressen refuses to release any of its claimed evidence and its editor, Thomas Mattson is apparently too scared to debate WikiLeaks on SVT as to the merits.

WikiLeaks demands Thomas Mattson issue a full, front page retraction, or resign.

1. The only WikiLeaks related "smear campaign" in Sweden is the one the Expressen tabloid has waged against WikiLeaks since it became public that Julian Assange was to publish a column in its rival Aftonbladet, back in early August 2010. It is absolutely false that there is an "internal WikiLeaks' memo" related to the subject. Nor, after own investigation, have we been able to find any person who is aware in any manner whatsoever of any WikiLeaks document with similar contents, anywhere. We note that Expressen refuses to release the alleged document. No such WikiLeaks document exists or ever has existed. **WikiLeaks founded "scientific journalism" which mandates the release of full source documents, so everyone may check their veracity, precisely so the type of corrupt "journalism" practiced by Expressen over the past week may become a relic of the past.**

2. The tabloid claims to have a 'WikiLeaks insider' source who confirms the story. This is false. No WikiLeaks staff member has made such a confirmation and neither is such confirmation possible by any source, since **no such WikiLeaks document has ever existed. This alleged 'source' is either a fabrication or an impostor.**

3. The tabloid then tries to manipulate other Swedish journalists into Expressen's defence by claiming that WikiLeaks is secretly gathering data on specific Swedish journalists, including taking pictures outside of their homes, investigating their finances and obtaining secret Swedish government documents on them. This is also absolutely false. If anyone is spying on these journalists, it is not WikiLeaks or anyone instructed by WikiLeaks. **WikiLeaks recommends that these journalists report any suspicious behaviour to the police.**

4. WikiLeaks spokesman Kristinn Hrafnsson has not said that the so-called 'internal memo' exists or confirmed any Expressen allegations. Kristinn Hrafnsson told Expressen only that the information provided in the already published Rolling Stone January interview (that cables exist showing long term contact between Carl Bildt and George W. Bush spinmaster Karl Rove) was accurate. Anything to suggest the contrary is itself spin. **Expressen claims to have a tape of Mr. Hrafnsson, which it may well do. That is not the point. The point is what the tape contains. We demand Thomas Mattson release the full tape or resign.**

The nature of our work, exposing abuses of power, means that we have many friends but also many enemies. Attacks on our systems are resisted with strict security measures. But attacks on our reputation are also a reality. It may seem like spy movie, but intelligence agencies, spin campaigns, and assassination threats are a well documented reality when it comes to WikiLeaks. If WikiLeaks had not taken these issues seriously it would have been destroyed long ago.

For example:

After the release of the US diplomatic cables in late November 2010, US Attorney General Eric Holder stated that there was a serious, active criminal investigation against WikiLeaks. The CIA has publicly declared a WikiLeaks Task Force. Even earlier, the Pentagon publicly declared a 120-member operation into WikiLeaks working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The US is believed to have issued a sealed indictment for Julian Assange according to information from "global intelligence" firm Stratfor's Vice-President for Terrorism. The Justice Department refuses to confirm or deny. The US Center for Constitutional Rights condemns an indictment against Julian Assange as a "dramatic assault on the First Amendment, journalists, and the public's right to know";

There is currently a secret Grand Jury investigating Julian Assange for espionage in Alexandria, Virginia, and the US is attempting to force alleged whistleblower Bradley Manning into a plea deal in order to implicate the real target, Julian Assange;

A report from early 2011 commissioned by the Bank of America with advice from the US Department of Justice, detailed how to take WikiLeaks out including by illegal means and smear campaigns. The multi-pronged onslaught had a budget of \$2 million/month. It was prepared for Washington law firm Hunton & Williams, which was hired by the Bank of America. The report was submitted to WikiLeaks) and the smear campaign is subject of ongoing investigations including a US Congressional probe.

WikiLeaks is the subject of an extrajudicial banking blockade by VISA, MasterCard, Bank of America, PayPal and Western Union since December 2010. The blockade is outside of any administrative or judicial process. The US Treasury stated in January 2011 that there were no lawful grounds to put WikiLeaks on a blacklist. Despite the Treasury's findings, the blockade remains in place. WikiLeaks has filed a complaint at the European Commission, and various litigations have commenced in different jurisdictions;

Calls to assassinate or harm WikiLeaks staff as well as hate speech, slander and libel against this organisation have been unrelenting since the release of the Collateral Murder video. The CIA has refused to confirm or deny knowledge of 'current or previous plans to assassinate Julian Assange' despite denying such knowledge for other public figures.

Internal communications from the private intelligence firm Stratfor, which has extensive ties to US Government secret agencies, claim to detail part of the US government's strategy to target WikiLeaks and Julian Assange. Stratfor states that the US is using the same tactics it uses against Al Qaeda to target WikiLeaks;

Irrespective of who is behind the campaign the effects remain the same: in terms of WikiLeaks, **it is contaminating Swedish public opinion so as to reduce the level of our donations from Sweden, to make Julian Assange's extradition to the United States politically feasible and to make a fair trial within Sweden for Mr. Assange, given the political nature of the lay judges system, difficult or impossible.** In terms of the rest of the Swedish press and public, Expressen is degrading Swedish and European culture, for lies have negative social utility.

<http://wikileaks.org/Press-release-WikiLeaks-on-Recent.html>

AB: 2012-03-06

Assanges moraliska kollaps

Skyddade inte sina källor efter publicering. Julian Assange tog inte sitt ansvar för Bradley Mannings säkerhet, skriver Dan Josefsson.

Efter att ha suttit fängslad i olika militärbaser i över ett och ett halvt år har 24-åriga Bradley Manning nu åtalats av en amerikansk militärdomstol för att ha läckt hemliga dokument till Wikileaks. Risken är stor att han döms till att leva resten av sitt liv i fängelse. Vems fel är det?

Främst är det naturligtvis amerikanska statens fel. Men att USA är en krigsekonomi vars lagar kräver nationalistisk lojalitet av medborgarna, och alldeles särskilt om de är soldater, är ingen nyhet.

Frågan är vem som är ansvarig för att 24-åriga Bradley Manning valde att på egen hand utmana denna militära supermakt och det på ett så inkompetent sätt att **han genast pratade bredvid mun och avslöjade sig själv. Jag påstår att den ansvarige för detta fiasko heter Julian Assange.**

När Assange startade Wikileaks 2006 sades huvudpoängen vara att han med hjälp av ett sinnrikt utformat datornätverk och avancerad kryptologi kunde garantera anonymiteten för alla som ville läcka känslig information. **Wikileaks påstod sig kunna erbjuda ett mycket starkare källskydd än traditionella medier [Och?---A.B.].**

I dag vet vi dock att Julian Assange gjorde en ödesdiger missbedömning. Han förstod inte att den journalist som tar emot uppgifter från en hemlig källa har ett mycket långtgående ansvar för källans säkerhet. Det handlar inte alls bara om hur informationen tekniskt överförs. **Minst lika viktigt är att undersöka om läckan är psykiskt tillräckelig.** Förstår han vilken risk han löper? Kan han efter publiceringen tänkas vilja skryta om saken på krogen eller i ett chattrum, och på så vis förstöra sitt liv?

Om något sådant sker är journalisten delansvarig. Den journalist som erbjuds hemlig information från **en källa som inte förstår sitt eget bästa** måste överväga om ansvaret

för källans säkerhet kanske kräver att materialet inte publiceras över huvud taget.

Detta ansvar tog inte Julian Assange [*bland annat för att han enligt uppgift inte visste källans identitet*—-A.B.]. Han inbillade Bradley Manning och oss andra att Wikileaks teknik gjorde det möjligt att tryggt göra sådant som i alla tider varit livsfarligt. På så vis **ledde han en ung människa över stupet. Sedan använde Julian Assange det läckta materialet till att med buller och bång göra sig själv till världskändis. [Ja, det är säkert det enda som Assange vill—- att "göra sig själv till världskändis".—-A.B.]**

Julian Assange gillar att döma ut journalister som en moraliskt lågstående fårscock. [*Där klammer skon.*—-A.B.] Jag tror dock inte att särskilt många av de journalister som han spottar på skulle orka se sig i spegeln om de hade varit ansvariga för det öde som just nu drabbar soldaten Bradley Manning.

• *Dan Josefsson*

Kommentarer

Sam Ajami · Toppkommentator · Jobbar på Forex Bank

Bra försök, men icke. Du kan försöka smutskasta Assange hur mycket du vill, herr Josefsson, men han kommer fortfarande förbli den bästa jävla journalisten på ett väldigt bra tag. För till skillnad från er, som går Big Brothers ärenden, så vågar denna man visa världen vad som händer bakom kulisserna, något ni journalister har glömt bort hur man gör, för länge längesen.

Thomas Totta Lundgren · KTH Haninge

Men Dan. Hur vet DU om huruvida Bradley Manning var väl medveten om vad han gjorde eller ej? Hur vet DU om Manning kanske tyckte att det var ett pris värt att betala? Hur vet DU att Manning ens är skyldig? Han är inte dömd ännu, eller hur?

Enligt samma resonemang så tycker jag att Aftonbladet bär skulden för att de valde att publicera Dan Josefssons artikel eftersom han uppenbarligen inte är medveten om hur mycket han gjorde bort sig i och med detta.

Jose Altamirano Ponce · Toppkommentator · IT-Gymnasiet Göteborg

Bradley manning borde få nobel priset!!! Och USAs president och politiker samt lobbyister borde åtalas i ICC För brott mot mänskligheten och folkmord!

Mona Helgå · Toppkommentator · Solna, Sweden

Dan Josefson du kan inte ha alla dina hästar hemma:-) Det dummaste jag har läst på länge, men det dummaste är ju att AB kan godkänna en så osaklig artikel.

Susanna Svensson · Toppkommentator · Örebro Uni.

Dan jag brukar läsa dina artiklar med glädje men den här gången fattar jag faktiskt inte vad du menar. Menar du verkligen på fullt allvar att en journalist inte ska ta emot uppgifter från en källa utan **att först leka någon slags amatörrättspsykiatriker** för att ta ställning till om källan förstår konsekvenserna om källan ev i framtiden outar sig själv?

Mikael Johansson · Toppkommentator

Jag finner det väääldigt konstigt att det publiceras lika mycket skit OM Assange, ur alla

möjliga anfallsvinklar, än vad det gör om VAD som kommer ut genom alla dessa Wikileaks avslöjanden. Hitills har Assange varit våldtäktsman (alternativt ofredare), hot mot demokratin, egoist, narcissist, ett svin som inte skyddar sina källor, landsförädare o.s.v.

Allt som avslöjas får knappt utrymme. Ibland kommer det någon liten artikel, som den om att Bildt springer storebror USAs ärenden (BIG suprise! NOT!). Något äcklar mig med gammelmmedia. Något är ruttet i dess rapportering. **Tur att internet finns fritt, än så länge**, så man kan själv kolla upp saker och ting.

Stanley Armata · Maskiningenjörprogrammet: enstaka kurser

Undrar vad var det för idéer, tankar, bakom rubriken "ASSANGES MORALISKA KOLLAPS"? Av denna rubrik kan man läsa att Julian Assanges är redan dömd i svenska domstolen för dessa påstådda två våldtäkter. Det förvanar mig inte alls att det hela förfaller sig på det viset. I svenska domstolar sitter nämndemän som väljs från olika partier sittande i svenska riksdagen. Dessa nämndemän saknar kunskaper i rättsliga frågor och ofta bedriver sin politik även i rättsalen. Speciellt när det gäller kvinnomisshandeln och våldtäktsmål. Våldtäktsmålen i svenska domstolar avgörs ofta vid stängda dörrar vilket innebär att till svenska allmänheten kommer fram en liten del av detta som har sagts under rättegångarna. Halva sanningar kan vara lögner också. Det vet de flesta. Hur vet personen som har skrivit artikel att Julian Assanges lider av en moralisk kollaps? Hur vet den som har skrivit denna artikel, vet om att det var just Julian Assandes som röjde sina källor? Från vilket hål kommer denna information och i vilket syfte? Den so har skrivit denna artikel med just denna rubrik vet något som inte svenska folket gör. Men från vem? Kanske från främmande säkerhetstjänst? Eller har jag fel? Vi har en rättslig process som pågår i Sverige just nu mot Assanges och jag tycker att denna artikel är en av alla dessa påhopp på personen Julian Assanges bara för att EXTREMA FEMINISTER får sin vilja igenom i den svenska domstolen. **Med sådana artiklar bearbetar men den svenska opinionen och förbereder för en fallande dom.** Man manipulerar svenska folket helt enkelt med dessa påhopp. Alla vet också om att våldtäkts dömda ligger längst ner på brottskalan direkt efter pedofiler. Ja, så är det. Julian Assanges är redan dömd i Sverige innan han har kommit in i rättsalen. **Vem kommer att bry sig senare vad som händer med en som dömdes för två våldtäkter?** Gissa själv. Ingen. Då kan advokaten Thomas Bodström och advokaten Claes Borgström med stöd från svenska folket medverka i utvisningen av Julian Assanges till vist land efter avtjänad straff i Sverige. Detta kan ske på samma sätt som med dem två terroristmisstänkta egypter. F.d. justitieministern Thomas Bodström har känt till saken och givit godkännandet just för att amerikanska agenter skulle landa på en svensk mark, kränka vår suveränitet och ta över kontrollen över svenska säkerhetstjänsten och polisen bara för att vara till lags med den stora makten. Vilken roll spelar dessa två advokater i det hela sammanhanget? Se själva. GRANSKA istället dessa två HERRAR, advokaten Thomas Bodström och advokaten Claes Borgström.

Anders Broman · Toppkommentator

"Minst lika viktigt är att undersöka om läckan är psykiskt tillräknelig. Förstår han vilken risk han löper? Kan han efter publiceringen tänkas vilja skryta om saken på krogen eller i ett chattrum, och på så vis förstöra sitt liv?... Om något sådant sker är journalisten delansvarig."

Bullshit! Menar du att journalisten avgör om källan är psykiskt tillräknerlig enligt lagen? Vilken rätt har journalisten att omyndigförklara människor genom att ta sådana beslut? Då kan ju ni journalister också ta beslutet om våra patienter inom psykvården

då! Bullshit!

"Han förstod inte att den journalist som tar emot uppgifter från en hemlig källa har ett mycket långtgående ansvar för källans säkerhet." Bullshit!

Källan är en vuxen, tänkande individ som själv tar beslutet att det är värt risken av vad som kan tänkas hända, redan när han tänker tanken på att gå till pressen!

Det är bara en ursäkt för dig att slippa publicera obekväma sanningar....

David A Ljungberg · Toppkommentator

Vad är det här för tramsartikel? Hur är det Assange's fel att Bradley Manning råkade avslöja sig själv genom att bekänna inför en annan hacker som valde att kontakta myndigheterna? Manning's misstag har inte med Wikileaks att göra överhuvudtaget, än mindre med Julian Assange.

Christer H. Zeitgeist · Toppkommentator · Jobbar på The Zeitgeist Movement

Det är då fan att man ska behöva bemöta skribenter som Dan Josefsson här på Aftonbladet, som framstår som om dom inte ens verkar veta vad ordet "research" står för. Hade han ens gjort sig besväret hade han vetat om att det är en specifik person vid namn Adrian Lamo som är skälet till att Bradley Manning sitter fängslad för sin rent heroiska insats.

Adrian Lamo var tidigare känd som "The homeless hacker". Men idag mer känd som "World's most hated hacker". Och det med rätta. Anledningen till att han läckte Bradley Mannings namn till USA:s myndigheter var att hans eget namn hade, av misstag, publicerats som sponsor på Wikileaks. Och Bradley Manning hade SJÄLV gjort det stora misstaget att bekänna inför Adrian Lamo att det var han som läckt till Wikileaks. Och sedan slutade det i en hämnd som saknar alla proportioner, sans och förnuft. Adrian Lamo bestämde sig helt enkelt för att offra en person som överhuvudtaget inte hade att göra med anledningen till hans namn råkade publiceras som sponsor av Wikileaks. Något han senare uttryckt en viss ångerfullhet över. Men allt jag kan säga om det är— "To little, too late, Adrian Lamo".

Att Aftonbladet bedriver en rent politiskt motiverad smutskastning av Assange har för länge sedan stått klart. Och nu har Dan Josefsson sällat sig en samling individer som gör en "bend over" för USA.

Men, men. Det är ju alltid skönt att veta vilka individer som saknar ryggrad och har en tendens att krypa för "överhögheter", samt vara politiskt motiverade propagandamegafoner. För man slipper ju faktiskt, för all överskådlig framtid, ta dom på allvar. Och du, Dan Josefsson, är numera en av dessa individer.

Anna Hughes · Glasgow Caledonian University

Detta är ju helt fel. Hur kan man skriva en sån här artikel, så mycket fakta fel att det borde vara kriminellt. Bradley Manning avslöjade sig själv igenom att skryta om det till en känd hackare på internet som sen gick till polisen med det hela. Hade han följt wikileaks regler hade han antagligen klarat sig.

Daniel Klasson · Toppkommentator

Hur ska Wikileaks kunna bedomma den psykiska halsen av en anonym person?

Tobias Nilsson · Toppkommentator · Göteborg, Sweden

Det har var nog bland det konstigaste jag läst.

Per Fridholm · Toppkommentator · Smyge, Skåne Län, Sweden

Detta vad nog det mest motsägelsefulla jag läst på länge. Hur kan Ab ens publicera

det? Artikelförfattaren anser att tydligen att Assange skall göra bedömningar av den psykiska hälsan av en helt anonym person, redan där faller hela resonemanget. Att manning snackade runt om sina bedrifter på offentliga ställen är knappast Assanges fel, hur man än vänder det.

Däremot verkar en stor del av stockholmjournalisterna få intellektuella kollapser, som artiklen ovan, så fort Assange nämns. Vad beror detta på? Avundsjuka? Att man känner sig påhoppad? Att man känner sig hotad?

Men hur kan Sveriges största tidning ständigt har rubriker om Assange som "Assange är ett litet äckel", "Assanges moraliska kollaps" osv??? Den osakliga smutskastningskampanjen är osmaklig.

På tal om smutskastningskampanjer så påstod plötsligt förra veckan både TT, Expressen, aftonbladet att Wikileaks och Assange tänkte genomföra en smutskastningskampanj mot sverige. Nu hade inte alls Wikileaks någonsin påstått det och tog avstånd från det. Det visade sig att smutskastningsshotet var ett rent påhitt av Expressen, men både TT och Bildt gick på det.

Man kanske projicerar sina egna (svenska kvällstidningar) dåliga egenskaper på personen man bråkar med...

Christer H. Zeitgeist · Toppkommentator · Jobbar på The Zeitgeist Movement

Visst är det som höjden av ren ironi. Eller kanske rent av självironi. Media fortsätter att smutskasta Julian Assange. Denna gång genom påståendet— "Nu ska Assange smutskasta Bildt och Sverige"

Media och ren dumhet vandrar tydligen omkring hand i hand nuförtiden. Undrar när (och om) media, chefredaktörer, journalister etc. ska inse att det enda dom gör är att skämma ut sig själva hela tiden. Eller ska vi rent av vänta oss att majoriteten av journalister kommer att dyka upp med strypkoppel runt halsen på presskonferenser, med tanke på hur toppstyrda dom är redan idag.

Erik Welson · Toppkommentator · Uppsala

Ojoj, var ska jag börja? De journalister som lovsjungs i ledaren deltar gärna i drev där flockmentalitet råder och fakta som talar mot drevet gärna glöms bort. Därför har nog Assange och alla andra intelligenta personer rätt och skyldighet att se ner på sådana "journalister.

Kicki Söderström · Lärarhögskolan Stockholm

Nu får ni väl ger er? Hur ska Julian Assange kunna avgöra en uppgiftslämnares psykiska hälsa, någon han inte ens vet vem det är? Smutskastningen av Julian Assange går för långt.

Robert Dahl

Dan Josefsson, var snäll att byt jobb! <http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se/platsbanken>

Martin Burgos

Riktigt låg artikel !!! Propaganda !!

Jutta von Schweden · Many på Many places

... Dan Josefsson tycker bara att han själv är en mer professionell journalist än vad Assange är. Svenska journalistkåren tycker att Pilger och Moore inte har fattat att Sverige är ett undantag från alla andra korrupta rättstater. I svenskt journalistpatos samlar de nu ihop sig till en liten skara komplexfyllda "nu måste vi ställa upp på maktens anspråk att krossa någon som vågade offra något". Med ordet i sin makt kan

de alltid ursäkta sig med att de "skyddar källor" eller minsann är mer proffsiga än Assange och Pilger. De anser sig yrkesetiska när de underlåter att skriva om riktigt viktiga angelägenheter. De skyddar källor..oj då

Nicholas Berglund

Assanges moraliska kollaps? Det finns en poäng i att skydda källor från myndigheter och sig själva, men den här journalisten är ute och cyklar. Bland det sämsta jag läst!

AnnKatrin Persson · Toppkommentator

Det är rätt att Wikileaks skickar ut den här informationen men det är inte rätt av wikileaks att inte skydda sina källor. Vem kommer i framtiden att våga skicka något till Wikileaks? Bara att se på Bradley Manning troligtvis livstids fängelse och vems fel är det? Bradley M som skickade eller Wikileaks som inte kan skydda sina källor? Jag svarar Wikileaks, för folk ska våga tala om vad

Christer H. Zeitgeist · Toppkommentator · Jobbar på The Zeitgeist Movement

Snälla! Det är inte för att vara oförskämd på något sätt. Men läs på lite i ämnet på egen hand. Svälj inte okritiskt precis allt som skrivs och sägs i media.

Wikileaks har INTE struntat i att skydda sina källor. Någonsin. Det var Bradley Manning själv som berättade att han var läckan för en person vid namn Adrian Lamo. Och Adrian Lamo har att göra med Wikileaks överhuvudtaget. Och det var sedan Adrian Lamo som läckte vidare uppgifterna till amerikanska myndigheter. Det enda Adrian Lamo har gjort för Wikileaks är att vid ett tillfälle ha donerat pengar.

Julian Assange själv däremot nämner inte ens namnen på Wikileaks "whistleblowers" till sina närmaste medarbetare. Något vissa av dom (av underliga skäl) kritiserat Assange för. Men han vägrar ändå.

Julian Assange (eller Wikileaks) har ingen som helst skuld i att Bradley Mannings namn läckte ut.

AnnKatrin Persson · Toppkommentator

Ok är det rätt så klagar jag inte såklart...

Christina Spjut · Helsingfors universitet

Amen härregud. Hur korkad får en krönikör vara och varför i all världen ska en kvällstidning slösa trycksvärta på en sådan ologisk ordsoppa!

Torsten Kindstrom

DJ är en av de mest prettiga och populistiska journosarna

Christer H. Zeitgeist · Toppkommentator · Jobbar på The Zeitgeist Movement

Mailade Dan Josefsson om artikeln. Och bland annat detta fick jag till svar:

"I min artikel i dagens Aftonbladet hävdar jag att Julian Assange hade en skyldighet att ta reda på om Manning möjligen var så instabil att han kunde tänkas avslöja sig själv-- till någon överhuvudtaget. Om denne någon sedan skulle visa sig vara hans chef, hans mamma eller en person som Adrian Lamo förändrar ingenting."

Slutsats: Assange ska inte bara tillhandahålla en sajt för anonym och säker distribution till "whistleblowers", enligt Dan Josefsson. Det vill säga, hans faktiska uppgift. Julian Assange ska även fylla en funktion som läkare, psykolog och terapeut. Själv har jag aldrig trott på "rena övermänniskor". Och det gäller även Assange. Om en person

ställer totalt löjliga och orealistiska krav så förstår jag också att samma person också producerar en lika löjlig artikel. Kvaliteten på den är ändå densamma. USEL!

Och bara tanken på att Julian Assange (med dom mängder av material som strömmar in till Wikileaks) även ska ställa frågor till varenda uppgiftslämnare som, "Och hur mår? Jag menar mentalt? Känner du dig stabil?", får mig bara att brista ut i ett enda stort LOL!

Allvarligt talat. Har någon en "dumstrut" till övers? Om så är fallet, skicka den då omgående till Dan Josefsson.

Daniel Klasson · Toppkommentator

Jag har helt förlorat min respekt för Dan Josefsson. Vilken idiot.

Christer H. Zeitgeist · Toppkommentator · Jobbar på The Zeitgeist Movement

Ingenting ovanligt på den här "blaskan" när det gäller just Assange. Här på Aftonbladet är det ett fullständigt "röven upp för USA" som gäller angående Assange. Det är sedan länge konstaterat.

Och sen att Assange kallat bland annat pekat på att Aftonbladet och deras journalister är en "moraliskt lågtstående fårscock" (vilket jag personligen fullständigt håller med om) gör ju kanske inte saken bättre när det gäller deras rent subjektiva beteende.

Gunnar Thorell · Social Worker Peace and Justice på Stockholm stad

Det är en märklig blandning av feghet o enfald som svenska journalister visar när det gäller att bedöma Julian Assange o Bradley Manning. Beror det på avund, eller är det den lilla marknaden för intellektuella som skapar denna brist på perspektiv?

Kenneth Rasmusson · Lund, Sweden

Det tycks här ha undgått Dan Josefsson helt att samvetsvisselblåsaren Bradley Manning avslöjade sig själv i samband med en chatt med den hacker som sedan anmälde honom. Att spekulera utan någon som helst grund om Julian Assanges eventuella skuld för Mannings öde, vars advokater nu försöker försvara honom genom att ställa fram hans homosexualitet som orsaken till sekretessbrotten, är därför inte bara falskspel utan även en uselt dålig fars som enbart kan skrivas av någon som har smutskastringen av Assange och Wikileaks allra högst på den egna drängtjänsteagendan. Aftonbladets kultursida borde höja sig från dylikt!

The dirty war on WikiLeaks

Media smears suggest Swedish complicity in a Washington-driven push to punish Julian Assange

*John Pilger
The Guardian
9 March 2012*

War by media, says current military doctrine, is as important as the battlefield. This is because the real enemy is the public at home, whose manipulation and deception is essential for starting an unpopular colonial war. Like the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, attacks on Iran and Syria require a steady drip-effect on readers' and viewers'

consciousness. This is the essence of a propaganda that rarely speaks its name.

To the chagrin of many in authority and the media, WikiLeaks has torn down the facade behind which rapacious western power and journalism collude. This was an enduring taboo; the BBC could claim impartiality and expect people to believe it. Today, war by media is increasingly understood by the public, as is the trial by media of WikiLeaks' founder and editor Julian Assange.

Assange will soon know if the supreme court in London is to allow his appeal against extradition to Sweden, where he faces allegations of sexual misconduct, most of which were dismissed by a senior prosecutor in Stockholm. On bail for 16 months, tagged and effectively under house arrest, he has been charged with nothing. His "crime" has been an epic form of investigative journalism: revealing to millions of people the lies and machinations of their politicians and officials and the barbarism of criminal war conducted in their name.

For this, as the American historian William Blum points out, "dozens of members of the American media and public officials have called for [his] execution or assassination". If he is passed from Sweden to the US, an orange jumpsuit, shackles and a fabricated indictment await him. And there go all who dare challenge rogue America.

In Britain, Assange's trial by media has been a campaign of character assassination, often cowardly and inhuman, reeking of jealousy of the courageous outsider, while books of perfidious hearsay have been published, movie deals struck and media careers launched or resuscitated on the assumption that he is too poor to sue. In Sweden this trial by media has become, according to one observer there, "a full-on mobbing campaign with the victim denied a voice". For more than 18 months, the salacious Expressen, Sweden's equivalent of the Sun, has been fed the ingredients of a smear by Stockholm police.

Expressen is the megaphone of the Swedish right, including the Conservative party, which dominates the governing coalition. Its latest "scoop" is an unsubstantiated story about "the great WikiLeaks war against Sweden". On 6 March Expressen claimed, with no evidence, that WikiLeaks was running a conspiracy against Sweden and its foreign minister Carl Bildt. The political pique is understandable. In a 2009 US embassy cable obtained by WikiLeaks, the Swedish elite's vaunted reputation for neutrality is exposed as sham. (Cable title: "Sweden puts neutrality in the Dustbin of History.") Another US diplomatic cable reveals that "the extent of [Sweden's military and intelligence] co-operation [with Nato] is not widely known", and unless kept secret "would open up the government to domestic criticism".

Swedish foreign policy is largely controlled by Bildt, whose obeisance to the US goes back to his defence of the Vietnam war and includes his leading role in George W Bush's Committee for the Liberation of Iraq. He retains close ties to Republican party extreme rightwing figures such as the disgraced Bush spin doctor, Karl Rove. It is known that his government has "informally" discussed Assange's future with Washington, which has made its position clear. A secret Pentagon document describes US intelligence plans to destroy WikiLeaks' "centre of gravity" with "threats of exposure [and] criminal prosecution".

In much of the Swedish media, proper journalistic scepticism about the allegations

against Assange is overwhelmed by a defensive jingoism, as if the nation's honour is defiled by revelations about dodgy coppers and politicians, a universal breed. On Swedish public TV "experts" debate not the country's deepening militarist state and its service to Nato and Washington, but the state of Assange's mind and his "paranoia". A headline in Tuesday's Aftonbladet declared: "Assange's moral collapse". The article suggests Bradley Manning, WikiLeaks' alleged source, may not be sane, and attacks Assange for not protecting Manning from himself. What was not mentioned was that the source was anonymous, that no connection has been demonstrated between Assange and Manning, and that Aftonbladet, WikiLeaks' Swedish partner, had published the same leaks undeterred.

Ironically, this circus has performed under cover of some of the world's most enlightened laws protecting journalists, which attracted Assange to Sweden in 2010 to establish a base for WikiLeaks. Should his extradition be allowed, and with Damocles swords of malice and a vengeful Washington hanging over his head, who will protect him and provide the justice to which we all have a right?

AB: 2012-03-14

Svinen och storyn

Julian Assange är ett osympatiskt svin — men han hänger inte ut sina egna medarbetare, skriver Martin Aagaard.

Likheterna mellan Rupert Murdoch och Julian Assange börjar nästan bli löjligt många. Men hur illa vi än tycker om dem för tillfället, så har det aldrig varit viktigare än just nu att försvara deras journalistik. De är nämligen helt oförmögna att försvara den själva.

Vänstern har inte blivit särskilt ledsen över att Rupert Murdochs medieimperium rasat samman det senaste året. När News of the world tvingades lägga ner i juli så klappade man till och med händerna— av det enkla skälet att Murdoch aldrig tvekat att använda sina medier för politiska syften. Inte minst det avskydda Fox News har blivit en sorts gigantisk högerblogg i tv-format.

Högern har väl inte heller engagerat sig överdrivet mycket i Murdochs tidningshaveri, eftersom våra konservativa medborgare ofta anser att tabloidtidningar är något som borde säljas under disk i porrbutiker.

De enda som försvarat Murdoch är gamla mediegubbar. Mediegubbar älskar ju alltid andra mediegubbar. Särskilt om de har mycket makt.

Men de som skrattar åt det som nu händer på The Sun är lika naiva som alla som tycker att Wikileaks borde läggas ner.

Visst går det att bedriva The Suns skoningslösa journalistik utan den totala empatilöshet och mansgriseri som genomsyrar allt tidningen tar sig för. Men man behöver faktiskt inte gilla The Sun för att uppröras över hur tidningen behandlats på

sistone.

För tillfället pågår tre parallella brittiska utredningar mot The Sun och Murdoch-sfären. FBI utreder dessutom om amerikaner har fått sina telefoner hackade av Murdoch-medier och i Moskva undersöker polisen om Murdochs ryska reklamföretag mutat lokala myndigheter. Men i centrum står anklagelserna om att The Suns reportrar ägnat sig åt olaglig telefonavlyssning och mutor.

Ur ett polisperspektiv är naturligtvis poliser som säljer information till högstbjudande en katastrof. Men ur ett journalistperspektiv är det inte alls särskilt dåligt. Tvärtom. Korrupta poliser har massor att berätta.

Enligt utredarna har The Sun betalat så mycket som 80 000 pund (835 000 kronor) till enstaka statstjänsteman. En enskild reporter ska dessutom ha haft 150 000 pund (1,57 miljoner kronor) i årlig tipsbudget. Reportrarna på The Sun hävdar å sin sida att det bara handlat om lunchpengar.

Vad än utredningarna kommer fram till är en sak ganska klar— den ende som kommer att klara sig helskinnad ur det här är Rupert Murdoch. Hans son James har redan fått sparken som styrelseordförande för tidningarnas holdingbolag. Redaktörerna Rebekah Brooks och Les Hinton har fått gå.

Men framför allt är det hans journalister som får ta smällen. I går morse greps Brooks och hennes make tillsammans med fem andra journalister av Scotland Yard. Tidigare i år greps ytterligare tio medarbetare på The Sun i en polisinsats som mest av allt påminde om en ren antiterror-attack.

Och det var Rupert Murdoch som gjorde det möjligt. Han har nämligen varit behjälplig med att skapa The Management and Standards Committee (MSC)— ett organ som förser polisutredningen med information, vilket lett till att ett veritabelt inbördeskrig brutit ut på The Sun. Personalen har hotat att stämma Murdoch i Europadomstolen för att få honom att sluta lämna ut uppgifter om journalisterna och deras hemliga källor, och kritik mot den ryggradslöse ägaren smygs in i tidningens krönikor.

”Folk tycker att de kastats under en buss”, säger en anonym Sun-medarbetare till Reuters.

Mitt i denna skandal har Murdoch dessutom tvingat de pressade journalisterna att skapa en ny söndagstidning— The Sun on Sunday. För en vecka sedan rapporterade Reuters att två av tidningens medarbetare försökt ta sina liv. Pressen börjar helt enkelt bli för stor.

Men det är inte bara enstaka journalister som blivit överkörda av Murdoch-bussen. Det är hela idén om grävande journalistik.

Grävande journalistik ska inte vara en syssla som ryggar för märkliga metoder. Tvärtom. Ju märkligare och mer oväntade metoder du använder, desto djupare gräver du. Att avlyssna telefoner på ett sätt som inte bryter mot buggningslagen (till exempel att ringa någons telefonsvarare och chansa på att koden är 0000) är inte förbjudet. Att betala tipspengar var inte heller förbjudet i England innan en ny, hårdare mutlagstiftning infördes i somras.

Murdoch-tidningarnas övertramp kommer att användas för att smutskasta grävande och grälsjuk journalistik under lång tid framöver. I Australien har man redan lagt ett förslag om att ett nytt medieråd ska övervaka pressen. En ren censurlag. Samma sak kommer säkert att hända i Storbritannien där man redan snävat in yttrandefriheten på bland annat Facebook.

Julian Assange har insett samma sak som reportrarna på The Sun— journalistik handlar om den story du får fram. Om du fått den via telefonhackning eller datahackning spelar ingen större roll. Men inte heller Assange är särskilt populär för tillfället.

Vänstern klarar inte av hans sexistiska uttalanden och hans anarkoliberala hat mot staten. Högern ser honom som samhällets fiende nummer ett och inte ens mediegubbarna som kramar Murdoch gillar honom. Expressen publicerade nyligen en krönika av New York Times chefredaktör Bill Keller som hävdar att Wikileaks inte skapat ett mer transparent samhälle. Tvärtom. Han är dessutom sur över att Assange kallar gammelmедier korrupta. Men Wikileaks dök upp i en stund när en hel generation förlorat förtroendet för journalistiken. Assange lyckades förnya deras tro på mediernas kraft.

Men visst finns många goda skäl att kritisera Assange. Ett är att han är ett osympatiskt svin. Däremot hänger han inte ut sina egna medarbetare, även om vissa hävdar motsatsen. I Aftonbladet (6 mars) skriver Dan Josefsson om Assanges moraliska kollaps och menar att han är ansvarig för att Wikileaks-källan Bradley Manning riskerar ett livslångt fängelsestraff.

En källa som Manning borde absolut ha informerats noga om vilka extrema risker han löpte. Men det är ett problem som drabbar alla journalister som tar emot anonyma tips. I dag har dessutom många mediehus någon sorts tipstjänst som påminner om Wikileaks— till och med Sveriges Radio har sitt eget Radioleaks.

Och att anklaga Julian Assange för Mannings fängslande är bara okunnigt. I de chattloggar mellan Manning och mannen som avslöjade honom (Adrian Lamo) som tidningen Wired har publicerat, visar det sig varför Manning avslöjade sig: han **lurades tro att han pratade med en journalist. Han trodde helt enkelt att han hade källskydd.**

Det var inte misstro mot journalistiken som fällde Manning. Det var blind tro på den. Ironiskt, inte sant?

Kommentarer

Gunnel Werner

Är det Claes Borgström, som denne Martin Agård vill ge en hjälpande hand med sitt personmord på Assange? Har uppenbarligen intressen i denna svenska rättsskandal. Journalistik eller privat partsinlaga?

Ta reda på hur nära bekant Aagårds fru är med den sk "A" med partibeteckningen S, i Assange-målet. Har AB tagit reda på det innan publiceringen?

Christer Nilsson · Toppkommentator · Nordbo köksarkitektskola

Ja det är verkligen dags att se lite nyanserat på det hela.. delar allt utom den personliga synen på Assange.. man mår gott av att provgå andra skor i Ny Liberalismens värld..
Svar ·

Ahpa Roengkasetkij

En ganska bra artikel som faller platt på att man kallar folk för "osympatiska svin", men den är ju på kultursidan, så det är väl kultur....

Goran Omar Bockman · Toppkommentator · Viggbyholmsskolan

Att jamfora Julian Assange med Murdoch ar hojden av osmaklighet. Den ene har ruinerat sej pa att bringa sanningen i ljuset; den andre har blivit multimiljardar pa logner och smutskastning.

No harm done but Assange faces real risk in the US

Scott Ludlam

The West Australian

March 13th, 2012

Last year, I travelled to London and Sweden at my own expense to improve my understanding of the situation faced by Wikileaks founder, Australian Julian Assange.

I attended Mr Assange's High Court hearing in London and met Swedish justice and police officials to learn more about Mr Assange's rights should he land in a Stockholm remand cell.

Mr Assange was subjected to an Interpol Red Notice without charge or a decision to prosecute. About the same time, a less urgent Orange Notice was issued for Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.

If that strikes you as odd, consider the fury Wikileaks has aroused in some of the most powerful people by doing what every good news publisher does— reporting the truth no matter how embarrassing.

My main concern is the possibility that Mr Assange, once in Sweden, will be extradited to the US under a "temporary surrender" mechanism for his work with Wikileaks. I hold grave fears for what sort of treatment Mr Assange will be in for if he is transferred to custody in the US.

The private intelligence firm Stratfor appears to know more than our Government about the existence of a sealed US Grand Jury indictment for Mr Assange.

Months of questions to Kevin Rudd when he was foreign minister and the Attorney General's office have yielded nothing about its existence.

Did the US hide this information from the Australian Government? Either Washington lied to Canberra or Canberra lied to us.

Citizens in open democratic societies understand the need for confidentiality in international diplomacy. This does not mean we need nor deserve to be deceived on

matters of life and death.

Wikileaks has shown me things about my country that sit uncomfortably. The release of this information was in the public interest— not because states don't deserve a modicum of discretion in their operations, but because occasional acts of unexpected transparency remind governments and corporations that they will be held responsible for their actions.

For those officials and organisations who have consistently told the truth, the release of the cables hold little consequence. For those who have lied about war, governance and commerce, they are an indictment. And a very great many people have lied, in our names and on our payroll.

A year after the cable releases, military and political figures in the US have acknowledged that while embarrassing, the releases caused no serious harm. No one was endangered, no one was killed. What the releases did was give us a better understanding of how power works. And that is the primary role of the free press.

- *Scott Ludlam is a WA Greens Senator*

Julian Assange to run for Australian senate

WikiLeaks founder hopes to enter politics in home country after discovering his ongoing extradition battle would be no bar

*Associated Press
17 March 2012*

The WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange plans to run for a seat in Australia's senate next year despite being under virtual house arrest in the UK and facing sex crime allegations in Sweden. The 40-year-old Australian citizen has taken his legal battle against extradition all the way to Britain's supreme court, which is expected to rule on his case soon.

"We have discovered that it is possible for Julian Assange to run for the Australian senate while detained. Julian has decided to run," WikiLeaks announced on Twitter.

Assange has criticised Australian prime minister Julia Gillard's centre-left government for not standing up for him in the wake of WikiLeaks' release of hundreds of thousands of classified US embassy cables in 2010.

Australian police have concluded that WikiLeaks and Assange did not break any Australian laws by publishing the cables, although **Gillard has condemned the action as "grossly irresponsible"**.

John Wanna, a political scientist at Australian National University, said it was possible for Assange to run for a senate seat if he remained on the Australian electoral roll, despite living overseas for several years. "If he gets on the roll, then he can stand **as long as he's solvent and not in jail and not insane**," Wanna said.

Being convicted of a crime punishable under Australian law by 12 months or more in prison can disqualify a person from running for the Australian parliament for the duration of the sentence, even if it is suspended.

Constitutional lawyer George Williams of the University of New South Wales said that provision of the constitution has never been tested in the courts in the 111-year history of the Australian federation and **probably would not apply to a criminal conviction in a foreign country such as Sweden**. "I'm not aware of an impediment to him standing, even if he was convicted," Williams said.

Any adult Australian citizen can run for parliament, but few succeed without the backing of a major political party. **Only one of Australia's 76 current senators does not represent a party.**

Every Australian election attracts candidates who have little hope of winning and use their campaigns to seek publicity for various political or commercial causes.

Wanna said the odds are against Assange winning a seat, but that he could receive more than 4% of the votes in his nominated state because of his high profile. At that threshold, candidates can claim more than AUS \$2 per vote from the government to offset their campaign expenses. Assange's bill to the taxpayer could reach hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The next senate election cannot be called before July 2013 and is due around August. Candidates cannot officially register as candidates until the election is called at least a month before the poll date.

Assange's mother, Christine Assange, a professional puppeteer from rural Queensland, said on Saturday she had yet to discuss her son's political bid with him. But she criticised what she believed was the government's willingness to put its defence treaty with the US ahead of the rights of an Australian citizen.

"The number one issue at the next election regardless of who you vote for is democracy in this country— **whether or not we're just a state of the US** and whether or not our citizens are going to be just handed over as a sacrifice to the US alliance," she said.

AB: 2012-03-17



Julian Assange
ställer upp i val

► [Kandiderar till Australiens senat 2013](#) Misstänks för sexbrott i Sverige.



DN: 2012-03-25

Julian Assanges många ansikten

Han kallas för "världens farligaste man" av en person som utsetts till "USA:s farligaste man". Just nu väntar Julian Assange på beskedet om han ska överlämnas till Sverige. Här kommer han då att ställas till svars i en rättegång om misstänkt våldtäkt. Bland annat handlar den om ifall han i augusti 2010 medvetet slitit av sig sin kondom.

Julian Assange anlände till Sverige den 11 augusti 2010 och togs emot som en rockstjärna [Sant? --A.B.]. Han betraktade då Sverige som ett drömland där han kunde arbeta fritt. Den svenska tryckfrihetsförordningen med anor från 1760-talet gjorde att hemliga källor hade det bättre i Sverige än i de allra flesta länder, menade han. Och det var för att få maximalt skydd av det svenska regelverket som han reste till Stockholm för att söka uppehållstillstånd. Med ett sådant i handen skulle han sedan skaffa ett publicistiskt utgivningsbevis och ha sig själv som ansvarig utgivare.

På så vis skulle Wikileaks, den kontroversiella sajten där hemliga dokument publiceras, få ett bättre skydd för de dataservrar som då fanns i ett gammalt skyddsrum i en källarlokal i Solna.

Innan Assange reste till Stockholm såg han till att, som vanligt, ha en formell inbjudan från något politiskt parti om att hålla ett offentligt föredrag. Det var ett sätt för honom att garantera uppmärksamhet och även hjälp om han skulle råka ut för något oplanerat.

Inför den här resan hade han en inbjudan från de kristna socialdemokraterna i Broderskapsrörelsen om att tala om Afghanistan på några av deras möten. Och det var vid dessa föreläsningar som han träffade de två kvinnor som han senare skulle få ihop det med, med kort mellanrum.

Bägge kvinnorna hade inledningsvis en relation med honom och han övernattade och hade sex med dem i deras bostäder i mitten av augusti. Men förhållandena spårade ur bland annat för att han, enligt kvinnorna, haft sönder eller tagit av sig sin kondom. De var rädda för att de blivit smittade av hiv. s

Donald Boström är journalist och var inhyrd som mediakontakt under Broderskapsrörelsens konferens där Assange deltog i augusti 2010. När de misstänka sexbrotten uppdagades fungerade han som en länk mellan Assange och de två kvinnorna.

– En av kvinnorna ringde till mig och förklarade att de tänkte gå till polisen om inte Julian Assange gick med på att hiv-testa sig. Jag kontaktade då honom och framförde deras krav. **Till en början var han emot, men gav sedan med sig. Jag hjälpte honom att få kontakt med olika kliniker som skulle göra testet. Det här var sent på fredag eftermiddag och det hela slutade med att han inte hann komma in innan de stängde, säger Donald Boström.**

De båda kvinnorna vände sig då till polisen för att få hjälp. I praktiken betydde det att de polisanmält händelserna.

Den legendariske whistleblowern Daniel Ellsberg gjorde på 70-talet världssensation när han fick fram tusentals dokument från det amerikanska försvarshögkvarteret Pentagon som bland annat visade att den dåvarande amerikanske presidenten Richard Nixon bluffade om vad som hänt under Vietnamkriget. Ellsberg blev då kallad för den "farligaste mannen i USA". Han dömdes till sammanlagt 115 års fängelse för spioneri men slapp undan straffet sedan Nixon gått för långt i sin iver att hämnas.

I dag är Ellsberg mentor, förebild och något av en gudfader för Julian Assange och Wikileaks i arbetet med att avslöja hemligheter och orättvisor. Och nu har Ellsberg utnämnt Assange till att vara ett strå vassare, nämligen "världens farligaste man".

Första gången som Julian Assanges namn dyker upp i Dagens Nyheters klipparkiv är den 7 april 2010. Under rubriken " Militärkälla bekräftar att Bagdadfilm är äkta" berättas om hur den amerikanska Apachehelikoptern AH-64 "Crazy Horse" den 12 juli 2007 öppnade eld med sin 30 mm automatkanon mot en grupp människor på en gata i Bagdad. Tolv personer dödades och två barn sårades. Bild och ljud kom inifrån helikopterns egen videoinspelning av händelsen och innehåller besättningens iskalla och cyniska kommentarer.

De hemliga filmbilderna hade läckt ut från det amerikanska försvaret och publicerats av Wikileaks och dess grundare Julian Assange. Båda blev omedelbart världsberömda.

– **Piloterna uppför sig som om de spelade dataspel och vill få så höga poäng som möjligt, förklarade Assange på en välbesökt presskonferens** den 5 april 2010 på pressklubben i Washington när han för första gången på allvar utmanade den amerikanska supermakten.

Fenomenet Wikileaks omnämns i klipparkivet redan år 2007 då tidskriften Forskning & Framsteg beskriver denna databas med rubriken "Ny webbplats för att läcka hemligheter ska ge en kanal för förtryckta". Här står också att "besökare ska kunna lägga ut dokument utan risk att bli identifierade, sofistikerad kryptering och avidentifiering ska göra det så gott som omöjligt att spåra avsändare". **Själv beskriver Assange sin organisation Wikileaks som "folkets underrättelsetjänst".**

I dag vet vi att idén om totalt källskydd inte höll. Wikileaks förmodade huvudläcka, den då 24-årige amerikanske underrättelseanalytikern i Irak Bradley Manning, arresterades i maj 2010, kort efter att de hemliga filmbilderna med helikopterattacken släppts av Wikileaks. *[Fel. Det var Manning själv som avslöjade sig till en journalist som sedan anmälde honom till USA-regeringen. ---A.B.]*

Han åtalas nu av en amerikansk militärdomstol för att ha läckt ut hemlig militär information och för "medhjälp till fienden". Manning riskerar livstids fängelse. Enligt tidningen Washington Post har åklagare i USA bevis för att Manning och Assange samarbetat och att Manning uttryckligen bett om hjälp från Wikileaks.

Det är fortfarande oklart om vad Manning har stulit och skickat vidare. Det är också en öppen fråga om Wikileaks varit en passiv mottagare av informationen, eller om den misstänkta källan Bradley Manning uppmuntrades av Wikileaks till att lämna ut denna. Men det står i alla fall klart att Wikileaks misslyckades med att hjälpa sin förmodade källa från att klara sig undan upptäckt. *[Fel och åter fel. ---A.B.]*

Motgången har lett till att Wikileaks taggat ned på sin hemsida. Tidigare stod det: "Att lämna förtroligt material till Wikileaks är säkert, enkelt och skyddat av lagen". Det byttes ut till det mindre tvärsäkra: "Att överlämna material till våra journalister är skyddat av lagen i bättre demokratier". Och lite senare: "Wikileaks tar emot material av olika slag, men vi efterfrågar det inte." *[Detta är en helt annan sak. ---A.B.]*

Möjligen uppfattade Assange det hela som utagerat sedan chefsåklagare Eva Finné den 25 augusti beslutade att lägga ned förundersökningen om våldtäkt. Men kort därefter togs han i polisförhör misstänkt för sexuellt ofredande. *[Det gällde en mindre allvarlig anklagelse om icke-sexuellt ofredande som Eva Finné för tillfället lät stå. ---A.B.]* Under förhöret finns hans försvarsadvokat Leif Silbersky och en tolk med vid hans sida.

I början av september tog överåklagare Marianne Ny över ärendet och återupptog förundersökningen om misstänkt våldtäkt. Några veckor senare, den 27 september, reste Assange från Arlanda till Berlin efter klartecken från sin nya advokat Björn Hurtig, som i sin tur påstår att han fått grönt ljus av överåklagaren Marianne Ny. En ny uppgift i sammanhanget är att när Assange kom fram till Berlin var allt hans bagage borta. Den 29 september ringde han till Björn Hurtig för att få juridisk hjälp med en

stöldanmälan. Väskorna är fortfarande borta, något som Assange kopplar ihop med jakten på honom och hans gärning.

I oktober häktades Assange i sin frånvaro av tingsrätten i Stockholm och Marianne Ny begärde att han skulle infinna sig för ytterligare förhör. Misstankarna mot honom hade nu utvidgats till våldtäkt, sexuellt ofredande och olaga tvång. Advokat Björn Hurtig försökte på olika sätt arrangera ett helgmöte i Stockholm den 8–9 oktober eller ett telefonmöte i London, men fick nej av Marianne Ny. **Till slut gav Assange upp tanken på att resa till Sverige eftersom han inte längre litade på det svenska rättssystemet.**

Överåklagare Marianne Ny och tingsrätten begärde då att han skulle hämtas av brittisk polis med hjälp av en europeisk arresteringsorder. *[Hon bestämde redan 27 september att utföra en hemlig arresteringsorder för Assange. —A.B.]*

Polisen i Storbritannien fick snabbt tag på Assange *[han anmälde sig frivilligt till polisen —A.B.]* och tog honom den 7 december 2010 till det ökända Wandsworthfängelset i sydvästra London. Där fick han tillbringa en tid iförd grå fångkläder med det anonyma fängnumret A9379AY fastsytt på tröjan. Under en tid var Julian Assange inlåst i samma fängelsecell som den irländske författaren Oscar Wilde satt inburad i år 1895 efter att ha dömts till två års fängelse för "homosexuella aktiviteter".

Den bästa vännen *[enligt vem? —A.B.]* och den tidigare nära medarbetaren Daniel Domscheit-Berg beskriver Assanges förhållande till kvinnor så här i sin bok "Wikileaks": "Vi talade ofta om evolutionsteorin. Den starkare var inte bara alltid i överläge, han skulle också utmärka sig genom den vitalare avkomman. Han menade att hans gener var speciellt värda att spridas. Jag var med när han inför en stor grupp människor skröt om alla ställen i världen där han redan var pappa. Många små Julian, en på varje kontinent— den bilden verkade han gilla. Om han sedan verkligen tog hand om barnen, eller om de ens existerade var en annan fråga". *[Det är också en fråga om man kan lita på Domscheit-Berg i detta sammanhang. —A.B.]*

Daniel Domscheit-Berg har svårt att se Assange som en sexbrottsling, berättar han för Dagens Nyheter.

– Det som blev hans fall var att han, den största manschauvinist som jag känner *[en bedömning som bygger på vad? —A.B.]*, hade oturen att vid olika tillfällen träffa på två självständiga svenska kvinnor— och det i ett land som har strängare juridisk syn på sexuella övergrepp än de flesta andra länder. Jag tror inte att Julian längre påstår att det är amerikanska CIA som arrangerade det som hände i Sverige för att komma åt honom. *[Han lär aldrig ha "påstått" det — bara diskuterat möjligheten. —A.B.]*

Julian Assange nekar till brott och menar att det som inträffade närmast var en bagatellartad händelse. Så här förklarar han det i sin självbiografi "Memoarer är prostitution": "Jag var ingen pålitlig pojkvän, inte ens ett artigt ligg, och det framstod allt tydligare. Det är möjligt att jag är ett slags mansgris, men jag är ingen våldtäktsman, och det är bara en riktigt vriden version av könspolitik som kan få mig till det. Båda två hade sex med mig frivilligt och hängde gärna med mig efteråt. Det är allt." *[Han har inte godkänt texten, varför man inte kan vara säker på att han faktiskt lämnat denna "förklaring" —A.B.]*

Julian Assange släpptes fri från fängelset i sydvästra London den 16 december 2010

mot en borgen på 240 000 pund (2 miljoner kronor). Sedan dess sitter han i husarrest på det pampiga godset Ellingham Hall i Norfolk, hemma hos journalisten och vännen Vaughan Smith. *[Han har nu flyttat till ett annat ställe. —A.B.]* Huvudbyggnaden som är från 1700-talet är byggd i grått tegel och har tio sovrum. Ett flertal anställda behövs för att hålla godset i gång. Alan Rusbridger, chefredaktör för The Guardian, liknar denna märkliga "godsarrest" som en historia som Stieg Larsson kunnat hitta på och som bearbetats av författaren till "Downton Abbey", Julian Fellowes. *[Rusbridger är knappast någon pålitlig källa i detta sammanhang. —A.B.]*

Villkoren för frigivningen var att han ska bära elektronisk fotboja och att han har utgångsförbud på kvällar och nätter. Varje kväll, mellan klockan 18 och 20, ska han dessutom rapportera till den lokala polisstationen i Bungay som ligger några kilometer från Ellingham Hall.

Assange menar att den höga borgenssumman och att han nu sitter i elektronisk husarrest inte står i någon som helst proportion till de brott han misstänks för i Sverige. Det måste finnas andra (politiska) skäl, menar han.

Striden i de brittiska domstolarna har bara handlat om den europeiska arresteringsordern har hanterats korrekt— inte alls om Assange är skyldig till de brott som åklagaren i Sverige vill höra honom om. Han stormar nu mot den europeiska arresteringsordern och beskriver den som ett hastverk skapat efter terrordådet i USA den 11 september 2001. Det är orimligt, menar han och hans engelska advokater, att EU-länderna i dag kan få en person överlämnad genom att enbart presentera en misstanke om brott och att fylla i ett formulär på två A4-sidor. *[Det är långt ifrån enbart Assange som är kritisk mot EAW, och det är grovt missvisande att ge detta intryck. —A.B.]*

Han vill inte bli utlämnad till Sverige och ett juridiskt system som han inte gillar eller begriper *[eller som ovan sagt litar på—A.B.]*. Risken är stor, menar han, att han isoleras från omvärlden i ett svenskt häkte under utredningstiden och att rättegången därefter sker bakom lyckta dörrar eftersom det handlar om ett sexbrott. Och själva rättegången litar han heller inte på eftersom avgörandet hänger på de politiskt tillsatta nämndemännen i domstolarna.

Det var Leif Silbersky som var Julian Assanges förste försvarsadvokat. Men redan efter en kort tid begärde Assange att få byta eftersom han menade att Silbersky inte var tillräckligt engagerad och ibland var svår att nå. I sin begäran om att få byta advokat påpekade Julian Assange att "möjligheten att få stanna i Sverige (han hade lämnat in en ansökan om uppehållstillstånd till Migrationsverket) riskerar att spolieras om jag inte får ett fullgott försvar".

Ny försvarare blev Björn Hurtig. Vid domstolsförhandlingarna i London i fjol redde den brittiske domaren Howard Riddle ut vad som gått snett vid försöken i Sverige att genomföra nya förhör med Assange. Problemet var att Björn Hurtig missat sms från åklagaren Marianne Ny som skickades innan Assange lämnade Sverige. Domaren i London var uppenbart irriterad av att Hurtig "vilselett" domstolen genom att inte minnas att åklagaren hade skickat tre sms till honom med begäran om att få förhöra Assange i september. *[Riddles tolkning har skarpt ifrågasatts av bl.a. den pensionerade svenska domaren Brita Sundberg-Weitman. —A.B.]*

Även i Sverige ansågs denna miss som "allvarlig" och Svenska advokatsamfundets

disciplinnämnd gav Björn Hurtig en formell varning för att han visat "grov aktsamhet" och "allvarligt åsidosatt god advokatsed". *[Det stämmer nog, men inte på det sätt som Riddle påstodde. —A.B.]* Nämnden var dock inte enig, en minoritet ville att han utöver varningen skulle åläggas en straffavgift på 15 000 kronor.

– Det är riktigt att jag glömde bort dessa sms. Men det är inget missförstånd. Som försvarsadvokat fungerar jag inte som någon delgivningscentral som kallar misstänkta till förhör, säger Björn Hurtig. [???

I november valde Julian Assange att byta ut Björn Hurtig mot två nya försvarsadvokater: Per E Samuelson och Thomas Olsson.

– I min föreställningsvärld kan jag inte se att Julian Assange har begått något brott. Det finns därför inte några skäl att väcka något åtal mot honom. **Han förhördes av polis strax efter det att de två kvinnorna anmält honom. Där svarar han på alla frågor om vad som hade hänt, säger Per E Samuelson.**

Per E Samuelson understryker att Assange stannade kvar i Sverige i nästan fem veckor innan han reste till England, och att det då fanns möjligheter att klara ut allting. Men så skedde inte. Han menar att Assange därför lämnade landet i god tro att affären var utagerad.

– Överåklagare Marianne Ny valde i stället att begära honom häktad i sin frånvaro och det är därför vi har hamnat i den här mycket extrema situationen med en europeisk arresteringsorder. **Jag kan inte förstå denna fyrkantighet. Hon vill placera honom i en cell på Kronobergshäktet där förhöret ska ske. Det borde gå att lösa det på ett smidigare sätt.**

Efter alla turerna och missförstånd så har Julian Assange tappat förtroendet för den svenska rättvisan.

– **Han förstår inte varför en ostraffad och oskyldig offentlig person kan bli behandlad på detta sätt. Han anser att han blir behandlad som skyldig av åklagaren innan hon ens hört hans version.** I USA och Storbritannien löser man dessa situationer med att låta folk sitta i husarrest. Men i Sverige saknar vi den möjligheten, säger Per E Samuelson.

Innan han åtog sig uppdraget att försvara Julian Assange hade Per E Samuelson "generella synpunkter" på problemet och förklarade i en intervju (rixstep.com) att om han skulle ha varit Assanges försvarsadvokat så skulle han "resa till London och ta med sig Assange i en väska tillbaka till Sverige. Han måste inställa sig i rätten."

Samuelson menade då också att risken för att Assange skulle bli dömd var "stor".

– **Citaten är korrekta, men gjorda då jag inte företrädde Julian Assange och saknade kännedom om vad som de facto hänt mellan honom och kvinnorna. Inte heller kände jag då till att Assange lämnade Sverige i god tro och blev häktad i sin frånvaro på grund av ett missförstånd. Nu när jag fått reda på detta förstår jag till fullo att han inte vill tvingas komma till Sverige för att här omedelbart bli arresterad. Han vill bli förhörd under ordnade former, säger Per E Samuelsson i dag.**

Julian Assange är även rädd för att en utlämning till Sverige skulle kunna leda till att han utvisas till USA, och det finns ett bilateralt utvisningsavtal mellan Sverige och USA.

–Jag har undersökt avtalet och om det finns en rättslig risk att han skulle bli utlämnad och **jag kan bara konstatera att om vissa kriterier blir uppfyllda måste Sverige överlämna en person till USA om det kommer in en ansökan.**

En eller ett par gånger per år utlämnas personer från Sverige till den amerikanska rättvisan. Senast var det en turkisk medborgare som skickades till USA misstänkt för bedrägeri. Enligt reglerna så kan inte en svensk medborgare som är misstänkt för ett brott utlämnas till USA.

Om Assange överlämnas till Sverige och om USA begär att han ska utlämnas vidare till USA måste en rad villkor uppfyllas: Brottet måste ge minst ett års fängelse enligt svensk lag. Och till en utlämningsbegäran från USA ska bifogas ett häktningsbeslut samt ytterligare utredning som ger stöd för att det finns sannolika skäl för att den misstänkte begått brottet (den starkare misstankegraden). Det får heller inte handla om något politiskt eller militärt brott.

– För att en utlämning skulle kunna ske från Sverige till USA— i detta tänkta exempel— krävs att även Storbritannien ger sitt godkännande. Det skulle därför knappast bli lättare för USA att få Assange utlämnad från Sverige jämfört med om de skulle komma med en begäran enbart till de brittiska myndigheterna, säger Nils Rekke, överåklagare vid riksåklagarens kansli i Stockholm.

I slutändan är det regeringen som beslutar om utlämningar till länder utanför EU.

Innan regeringen bestämmer sig ska riksåklagaren ge sin syn på saken. Om den som är begärd utlämnad motsätter sig utlämningen ska Högsta domstolen pröva om det föreligger hinder enligt utlämningslagen mot utlämning. Om Högsta domstolen finner hinder mot utlämning får regeringen inte bifalla utlämningsframställningen.

– Ytterst finns det alltid möjlighet för regeringen att säga nej till en utlämning— även om samtliga villkor är uppfyllda, säger Nils Rekke. [*Skulle regeringen Reinfeldt eller Löfven trotsa USA i denna fråga? –A.B.*]

Den senaste utlämningen från Storbritannien till USA är en 23-årig brittisk student som skapat en hemsida med länkar till upphovsskyddade filmer och tv-program. Hemsidan var inte olaglig i Storbritannien men kan ge upp till fem års fängelse i USA. I rätten förklarade studenten att han inte ville till USA för att han inte trodde att rättegången i USA skulle bli rättvis, att det han gjort inte var ett brott i Storbritannien och om han hade begått ett brott så ville han dömas hemma i England. Domstolen Westminster Magistrates Court i London avvisade samtliga skäl och fastställde utlämningen. Han har rätt att överklaga beslutet fram till och med den 26 mars.

Även internt inom Wikileaks har Assange varit en stridbar figur. Innan den berömda videon med helikopterattacken i Bagdad 2007 skulle släppas satt han tillsammans med sina medarbetare och redigerade filmbilderna i ett sunkigt hus på Island. Allt var improviserat med datorer, sladdar, kaffemuggar och videokassetter i en salig röra.

På plats fanns hans närmsta medarbetare Daniel Domscheit-Berg och fyra andra personer. *[Ständigt denna Domscheit-Berg, vars trovärdighet i detta sammanhang är lika med noll. —A.B.]*

– Det var stressat och jag fick se en sida av Julian som jag faktiskt aldrig sett förut. Den vänlige och generöse gentlemannen, som han också kan vara, var förbytt till en nästan hänsynslös person. Han ville fatta alla viktiga beslut på egen hand. Oss andra betraktade han som obeslutsamma, feiga eller rådvilla. Det fanns ingen som kontrollerade honom. Han ville inte bli ifrågasatt, han är verkligen ingen lagspelare, säger Daniel Domscheit-Berg.

Han berättar om hur Julian Assange ibland kunde ta för sig på ett sätt som gjorde att många tog illa upp.

– **När jag hade lagat middagsmat åt oss två, så delade vi inte på det. Det handlade mest om vem som var snabbast. Fanns det fyra köttskivor och jag var för långsam så åt han tre och jag fick en. Jag hade fram till dess aldrig varit med om något liknande.**

Han betedde sig som om han uppfostrats av vargar och inte av människor.

Problemet, enligt Daniel Domscheit-Berg, med en informell organisation som har en så dominerande ledare är att ingen vågar säga stopp.

– Jag fann mig alltför ofta i vad Julian sade. Jag klagade på att han var en diktator, att han alltid bestämde allt, att han undanhöll information för mig. Men inget hjälpte. Mitt intryck är att han är vänlig och generös när han tjänar på det. Om han inte har något att vinna så betar han sig tvärtom.

Daniel Domscheit-Berg blev avstängd från Wikileaks den 26 augusti 2010. Han fick sparken av Assange efter att öppet ha kritiserat hans ledarstil. *[Han gjorde mycket mera än så. —A.B.]* Den exakta mejlkonversationen finns i boken "Wikileaks" som Daniel Domscheit-Berg skrivit.

Daniel: Du uppför dig som något slags kejsare eller slavhandlare.

Julian: Du är avstängd i en månad, från och med nu.

Daniel: Haha.

Daniel: Visst.

Daniel: På grund av vad?

Daniel: Och säger vem?

Daniel: Du? Ett ad hoc-beslut till?

Julian: Om du vill överklaga kommer du att höras på tisdag.

Daniel: Bahahahah.

Daniel: Kanske alla har rätt och du har verkligen blivit galen, Julian.

Daniel: Du borde se till att skaffa hjälp.

Julian: Du kommer att prövas av en jury av jämlingar.

Julian: Härmed avstås du på grund av illojalitet, olydnad och destabilisering i kristid.

Trots detta upprepar Daniel Domscheit-Berg gång på gång under samtalet med Dagens Nyheter att Julian Assange och Wikileaks nu behöver stöd. Han menar att det är en skandal att en del amerikanska politiker och journalister inför rullande kameror förespråkar att Assange ska dödas.

New York Times i USA var en av de tidningar som publicerade de läckta Pentagon-dokumenterna som Daniel Ellsberg fick loss år 1971. Det var därför naturligt för tidningen att även publicera en del av läckorna från Wikileaks. *[Turerna kring Times inblandning är många och artikelförfattaren tycks inte ha koll på denna historia. —A.B.]*

Ett samarbete skapades mellan New York Times, tyska Der Spiegel och brittiska The Guardian för att man tillsammans skulle faktakolla materialet från Wikileaks. Senare anslöt sig även Le Monde i Frankrike och El País i Spanien. Samarbetet började knaka i fogarna redan när Assange började kalla tidningarna för sina "media partner" och började lägga sig i vad de skulle publicera *[enligt avtal —A.B.]*. Och i dag är han osams med flera av dem.

Wikileaks har också kritiserats av de tidigare entusiasterna i Amnesty International och Reportrar utan gränser för att urskillningslöst publicera material där enskilda människor kan identifieras och senare bli hotade till livet. *[Hittills finns det inget bevis att någon blivit skadad. I själva verket var det The Guardians David Keith som var skyldig till den värsta urskillningslösa publiceringen. —A.B.]*

Den 20 december 2010, på dagen fyra månader sedan Julian Assange anhölls i Stockholm, undertecknade han ett kontrakt med bokförlaget Canongate Books i Edinburgh i Skottland om att skriva en självbiografi som till stor del skulle bli ett slags manifest över Wikileaks. Boken skulle bli ett tidsdokument och "förklara vår globala kamp för att tvinga fram ett regelsystem mellan folken och deras regeringar".

I mer än 50 timmar satt han i bandade intervjuer med sin spökskrivare på godset i Ellingham Hall. Men efter några månader, då han läst det första manuset, sade han "nej tack" med motiveringen att "Memoarer är prostitution". Och i juni 2011 när 38 bokförlag världen över hade köpt rättigheterna till boken förklarade Julian Assange att han ville säga upp avtalet. Detta gick dock inte att stoppa eftersom han redan fått förskottsbetalning av förlaget och använt en del av pengarna till att betala sina advokater i London och Stockholm. Boken fick namnet "Julian Assange. Memoarer är prostitution".

Julian Assange föddes den 3 juli 1971 i staden Townsville med 80 000 invånare i norra Queensland i Australien. Han beskriver det som en avlägsen provins i ett avlägset land. En plats där träd och buskar växer ända ned till havet. Från sitt hem kunde han se

över till ön Magnetic Island som fått sitt namn efter den brittiske upptäcktsresanden James Cook som trodde att ön fick hans fartygskompass att visa fel.

Senare flyttade Julian Assange med sina föräldrar ut till ön, som han nu beskriver som en bortglömd hippierepublik med tusen invånare där mango och eukalyptus växte utanför fönstren. Både hans mamma Christine och pappa John Shipton var skådespelare. Mamman var politisk aktivist och den person som hela tiden följt honom genom livet. Hans pappa försvann tidigt ur bilden och det blev i stället styvpappan Brett Assange, också han skådespelare, som blev den manliga förebilden.

De levde ett kringflackande liv och Julian Assange gick i 37 olika skolor under sin uppväxt. Varje gång han bytte skola och var ny i klassen visade han vem han var genom att trotsa allt. Trotsa systemet. För honom var skolan systemet.

Familjen splittrades på nytt när han var nio år då mamman och styvpappan skilde sig. Mamman träffade nya män som Julian Assange och hans yngre halvbror sällan gillade. Sedan 1996 har han återknutit kontakten med sin biologiska pappa John Shipton.

När Assange var 16 år "gav han sig själv åt datorer". Han beskriver det som att han överförde sin livsnerv till ett intelligent system som var beroende av honom och som han i sin tur var beroende av. Eller så här: "Jag var 16 år när gryningen kom i form av en liten låda som kopplade upp sig väldigt långsamt". Datorn var för honom en maskin som skulle användas för att slåss för rättvisan.

Under täcknamnet "Mendox" (ädel lögnahtig) hackade han sig in i telebolagens datorer och lurade till sig fri telefontid och hittade på så vis vänner över hela världen. Målet var att ta sig över alla murar som stoppade informationen, hinder som han menade begränsade människors frihet och dolde sanningen. **Han ville inte vara som sina föräldrar som protesterade mot makten. Han ville avsätta makten inifrån med hjälp av datorn.**

År 1990 fick han sitt första barn, sonen Daniel, med sin dåvarande fru Teresa. Efter separationen hade de en utdragen vårdnadstvist om sin son. Julian Assange fick enligt domstolsutslag ensamt vårdnadsansvaret för Daniel under en period. Obekräftade uppgifter säger att han år 2006 fick en dotter med dåvarande flickvännen Lisa.

I sin självbiografi skriver Julian Assange kortfattat om sig själv som pappa: "Den här boken handlar om mitt liv som journalist och hur jag slagits för friheten. Mina barn ingår inte i den berättelsen, och jag tänker inte berätta mycket mer om dem. Det är Daniel och det finns andra barn vars mammor jag tyckt om."

År 1994 åtalades Assange för dataintrång ibland annat telebolaget Nortels datorer i Kanada och dömdes till böter på 50 000 australiska pund och slapp därmed fängelse. Därefter pluggade han matematik vid universitetet i Melbourne i Australien och det var där som han kom på idén med Wikileaks. Målet var att "begränsa den konspiratoriska makten genom att driva ut hemligheterna i det fria". Den 4 oktober 2006 registrerade han sajten wikileaks.org.

Advokat Claes Borgström är de två kvinnornas juridiska ombud. Han menar att den här affären borde ha klarats ut för länge sedan.

– Det är helt otillständigt att det som hände i augusti 2010 ännu inte är avgjort. Det finns de som kritiserat det svenska rättssystemet för detta. Men jag menar att problemet ligger i domstolarna i Storbritannien som inte kunnat avgöra den formella frågan om Julian Assange ska överlämnas till Sverige eller ej. Det strider mot Europakonventionens krav på skyndsam handläggning av den här typen av frågor, säger han.

Han beskriver situationen för de två kvinnorna som pressande eftersom deras identiteter röjts i framför allt utländska medier och på nätet.

– I alla artiklar och inslag om det här fallet så handlar det bara om hur Assange har det i sin husarrest på slottet i England. Inget om hur kvinnorna mår. Det är som om de inte existerade trots att de är brottsoffren, säger Claes Borgström. [*Av allt att döma har de själva hållit sig undan, antagligen på Borgströms inrådan. –A.B.*]

DN Söndag har sökt Julian Assange för att göra en intervju och får till slut svar från hans assistent att han bara ger oredigerade intervjuer på engelska utan översättning: **"Dear Clas, given the degree of fabrications and media distortions apperaring in the Swedish media, Mr. Assange only gives interviews in full, untranslated form."**

• *Clas Barkman*

US 'Assange hunt' chokes air for whistleblowers

RT

27 March 2012

Washington's relentless pursuit of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, and alleged whistleblower Bradley Manning, is no secret. But the fate of the two men has got US journalists worried, that they too could soon find themselves behind bars.

Julian Assange's life resembles a game of chess. He is an Australian citizen in the custody of Britain fighting extradition to Sweden. But no one wants the king of WikiLeaks more than America. Washington has had secret plans for Assange since at least January 2011. Ironically, the secret was uncovered earlier this month after five million confidential emails from the global intelligence company Stratfor were published by WikiLeaks.

"It's done frequently when a defendant is outside the US. They'll get an indictment, which is secret. They'll seal the charging document of the indictment. They will ask for an arrest warrant and that will also be sealed. That way, the US stands behind a big large boulder, if you will, and then jumps out from that boulder and arrests someone," says Douglas McNabb, federal criminal defense attorney and extradition expert.

Under house arrest for more than a year, Assange has not been charged with any crime in any country, though Sweden wants to question him over sex-related allegations.

The US meanwhile, is determined to punish the forty-year old. Apparently, it is

payback for exposing confidential cables repeatedly shaming America by shining a spotlight on illegalities in overseas military operations and on some embarrassing tactics and opinions from the State Department.

Washington says publishing the documents has created a national security risk. The Justice Department has reportedly mounted an unprecedented investigation into WikiLeaks, aimed at prosecuting Assange under the espionage act.

“They're going to continue going after Mr. Assange to make a point that we're tough and we're not going to let anybody threaten America, whether it's Al-Qaeda or it's an Australian national,” believes journalist James Moore.

And some say they'll go to any lengths to make the point. “The US government within the federal arena likes to charge others— that have either aided and abetted or assisted or were full blown co-conspirators— likes to go after those in order to flip them. To get them to co-operate with the US government against the major players, in this case Mr. Assange,” McNabb says.

The US is now apparently working on flipping none other than Private Bradley Manning. The US soldier is facing 22 federal charges for allegedly leaking 700,000 documents and videos to WikiLeaks. **He's one of six Americans, the Obama administration has charged with espionage.**

“If one of those cases makes it to the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court upholds the Espionage Act as an act which essentially criminalizes any whistleblower, anybody who exposes war crimes, anybody who challenges the official narrative of the lies of the state, then that's it. Because that would mean that any leaker could automatically be sent to prison for life. And at that point any idea of freedom of information is over. We will only know what the state wants us to know,” Chris Hedges, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author told RT.

“It's supposed to be about protecting the national security of the United States. But that is not the way the journalism industry will view it. They will view it as being a message to them. ‘Be careful who you talk to. Be careful what you write because you can be next.’ I think a number of reporters will say ‘I am not risking it,’” Moore believes.

Critics say the Obama administration's unprecedented “war on whistleblowers” may ultimately deliver a death sentence to freedom of the press in the US. If people and or publishers are criminally convicted and jailed for exposing the truth, more journalists may prefer to abandon First Amendment privileges and reserve the right to remain silent.

Attack on WikiLeaks mounts as cables are withheld

*Philip Dorling
Sydney Morning Herald
March 31, 2012*

THE Australian government has renewed its attacks on WikiLeaks, condemning the transparency group for "reckless, irresponsible and potentially dangerous" disclosures of secret information.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has also delayed release, under freedom of information, of sensitive Australian diplomatic cables relating to Julian Assange until after a legal challenge to the WikiLeaks founder's extradition to Sweden has been decided. The delay follows expressions of concern by United States authorities about disclosure of US-Australian discussions about WikiLeaks.

Although the federal government has in recent months refrained from its previous strident criticism of Mr Assange, a senior Attorney-General's Department executive, responsible for international crime and extradition matters, last week renewed the government's condemnation of WikiLeaks's release of leaked US diplomatic cables as "reckless, irresponsible and potentially dangerous".

Writing on behalf of the Attorney-General, Nicola Roxon, to a constituent of a federal Labor MP, international crime co-operation branch head Anna Harmer insisted that "debate about the WikiLeaks matter is not about censoring free speech or preventing the media from reporting news" and confirmed the government's focus on the "reckless ... unauthorised disclosure of classified material".

Mr Assange, who recently announced his intention to run for a Senate seat in the next federal election, is awaiting a British Supreme Court decision on his appeal against extradition to Sweden to be questioned in relation to sexual assault allegations.

Mr Assange, who has not been charged with any offence in Sweden, fears extradition to Stockholm will facilitate his ultimate extradition to the US on possible espionage or conspiracy charges in retaliation for WikiLeaks's publication of thousands of leaked US military and diplomatic reports. In an interview this week, he also expressed concern that a successful appeal against extradition to Sweden would only be followed by the US seeking his extradition directly from Britain.

Last December, the Herald obtained the release of Foreign Affairs Department cables that revealed WikiLeaks was the target of an "unprecedented" US criminal investigation and that the Australian government wanted to be forewarned about moves to extradite Mr Assange to the US.

The Herald has now learnt from Australian government sources that senior US officials subsequently expressed "concern" about the disclosure of information and pressed for the US to be "more closely consulted" on any further FOI releases.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade this week delayed the release, under freedom of information, of more Washington embassy cables about WikiLeaks, written until the end of 2011, until at least late May — nearly six months after an FOI application was lodged by the Herald.

The Supreme Court in Britain is expected to deliver a decision on Mr Assange's appeal soon, possibly before Easter.

<http://www.smh.com.au/technology/technology-news/attack-on-wikileaks-mounts-as-cables-are-withheld-20120330-1w3h2.html>

Transcript: Julian Assange on ABC Radio National

Interview on ABC Radio National (Australia) Late Night Live, 29 March 2012

*WL Central
31 March 2012*

Norman Swan: And now an interview that we were going to do Monday, but we are now going to do tonight, which many of you were waiting keenly on, with Julian Assange. Who's nearing... What is it, Julian, 500 days in house arrest?

Julian Assange: I've lost count, Norman. I think it's 500 in 24 days.

Norman Swan: Where are you? Where are you under house arrest?

Julian Assange: I'm outside the city of London in the country. It's a bit isolating, but it's necessary for security reasons.

Norman Swan: But it's not a little shed. You're in a quite comfortable house.

Julian Assange: It's a small country holiday house, but it's comfortable enough. And I am in a fortunate position to have some good friends in this country to be cared for.

Norman Swan: Right. Getting a bit of noise on your phone there, Julian. Is there a bit of wind coming through or something like that?

Julian Assange: There is. I stepped outside, Norman, because it was breaking up again. Let me move into another room; maybe the reception will be better.

Norman Swan: Okay.

Julian Assange: Go ahead, Norman.

Norman Swan: Well, we're certainly getting an audio tour of your incarceration, Julian. So what's the situation; you're waiting on the Supreme Court handing down the appeal on the extradition.

Julian Assange: Yes. So we had a very big Supreme Court case here, which in itself is quite interesting. So the Supreme Court said the matter was of great public importance. There's concerns whether in the European Union one state can extradite a person from another state without any charges being made, without any evidence being given, and when the person issuing the extradition request is not even a judge, but is a policeman or a prosecutor. So that really goes from the mental notion of statehood. Because really a key ingredient to statehood is that you have the monopoly on the deployment of coercive force. And so if other, policemen say, in other countries in the EU, are able to take the reigns of coercive force in England or in other EU countries, then how does that redefine the state in the EU? **Really it does, in fact, create an EU as a nation-state** as opposed to an EU as a mechanism which permits states within the EU to cooperate. Another being part of an ideological project in the EU amounted to the Cold War to try and produce a United States of America. And that's a particular aspect in relation to

extraditions within the EU came in after 9/11—in response to 9/11— saying that this mechanism was necessary for terrorist extraditions from one state to another, to do things very quickly, without evidence, without even charge.

Norman Swan: And if you win, putting aside the impact on you, if you win then it creates a crisis in terms of internal extradition processes within the European Union.

Julian Assange: It's hard to say. I mean, ideally that would be the case. And it would solidify more common law notions about— to be fair, which are included in the EU constitution— that there should not be punishment before trial, that decisions that are made that effect someone's liberty must be reviewable by the courts. And so, if I win it could be within the context of simply that Swedish policemen are not able to do this. But it will set some kind of important precedent.

Norman Swan: And is there a double-jeopardy, can they reissue the extradition order from a more appropriate source and get around the finding of a Supreme Court?

Julian Assange: Yeah, so they can.

Norman Swan: So they might not end with this.

Julian Assange: The Swedes could reform their system to be compliant with the British Law. The British Law demands that a judicial authority issue an extradition warrant. So they could bring their system into compliance with that and reissue, but that's not really the big concern. **What is likely if I do win then the United States will issue its request for extradition, and they can simply do that by telephone call. And then they have 40 days to put in the actual extradition papers themselves.**

Norman Swan: Why haven't they done that yet? I mean what grounds would they have for doing that? Is that via the Bradley Manning case?

Julian Assange: That's via this Bradley Manning case. There has been a Grand Jury meeting every month, several days a month, in Washington D.C. for the past 14 or so months, since September 2010. And that Grand Jury goes for a period of 18 months. Information has come out from several sources that this Grand Jury has a indictment against me already, but they're keeping it sealed until the appropriate moment comes to release it. And the U.S. Ambassador to the UK, Susman, said early last year that they were waiting for the Swedish case before considering their moves. So, that's all fair report that we hear back from our people in Canberra, that everyone's sort-of happy with the Swedish solution and as well to ship me off to Sweden and then Sweden has to deal with the matter.

Norman Swan: But in fact in the United States it's over the breach of security and WikiLeaks, rather than the case in Sweden which is alleged sexual assault.

Julian Assange: The case in Sweden has no charges, it's all very odd. There is no case to that degree. There is a demand by a Swedish prosecutor from Gothenburg that I be extradited to Sweden for questioning. And she has refused to use all the standard EU mechanisms such as the mutual systems treaty or Skype or telephone call or anything else— even though that is normally done in Sweden— to question me. So we believe that this questioning is in fact not a legitimate activity, if it was legitimate...

Norman Swan: So this is where your conspiracy theory, if you like, is that they're doing this so that America can extradite you directly from Sweden.

Julian Assange: Well, like all rare circumstances, like a jumbo jet going down, it tends to be many unusual factors coming together. And in this particular case, there's a Swedish national election just one month after the arrest. And this guy Claes Borgström was running the Swedish election and the complainants all from the same party, the Social Democratic party. **So there's national factors and there's also geopolitical factors because Sweden has run very close over the past 10 years to the United States.**

Norman Swan: Let's talk about the United States for a moment and why they're going after you. I mean, WikiLeaks is an organization, it has many members, it has members who are public, not a secret, who has been involved in WikiLeaks at the top. Why do you think America would be focusing on you rather than a corporate group, you know, 5 or 6 people that could be easily identified as being involved with WikiLeaks.

Julian Assange: It's the principle of general deterrent, Norman. WikiLeaks has been going for over 5 years, we've done material from over 120 countries. But in our publications about the United States in 2010, we've reached a certain level of publicity which was of global prominence.

And the United States, the Pentagon, made a 40-minute press conference demanding of me personally, by name, and the White House as well, that we destroy all our previous publications that had come from the U.S. Government, we destroy all future publications that we had in our possession that we would publish, and that we cease dealing with U.S. military employees full stop. And of course we said that those demands were unacceptable and we would not be following them and we did not. In fact, we published everything that we said we were going to publish.

But look at it this way: the Pentagon made an international, public demand and said that they would coerce us in that press conference if we did not fulfill that demand and they failed. So what credibility does the Pentagon have now? To stand up and say North Korea must do something, we demand it must do something, or an African state must do something, or Thailand must permit greater importation of tobacco. **It simply has no credibility in terms of its authority anymore because it couldn't apply its authority to us, so it has to reestablish its authority with the group that defied its authority.**

Norman Swan: Julian, how are you sleeping?

Julian Assange: Well, I'm pretty busy, Norman. I don't sleep much, but you know that the work that we have done over the past five years and this tremendous international battle that we have been through over the past two years, I am proud, I understand the significance of what we all have achieved, and I am very proud of it.

Norman Swan: Right, but you know what I'm asking. I'm asking about your psychological state. You run the potential of... you could lose this case, you could go to Sweden, you could be extradited to the United States, you could spend a long time in jail. You're sounding remarkably relaxed on the phone. Are you really relaxed?

Julian Assange: Well, you know since July 2010 we've been going through this every week or every couple months, that someone's been seized or raid or detained or I've been arrested or imprisoned or about to be extradited and so on. Now we are reaching the end of the road, if you like, because the matter has reached the Supreme Court and there's no legal alternative left there, merely political alternatives left. But you know, you adapt to everything.

Norman Swan: So is part of this frenetic activity as distraction?

Julian Assange: It is distracting. And I mean, what else can you do in such a situation? I believe in certain things and we're working towards those things and it is very satisfying for me to do that. **We must all understand that we only live once anyway, and life is not so long anyway, so one should live your life fully and do something that you believe in. And what we have been doing I believe in and it has been successful.**

Norman Swan: How are things going in WikiLeaks itself? You hear stories of internal disagreements, not being as coherent as it used to. How is the organization itself?

Julian Assange: Well, it's funny you mention this, Norman, because this is all nonsense. We had, during the sort-of big attack on us, like all organizations some people are stronger and some people are weaker. **And we lost two people from the whole organization, two people. And that was in 2010.**

Norman Swan: But one of them's pretty senior. Somebody who went way back with you.

Julian Assange: No, not at all. Not at all. This is simply spin. And you know when there's a big news story, people want to be in on the news story and so they start claiming authority and proximity that they never had. And that's something we have seen over the past year. And there has been no problems with the organization, no resignations— and there wasn't even a resignation; someone was suspended— there's been **no suspensions since this dramatic moment in late 2010.** And yet we see these sort of issues constantly bought up by our press competitors, and we should look at it that way—

Norman Swan: Press competitors?

Julian Assange: Yes, that WikiLeaks is involved in sort of three fields of operation. One, yes we are holding very powerful organizations to account, who of course lash back and they try and discredit the message by attacking the messenger and they want to reassert their authority.

Norman Swan: That's government.

Julian Assange: That's government and sometimes big corporations like the Bank of America which set up permission to a two-million dollar a month campaign to attack us through HB Gary, U.S. intelligence firm.

And then there are our media organization competitors. So we are a media organization, we have produced more words than the New York Times in the equivalent period. And so we are a competitor in that raw sense as a competitor for

providing the public information.

And then in relation to individual journalists, you know we have over 90 media organizations that work with us and hundreds of journalists, but there are many more who do not. So those who do not, they are social competitors. Those journalists particularly who have tried to market themselves as protectors of freedom of the press or being on the left to the degree that they are holding governments or entrenched authority to account. Those journalists are in social competition with us.

Media organizations are in economic competition; those journalists see themselves as in social competition with us, and rightly so, because their grandiloquent claims of holding authority to account in fact are rather diminutive when compared to what we have achieved over the past two years. We work with many fine journalists from around the world, and also many fine media organizations, but there are many who are more about the marketing than they are about action. **And our actions have shown their marketing for what it is.**

Norman Swan: So it sounds as if, I mean apart from you last comment, that you've built a fair degree of wall around yourself thinking that the world is against you.

Julian Assange: We have friends and we have enemies. A superpower like the United States is a superpower because it has its tentacles in so many different places. This is not to say that it is engaged in all sorts of secret conspiracies— although of course it is engaged in a vast array of secret operations— but rather the areas are sort of a gradient of interest.

And people all over the world of certain types try and curry favor with people that they perceive to be more powerful than them, is not necessarily a matter of instruction but rather people who are perceived to be powerful, others attempt to do them favors in order to get prestige or placement or patronage.

And, on the other hand, we have a lot of friends who understand that system. Reuters did a survey of 24 countries involving 19,000 people looking at what their relative support for WikiLeaks was over the world. **If we look at the top 5 countries, the most supportive countries, whose support was up at the 80% level, we see South Africa was the most supportive country, Germany, Argentina, Russia, and Australia.** Australia is unique, but these other four countries, what do they have in common? Well, these are countries that have thrown off a regime within living memory and they understand the abuses of government.

Norman Swan: Well, and some of them, like Russia, hate America.

Julian Assange: Maybe. But why are they... you know, China wasn't up there, for example, in that front. China is a more conservative authoritarian country. These other countries, they have thrown off a previous regime and they understand the importance of things like the Stasi archives, the national archives showing the bad behavior of government, and that publishing is a way to get the truth. And in South Africa you had the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process which brought out the mechanisms of government.

And if we go to the other end, we have the United States as the least supportive, and Britain as the second least supportive. But nonetheless, support in these countries, support in the United States runs to 40% of the population. That is despite the sort of domestic propaganda within the United States that revealing classified information is treason. That's not true in most cases. So the population, despite a hostile media within the United States, is incredibly resilient at seeing through deliberate attempts to try and

push a particular agenda.

Norman Swan: Julian, is Stratfor a competitor?

Julian Assange: That's quite interesting.

Norman Swan: Well that's what people are saying, that's why you took them down because they're a competitor of yours.

Julian Assange: Well, I did think about this. I did think about this, that to a degree...

Norman Swan: I should explain to people who might not know what we're talking about, Stratfor is a subscription service, private intelligence, giving you intelligence about the world and so on. And you, I think, what is it, 5 million emails or something like that through WikiLeaks were released recently and some people believe that was a competitive action.

Julian Assange: Well, we are source-driven, Norman. We spend extra analytical attention on matters that we think will have greater impact. But we are source-driven in terms of information that comes to us. But if we look at Stratfor, perhaps describes it a bit generously, this is an organization which we have discovered and published engages in bribing people around the world to collect information, which it then uses for....

Norman Swan: But another interpretation of that is that they're like a newspaper and they're just paying people for contributions the way a correspondence would.

Julian Assange: That's not true. It didn't start like that and it's not ending like that. And now information is showing that it isn't like that. In fact it does three things with its information: Number one, it collects that information and it feeds that information on to its private clients, like the U.S. military, U.S. intelligence, Coca-Cola corporation, Dow Chemical to spy on Bhopal activists and so on. So it is, in that extent, a private intelligence organization. It also takes that information and it is attempting to use it in something called Stratcap which is its own captive investment vehicle. So it is using information gleaned from these bribes to invest in particular stocks, invest in current...

Norman Swan: I hear what you're saying, Julian, that you're source-driven, but this seems to have been a deliberate attack by Anonymous, the hacking organization, to do it for you. It looks as if it was a fairly deliberate attack to take down Stratfor by Anonymous.

Julian Assange: You have to understand, Norman, that as a source-protection organization I can't speak at all about sourcing-related matters. Only to say that our system that we have developed is one that is designed to give the maximum protection to sources by keeping them even anonymous to us.

Norman Swan: Now Julian, you talked about Russia being big fans of WikiLeaks. You've already recorded a 10-part series with Russia Today, one of the Russian television stations, is that right?

Julian Assange: That's correct. We recorded the 10th episode two days ago.

Norman Swan: And this is an interview-based program, I hear.

Julian Assange: It's an interview-based program. It came out of me being isolated under house arrest, but nonetheless needing to understand the world and try and use the information from my understanding to protect our people and help run the organization and also help analyze the material we're getting.

Norman Swan: And who are your guests?

Julian Assange: So we thought, well, given that we need to get people anyway over to see me because I'm so isolated, and they're quite interesting people and perhaps we should film it and release the film.

Norman Swan: And can you tell us who you've interviewed?

Julian Assange: And other people shared in that. So some of the guests have said that they had been interviewed, for example the President of Tunisia, and Alaa, a famous Egyptian revolutionary, and the leader of the Bahrainian democratic movement, and David Horowitz, a right-wing Zionist from the United States. There's quite a range.

Norman Swan: And so how do you live with yourself, given that Russia is about 142nd on the world's list of press freedom and this is a Kremlin-run station.

Julian Assange: Well, you're talking about the license that Russia Today has bought. **So, we have our own production company, we produce everything, and we sell licenses to any media that wish to buy licenses for the production. There is no editorial input from any of the licensees, including Russia Today.**

Norman Swan: But they've instigated it, haven't they, they're the primary...

Julian Assange: The BBC didn't chose to buy a license, you know. **No, they didn't instigate it; that is absolutely false.**

Norman Swan: So you offered it to them.

Julian Assange: That's correct. We offered licenses and others such as the Sydney Morning Herald and The Australian are also requesting licenses. But it's interesting, Norman, that you have this perception, this deception that somehow Russia Today is producing this, when this is just a licensee.

Why do you have this deception? Because we released the press release that we were engaged in this very interesting production and then some days later Russia Today said they had proudly bought a license. Now, that you have the perception that you have because certain groups wish to spread an attack on us saying, 'Look, oh Julian Assange the great defender of press freedom, WikiLeaks the great defender of press freedom, has gotten into bed with the Kremlin, is employed by the Kremlin, is working for the Kremlin,' when that is false.

This is another example of how traditional media dynamics are used to distort what the actual picture is. And if we look more broadly, because I want to pull out of this now, and look at the different media organizations. So, in terms of penetration to United States for foreign media network, the BBC has number one penetration, Russia Today has number two, and Al Jazeera has number three. **So from our perspective,**

Russia Today has the second best penetration into the United States and therefore is a good deal to us if the BBC wouldn't buy a license, and of course they won't.

Norman Swan: We only have a couple minutes left, Julian, and I can't avoid talking about your discussion of running for the senate. I mean, is this just words or do you think you can really do it?

Julian Assange: I think we can do it. We've looked closely at the legal situation.

Norman Swan: Which state would you run in?

Julian Assange: Well, I've lived in in fact every state in Australia, but have particularly strong connections to Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. So picking between those states is sort of a strategic matter. There's interesting reasons for different states that we need to look at, say, the senate make up within those states and the fraction that is required and the relative existing sort-of preference swaps that are occurring. That's a strategic matter, but I do have... my father lives in New South Wales, my mother's in Victoria and so on.

Norman Swan: We will watch with interest, Julian, and good luck in your court case.

<http://wlcentral.org/node/2525>

Australian Government's escalating hostility toward WikiLeaks and Julian Assange

*Submitted by m_cetera
WL Central
2012-04-02*

After a public forum on WikiLeaks, Australian Greens Senator Scott Ludlam made the following comment:

The Australian Government has done the absolute bare minimum above stuff-all to help this Australian citizen in trouble. [...] They've attempted to block and delay Freedom of Information requests, they haven't answered straight questions, they've voted against motions, and to me it's starting to look not like indifference but like hostility.

This hostility from the Australian Government is becoming more and more apparent, especially as Julian Assange awaits the UK Supreme Court's decision on whether he'll be extradited to Sweden. Not only is the Government offering little support to its citizen, but it is making derogatory and false remarks against the WikiLeaks organization, refusing to offer timely release of relevant information, and passing new laws which make it difficult for WikiLeaks to continue operating legally and raise safety concerns for its founder.

Back in December 2010, Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard condemned WikiLeaks' release of information, calling the action "irresponsible" and, the far more serious allegation, "illegal." A week later, and just days after Julian Assange's arrest, Attorney-

General Robert McClelland further expanded on Gillard's comments saying that the information WikiLeaks released was "accessed in an unauthorized manner" and was therefore an offense under Australian law.

But, after a 17-day investigation by the Australian Federal Police, it was established that none of WikiLeaks' actions were in fact illegal. In a quasi-apology Gillard was forced to announce the AFP's finding that WikiLeaks had not broken Australian law, but again denounced their actions as "grossly irresponsible" and declared, "It's clear that the theft of those documents is an illegal act." Of course, these vilifying comments were being stacked on top of those by U.S. politicians, such as Vice President Joe Biden's labeling of Julian Assange as a "high-tech terrorist" and political candidate Sarah Palin's belief that he is an "anti-American operative with blood on his hands" who should be "pursued with the same urgency [the U.S. pursues] al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders." **Senator Scott Ludlam has since asked if Gillard apologized to WikiLeaks or formally retracted her false claims, to which her representative replied she hadn't.**

Recently, on the eve of Julian Assange's Supreme Court verdict being handed down, the attacks have resurfaced. In response to a citizen letter concerning Julian Assange's extradition, **Australian official Anna Harmer wrote on behalf of Attorney-General Nicola Roxon that WikiLeaks' release of U.S. diplomatic cables was "reckless, irresponsible, and potentially dangerous."** The U.S. Ambassador to Australia Jeffrey Bleich echoed the claims of irresponsibility and added that WikiLeaks had also acted "destructively" and "was not a force for good." In earlier statements, Bleich also called WikiLeaks "unhealthy [...] dangerous, and immature." To this day, there is still no evidence of physical harm coming to any persons based on WikiLeaks' releases.

The attacks go far beyond verbal and written statements. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has delayed the release of Australian diplomatic cables relating to Julian Assange requested under the Freedom of Information Act (at least six times, according to Senator Ludlam) until at least late May, after it is decided whether or not he'll be extradited to Sweden. When asked about the delays, Senator Chris Evans acting as representative for Prime Minister Gillard only stated that the FOI request had been received and "the response is being worked on by DFAT." **The Australian Government also refuses to give straight answers regarding both the alleged sealed indictment the U.S. has against Julian Assange and the secret Grand Jury which has been in existence for over a year.**

Beyond this, two new laws have emerged in Australia which make it more difficult for organizations such as WikiLeaks to operate within legal boundaries. The first is a bill, informally known as "the WikiLeaks amendment," which significantly expands ASIO's (Australian Security Intelligence Organization) powers to spy on Australian citizens. Patrick Emerton, senior lecturer in the Faculty of Law at Monash University, commented that, while the bill couldn't be used to spy on Julian Assange in London, it could conceivably be used to spy on communications he had sent to Australia, e.g. a letter or e-mail.

The second is an extradition law created to "streamlin[e] the extradition process and [cut] delays." It broadens the possibility of extradition on both minor and political offenses. It also allows nationals to be prosecuted on Australian soil if the government declines to have them extradited.

A third law, the Cybercrime Legislation Amendment Bill, which would allow access to more information by Australian and overseas agencies, has passed through the Lower House but is yet to become full law.

With all this in mind, Australia's hostility towards WikiLeaks and its founder Julian Assange is evident. The majority of Australians support WikiLeaks and Assange, a statistic that has remained constant since 2010. Therefore it is only right for the Australian Government to stand up for Julian Assange and WikiLeaks, not only because he is their citizen, but because it is in the interest of the public to do so.

<http://wlccentral.org/node/2535>

Julian Assange Challenges UK Press Coverage of Extradition Struggle

*Kevin Gosztola
Firedog Lake
April 5, 2012*

Numerous complaints about United Kingdom press coverage of WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange's struggle against being extradited to Sweden have been made by Assange. Those complaints were submitted to the Leveson Inquiry, empaneled to examine culture, practices and ethics of the press in the aftermath of the News of the World phone hacking scandal. The complaints reveal a dogged effort by Assange to challenge an inaccuracy often reported as fact: that he was charged with rape and that is why he is facing extradition.

A good example is a complaint he made in regards to the coverage of his case by People (UK) in February 2011. He responded to a headline that read, "Assange must face Sweden sex trial."

The headline implies my case is ready to go to trial and the article begins: "WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange should be extradited to Sweden to face sex offense charges, a judge has ruled," both of which are false. I have not been charged with any offense and the preliminary investigation has not been completed. No decision to take the matter to trial is possible under Swedish law until it has been (see Prosecution link). These statements therefore represent a significant and misleading inaccuracy. The facts are not hard to establish— a matter of basic fact-checking— and a correction should be printed with due prominence.

He then lists the "costs of the libel" asserting: it harms his and WikiLeaks' reputation globally; it contributes a "hostile media climate in the UK" while extradition is still being heard by the courts; it contributes to a "hostile media climate in Sweden," where he may soon be extradited and put on trial; it contributes to a "hostile media climate in the United States" where a federal Grand Jury has been empaneled; it undermines potential political support in Australia and discourages the Australian government from intervening to stop his extradition; and it makes it difficult to raise money for

WikiLeaks and his personal legal defense fund at a time when FBI, Pentagon, CIA and US State Department Task Forces “imperil” him and his organization.

In total, there are 75 press complaints that were submitted to the British Press Complaints Commission (PCC)....

A “cover letter” submitted to the Leveson Inquiry shows how Assange thought providing this material would help the Inquiry in its efforts:

...As a case study, it can bring focus to many of the key issues the Leveson Inquiry wishes to explore: for example, whether the Editors’ Code is insufficiently rigorous to be meaningful, and the disparity between how newsrooms say they implement it and their subsequent attitudes towards it when challenged about breaches of its principles; does the PCC have enough independence within the current model of self-regulation; and what explains its inability to meet its Charter commitments (the majority of these complaints took roughly twice the advertised ‘average of 35 working days’), among other things...

...In its own evidence to the Leveson Inquiry the Press Complaints Commission has argued that, with no legislative powers and under its current structure, it is geared to perform only one function of press regulation effectively — that of providing a conduit for people either to prevent or to remedy the worst excesses of the UK press around high-profile news stories involving themselves. Anecdotal evidence already before the Inquiry from other victims of press misbehavior and poor standards suggests the PCC falls well short of achieving this. The case study provided here gives the documentary detail needed to enable a contemporaneous analysis of how and why the PCC fails to provide individuals vulnerable to bad journalistic practices — whether through deliberate smear campaign, inadequate fact-checking or regurgitated press agency material — with effective protection or redress.

If the content of Assange’s complaints are not evidence of efforts to libel Assange, they are at minimum a cross-section of UK media coverage that allows one to truly see how UK media have covered his legal struggles over extradition.

The PCC is already slated to close and be replaced by another body after the Inquiry completes. In the meantime, a transitional body is to operate and, as the Guardian reported, be run by: Michael McManus, “a former Conservative special adviser, who is director of transition; Jonathan Collett, “the director of communications, who has previously acted as press adviser to former Conservative leader Michael Howard”; and Charlotte Dewar, “the head of complaints who previously worked at the Guardian.” So, the value of Assange’s complaints is that they could help influence Inquiry recommendations for a new media watchdog body.

To Americans, it is probably pretty odd to think about having a government body that keeps watch over media and tries to force media or news organizations to uphold ethics or standards. The value of such a body would be hard to comprehend for most citizens and probably much of the political class. If there wasn’t any interest in having government subsidize newspapers when the newspaper industry was collapsing a few years ago because people feared the government might try to control media, there definitely is little chance of a government watchdog body ever being setup in the

United States.

Assange is still waiting to hear from the UK Supreme Court on whether he can appeal his extradition to Sweden. He has been waiting since February for a Court decision. And the delay has complicated efforts to get the Australian government to release secret diplomatic cables relating to Julian Assange.

For nearly 500 days, Assange has been under house arrest without charge. WikiLeaks has been financially blockaded by Visa, Mastercard and PayPal for nearly 500 days as well. And Pfc. Bradley Manning, the individual accused of releasing the information to WikiLeaks, which fueled the vilification and political targeting of Assange and WikiLeaks? He has been in pre-trial confinement awaiting a trial for nearly 700 days.

Two years ago Assange boarded an airplane from Iceland to the United States for the release of the "Collateral Murder" video, which showed a 2007 US Apache helicopter attack that killed two Reuters journalists and a "Good Samaritan" and wounded two children. The video exposed a war crime, but to this day no person involved has been held accountable. On the other hand, the journalist and alleged whistleblower involved continue to face regular attacks in the media (mostly the US) and efforts to put them in jail for revealing the truth about US superpower.

<http://dissenter.firedoglake.com/2012/04/05/julian-assange-challenges-uk-press-coverage-of-extradition-struggle/>

Wikileaks' Julian Assange Slams Media for Libelous Coverage

Common Dreams staff
April 5, 2012

WikiLeaks' Julian Assange said today that he's made 75 official complaints over shoddy reporting of his extradition battle. Assange claims he has been subjected to inaccurate and libelous media coverage. Assange itemized the complaints in a written statement to Britain's judge-led inquiry into media ethics, which is examining the standards and practices of the UK's scandal-ridden press.

Assange said in a statement released Thursday that he had been subjected to "ongoing, widespread inaccurate and negative media coverage."

Assange wrote: "Those who have been the subject of ongoing, widespread inaccurate and negative media coverage — as I have, possibly on a scale not seen since the abuse of the McCanns — know that the harms created for individuals and small organizations or groups by a failure to maintain high ethical journalistic standards can be severe, consequential and almost insurmountable."

He listed 75 complaints made to the UK's press watchdog over repeated articles reporting that he had been charged with rape when in fact he has only been accused of the offense.

The 40-year-old Australian denies any wrongdoing. He is waiting to hear the outcome of his appeal to the UK Supreme Court against being extradited to Sweden.

* * *

The Guardian reports:

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has launched an attack on the Press Complaints Commission, claiming he has been subjected to inaccurate and negative media coverage "possibly on a scale not seen since the abuse of the McCanns".

He says the soon-to-be-extinct complaints body stood idly by as he "suffered extensive libels" in the coverage of his battle with Swedish authorities over sexual assault allegations.

Assange, who is out on bail awaiting a British court decision on his appeal against extradition to Sweden, has told the Leveson inquiry says the PCC found it "perfectly acceptable for newspapers to say that I had been charged with rape as being 'charged' with an offence is seen as the same as a mere allegation".

In a written statement to the inquiry he said his experience with the PCC provides a "unique" case study at the damage that can be wrought by a flawed regulatory system to an individual involved in a "high profile and political" situation.

Assange added: "Press standards matter. Those who have been the subject of ongoing, widespread inaccurate and negative media coverage — as I have, possibly on a scale not seen since the abuse of the McCanns — know that the harms created for individuals and small organizations or groups by a failure to maintain high ethical journalistic standards can be severe, consequential and almost insurmountable."

He told how he complained about 45 articles in newspapers including the Observer, the Guardian, the Daily Mail, the Independent, the Evening Standard and the Sun, which he referred to "charges" against him or said he was "facing charges" or had been "charged".

Mattsson har Assange-komplex?

Old Wolfs blogg
6 april 2012

Expressens chefredaktör Thomas Mattsson verkar ha Assange-komplex. På annat sätt går inte att förklara varför nämnde Mattsson helt omotiverat blandar in Julian Assange och Wikileaks i en blogg som handlar om Berns Salonger och Eritrea.

"Expressens roll, då? Ja, vi fortsätter att försöka berätta hur diktaturen agerar mot sina medborgare i Eritrea och via sina stödorganisationer i exempelvis Sverige. Företrädare för regimen och dess anhängare är ungefär lika entusiastiska till Expressen som Wikileaks och dess anhängare, senast häromdagen publicerade ju Wikileaks-talesmannen nya— falska— påståenden om Expressen. Men vårt uppdrag är inte att söka beröm från Isaias Afewerki eller Julian Assange.... Vi ska nyhetsförmedla."

Vilka påståenden har Wikileaks publicerat och som är falska? Det får man inte veta, möjligtvis är det något man måste gissa sig till? Eftersom en blogg publiceras på nätet

har man en möjlighet, som inte finns i papperstidningen; man kan nämligen länka till det man påstår. Detta är något jag även tidigare noterat att Mattsson aktat sig för, när han har tunnt på fötterna.

Mattsson och hans tidning har en tid ägnat sig åt överfierad smutskastning av Julia Assange och Wikileaks. Jag har berört detta i mina bloggar [se nedan].

Det är naturligtvis ingen tillfällighet att Julian Assange omskrivs i samma andetag som Isaias Afewerki. **Mattson och Expressen har en agenda, som går ut på att till varje pris misskreditera Assange och Wikileaks.**

Jag har tidigare påstått att Thomas Mattsson är en ganska fåfängd person, som gärna vill vara i centrum. Hans agerande får mig att tänka på en travestering av Snövit och de sju dvärgarna.



Thomas Mattson

Mattson står framför den magiska spegeln och frågar: "Spegel, spegel på väggen där, säg vem som bäst i världen är?" Spegeln har tidigare svarat "Du", men helt plötsligt svarar den "Julian Assange" och Mattsson blir rasande. Han kommer dock aldrig att kunna pinka lika högt upp på väggen som Julian Assange!

<http://oldwolf-vindenviskarmittnamn.blogspot.se/2012/04/mattsson-har-assange-komplex.html>

Hur bitter är Thomas Mattsson egentligen?

Old Wolfs blogg
8 mars 2012

När jag ser Expressens chefredaktör och ansvarige utgivare Thomas Mattsson, framför allt i smutskastningen av Wikileaks och Julian Assange, kommer jag osökt att tänka på Robert Gustavssons fantastiska monolog "Nej, jag är inte bitter".

När nu de egna argumenten tryter och man själva inte har något mera att komma med, väljer Thomas Mattsson att ge utrymme åt en annan bitter gubbe, Bill Keller, tidigare chefredaktör på New York Times och ökad för sitt hat mot Assange. Detta trots att han en gång i tiden inte drog sig för att tjäna pengar på Assange och fortfarande hoppas kunna göra det.

Keller kommer till tals i en krönika i Expressen och som tidigare varit publicerad i New York Times. Kellers artikel är ett misch-masch av en massa smörja och självglorifiering, samtidigt som han smutskastar Assange. Den som läst hans "The Times dealing with Assange and the Wikileaks secrets" är inte förvånad.

Eftersom Expressen inte länkar till bloggar eller tillåter kommentarer får ju deras påståenden stå oemotsagda i den egna tidningen. Intressant kan därför vara att läsa hur kollegor i USA kommenterar det Keller skriver. Greg Mitchell har kommenterat Keller i "The Nation":

"Bill Keller, the former executive editor of the New York Times who partnered with Julian Assange on several major WikiLeaks releases, has written another anti-Assange column for today's Times. The two men have been feuding for about eighteen months now—going back to Keller's shocking Julian-wears-dirty-socks revelations—and every time it dies now, Bill writes another blast. Maybe he couldn't handle Assange's guest spot on *The Simpsons'* celebrated 500th episode last night."

Wikileaks twittrar följande med anledning av Kellers artikel: "The only explanation for Bill Keller's bizarre attacks on Wikileaks, his former benefactor, is fear. The question is, of what?"

Advokaten, bloggaren, författaren m m Glenn Greewald twittrade följande: "Trying hard to ignore the typically sneering, typically banal Bill Keller column on WikiLeaks—prospects for success: quite low."

Professor Samir Chopra skriver följande i sin blogg: "Wikileaks exposed too much. In response, the always-secretive have become more secretive. And now life is harder for all us Serious Journalists[tm]. So let me get this straight: in response to exposure, those ensconced in power have dug their heels in, become more opaque, stepped up their chilling attacks on journalists and potential whistle-blowers, and this is Wikileaks fault? Could Keller be more offensive, more of a fawning lapdog of the powerful and the opaque, if he tried? I don't think so. Keller is pushing back at the wrong forces in this debate. In doing that, he is merely the latest depressing example of the incestuous embrace of the political and media establishments in this nation."

Sista påståendet kunde lika gärna gälla svensk gammalmedia med Expressen i spetsen.

The Dissenter [Firedog Lake] skriver följande vilket är av stort intresse med tanke på Expressens smutskastning av Assange:

Keller's "WikiLeaks has blood on its hands" argument is made without any concrete evidence. Keller expects us to take him at his word when he says he's been told, "A few exposed sources fled their countries with American help" and a "few others were detained by authorities." This is just another restatement of an allegation that is largely pure fabrication.

Who are these "sources"? Keller doesn't mention that the Associated Press did a review that found no sources were threatened. The State Department refused to "describe any situation in which they've felt a source's life was in danger." The State Department would not "provide any details on those few cases" of individuals that had been relocated."

Keller doesn't note that when WikiLeaks went ahead and published all the cables in August and September 2011 without any redactions the cables were out in public somewhere for anyone to download. Governments that wanted to read them could theoretically download the file, use a password that had been publicized by former WikiLeaks spokesperson Daniel Domscheit-Berg and begin to hunt down individuals named in the cables"

Keller insinuates Yemenis might have been beheaded for giving information to WikiLeaks is incredibly irresponsible and lazy. The Nation's Jeremy Scahill, who went to Yemen, reported.

Även Wikileaks närstående NYTimesXaminer sågar Keller jäms med fotknölarna. Artikeln i Expressen passar med andra ord väl in i mönstret att smutskasta Assange och Wikileaks. Lika lite som tidigare artiklar tål den att analyseras. Jag ber om ursäkt för att mycket av materialet är på engelska, men det skulle ta mig flera dagar att översätta det till bra svenska. Jag kan prata och läsa engelska rätt bra, men korrekt översättning tar tid och Google är Google.

<http://oldwolf-vindenviskarmittnamn.blogspot.se/2012/03/hur-bitter-ar-thomas-mattsson.html>

Thomas Mattson — en geting utan sting!

Old Wolfs blog
9 mars 2012

Expressens chefredaktör Thomas Mattson fortsätter sin kamp mot Wikileaks och Julian Assange. Det blir dock allt mer uppenbart att det är en geting utan sting. Han påminner allt mer om en grälsjuk bloggare och hans argument är på sandlådenivå.

I bloggen "Vad är de rädda för?" redogjorde jag för Thomas Mattson och Expressens krypskytte på Wikileaks och Julian Assange, som handlade om att Wikileaks skulle starta en smutskastningskampanj mot Sverige och att man hade komprimerade dokument om Carl Bildt.

"I ett internt Wikileaks-dokument som Expressen tagit del av hotar Wikileaks att offentliggöra en hittills okänd amerikansk diplomatrapport där utrikesminister Carl Bildt pekas ut som informatör för USA sedan 1970-talet."

Allt detta förnekades av Wikileaks på Twitter: "The journalist writing the Expressen article is said to be in Bildt's london hotel. #svpol No WikiLeaks officials have spoken to Expressen".

Detta visade sig dock lite förhastat eftersom Expressen talat med Wikileaks talesperson Kristinn Hfransson, vilket denne bekräftar i ett debattinlägg i SVT.

"Jag befann mig i brådska på Paddingtons järnvägsstation i London när Expressen ringde. Det var sent, kvällen innan Expressen skulle publicera sin stora uppdiktade

historia. Trots att omgivningen var bullrig är jag säker på att journalisten fick svar på sina frågor. Nämligen att WikiLeaks inte vill ha strid med svenskar och att organisationen absolut inte planerat någon 'förtalskampanj mot Sverige'." (SVT)

Wikileaks krävde att Expressen skall redovisa de interna dokument man säger sig inneha. Detta vägrar Mattsson med hänvisning till källskyddet. Fine, jag kan köpa detta om det finns risk att källan röjs. Samtidigt drar jag mig till minnes ett inlägg på Newsmill, som gamle kollegan Olle Andersson skrev förra året och som bl a handlade om Mattssons lilla favorit, tillika Assange-hataren, kulturchefen Karin Olsson:

"Men, Karin Olsson på Expressen, du som i en ledare ville att Wikileaks skulle avslöja källorna så att dessa kunde hyllas som de verkliga hjältarna (sic): hur är det med din egen öppenhet. Hur resonerade du när ni hängde ut Wikileaks ryske representant som antisemit och sen refuserade hans replik? Vem avgör vad som skickas i papperskorgen, du eller någon annan. Om jag kommer till dig på kulturen och vill veta hur det kommer sig att vissa saker står i tidningen och andra inte, lovar du då att slå på 100-wattarna på nyhetsdesken? Vem tipsade om Tobleroneaffären? Låt oss få 'hylla den verkliga hjälten' istället för den reporter som stal applåderna."

Detta är bara ett exempel på den värld Thomas Mattsson och Karin Olsson framlever sina dagar, där dubbelmoralen bara är en av ledstjärnorna i deras smutsiga värld.

Själva telefonsamtalet med Hrafnsson säger sig Expressen ha spelat in. Vad sa Hrafnsson? Detta borde vara lätt att bevisa genom att lägga ut samtalet på nätet, men Mattsson vägrar. Varför får vi ingen förklaring till. Den enda logiska slutsatsen måste vara att samtalet inte innehåller det Expressen påstår att det gör. Om så är fallet, varför skall vi då tro Mattsson på hans ord när det gäller dokumenten?

Uppgifterna om att Carl Bildt varit amerikansk informatör sedan 1973 kommer från en intervju med Julian Assange i tidskriften Rolling Stone. Nu refererar Thomas Mattsson till denna i ett svar Till Hrafnsson i SVT. Där skriver Mattsson:

"I debattartikeln hos SVT står exempelvis inte att Julian Assange själv— till tidskriften Rolling Stone— påstått att Wikileaks har dokument som pekar ut Carl Bildt som USA:s 'informatör'.

Undrar om Thomas Mattsson hört talas om Pinocchio, som fick en lång näsa när han ljög? Förmodligen har Mattsson hoppats på att ingen skulle orka leta i den 7 sidor långa intervjuen. Vad säger Assange? Detta:

"The Swedish foreign minister responsible for extradition, Carl Bildt, became a U.S. Embassy informant in 1973 when he was 24 years old. He shipped his personal effects to Washington, to lead a conservative leadership program, where he met Karl Rove. They became old friends and would go to conferences together and so on" (Rolling Stone)

Här finns inte ett ord om några hemliga dokument, alltså ljuger Mattsson sina läsare rakt i ansiktet.

Bakgrunden till Assange påstående är att Carl Bildt 1973 inbjöds, innan han ens var riksdagsman, att besöka amerikanska militära installationer, tex ledningscentralen för

amerikanska strategiska bombflyget i Omaha, Nebraska. Där diskuterade han svensk försvarspolitik

Det var ett viktigt år för den då 24-årige Bildt. Han blev ordförande för Fria Moderata Studentförbundet, redaktör för deras tidskrift och dessutom politisk sekreterare under Gösta Bohman. Karl Rove, å sin sida, är bara ett år yngre än Bildt. Just 1973 lyckades han bli vald till ordförande för Republikanernas studentförbund. Även Roves illustra karriär tog fart där och då. Att Rove och Bildt haft kontakter med varandra sedan 1970-talet är känt sedan tidigare, och att det kan ha börjat just det året framstår som helt logiskt.

10 år senare, lämnade Bildt information från ubåtskommissionen direkt till Pentagon och till dess Defense Information Agency. Det gav upphov till den sk Bildt-affären i Sveriges riksdag.

"En av medlemmarna i ubåtskommissionen var nuvarande utrikesminister Carl Bildt, som då var enskild riksdagsman. Ett par dagar efter det att kommissionen presenterat sin rapport åkte Bildt till Washington och pratade ubåtar och säkerhetspolitik med amerikanska säkerhetsexperter.

Det ledde till en offentlig bannbulla från regeringen Palme och gjorde i ett nafs Carl Bildt känd för en större krets. Bildt har därefter vid upprepade tillfällen hävdad att Sovjetunionen och senare Ryssland kränkt svenska vatten, även efter Hårsfjärden." (Aftonbladet)

Carl Bildts kontakter i USA har varit allmänt kända för oss som var med redan på den tiden. Thomas Mattsson var bara 13 år när U-båtskommissionen kom med sitt betänkande. När andra kommissionen kom 1995 hade han hunnit bli 24 år och var verksam som journalist.

Dokumentet Mattsson hänvisar till finns förmodligen bara i hans fantasi. När Wikileaks ville dementera Expressens påståenden vände man sig genom sin svenska PR-byrå Ullman PR av naturliga skäl till just Expressen. Där ställde Thomas Mattsson som villkor att organisationen skulle be om ursäkt för sitt första twitter. Detta krav gick inte Wikileaks med på, utan man gick istället till SVT.

Expressens smutskastning av Wikileaks och Assange når 945.000 läsare. (Expressen). 153 131 svenska twitterkonton var registrerade i december 2011. 63 801 av dessa hade varit aktiva senaste veckan. 23 089 ytterligare hade varit aktiva senaste 30 dagarna. 18 112 användare har aldrig skrivit något inlägg. (Blogg Vå)

För att få reda på vad Wikileaks skriver måste man "följa" deras twitter. Twitter eller tweets kan också twittras vidare, alltså vidarebefodras. Jagt har inget twitterkonto själv, men brukar gå in och "tjuvläsa". Wikileaks har drygt 1,4 miljoner följare worldwide. Om 5 procent av Sveriges aktiva twittrare följer Wikileaks, innebär detta 6 750 personer och låt oss vara generösa med att ytterligare 6 750 personer nås av deras budskap på olika sätt vi uppe i 13 500. **Det är 1,43 procent av det antal som nås av artiklarna i Expressen.**

Nu framstår Thomas Mattsson mer och mer som en ganska fåfång person. Twitter är vanligare bland journalister än bland vanligt folk. Mattsson själv twittrar och då är det lätt att tro att man befinner sig i världens centrum på samma sätt som kampanjledarna i #prataomdet.

Mattssons fåfänga visar sig också när Expressen låter publicera sig på engelska för att vidga kretsen av mottagarna för lögnerna. Påståendena kring "kartläggningen av svenska journalister" har jag tittat på [här](#).

Professorns Blogg uppmärksammade på något jag missat: "The material to which Expressen, awarded 'Editorial Team of the Year' in 2011 by the Swedish Newspapers Association, and 1st Prize Winner in the international INMA Awards for its coverage of the latest Swedish general elections, has become privy shows that the finances and private lives of the Swedish journalists have been reviewed."

Man kan lätt luras att tro att det är ett pris för framstående journalism och att man fått prisen för just framstående journalistiska prestationer, eftersom man väljer att lyfta fram dem i en nyhetsartikel för en internationell publik. Inte heller här har inte Mattsson räknat med att bli synad.

"Valstugan var en unik satsning som Expressen gjorde i valsapurten. Aldrig tidigare har en tidning haft en valstuga mitt i Stockholm. I valstugan kunde läsarna och väljarna möta politiker, ställa frågor och diskutera politik med allt från partiledarna från riksdagspartierna till företrädade för Expressens ledarsida." (Expressen)

Med andra ord handlade det mera om marknadsföring än journalistik.

Thomas Mattsson skriver i sin blogg att han har tackat nej till att möta Kristinn Hrafnsson i debatt i SVT, men.... "Jaja. Om ledaren för Wikileaks, Julian Assange, åker till Göteborg för att debattera nyhetsjournalistik så lovar också jag, som chefredaktör för Expressen, att komma till SVT-studion. Det är väl ändå rimligt? Men att sätta mig där med en talesperson för en organisation som far med osanning? Nänä"

Julian Assange sitter i husarrest i England. Därmed är Thomas Mattsson inlägg så oerhört korkat, att man saknar ord. När sedan mannen som inte sagt ett sant i ord i fråga, beskyller motståndarna för att ljuga förbättrat inte mitt omdöme-- en geting utan sting!

Mattsson fundera varför kvällstidningar ligger i botten på svenska folkets förtroendebarmeter?

<http://oldwolf-vindenviskarmittnamn.blogspot.se/2012/03/thomas-mattson-en-geting-utan-sting.html>

There's Something Seriously Fishy About The Case Against Julian Assange

*Michael Kelley
Business Insider
April 7, 2012*

Any day now Britain's Supreme Court will issue a ruling on whether or not the European Arrest Warrant (EAW) issued for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is valid, a decision that will determine if Assange is extradited to Sweden to face allegations of sexual assault. The EAW system increases the speed and ease of extradition throughout EU countries.

Assange, 40, had consensual sex with two women in Sweden in August 2010. He is accused of refusing to use a condom in one instance and having intercourse with the other women while she was not fully awake. Assange denies both claims. He is currently under house arrest outside London.

Based on the "Agreed Statement of Facts and Issues" issued by the UK Supreme Court, the details surrounding both the extradition and sexual allegations deserve a closer look. A quick recap of the extradition case:

- The EAW was issued for Assange on December 2, 2010. He was arrested in London on December 7, 2010, and has been under house arrest since.
- According to the Agreed Statement of Facts and Issues, Swedish Director of Public Prosecution Marianne Ny is "requesting the arrest of Assange... to enable implementation of the preliminary investigation."
- The extradition hearing took place before the Westminster Magistrates' Court in February 2011 and a Senior District Judge ordered Assange's extradition. Assange appealed to the High Court, which dismissed his appeal on November 2, 2011.
- On December 16, 2011, the Appeal Panel of Supreme Court granted Assange permission to appeal to the Supreme Court.
- The UK Supreme Court heard Assange's case on February 1 and 2 of this year.

Assange's lawyers have argued that the EAW is invalid for two reasons:

- 1) Assange has not been charged with a crime. Under EAW procedures a warrant must indicate a formal charge in order to be validated.
- 2) The "issuing judicial authority" of the EAW was the prosecutor (i.e. Ny), but "judicial authority" usually refers to an impartial magistrate, judge or court (or in Sweden's case the National Police Board).

Geoffrey Robertson, an adviser to Assange's legal team, began his written argument to UK Supreme Court with the sentence: "The notion that a prosecutor is a 'judicial authority' is a contradiction in terms."

Furthermore, according to the EAW surrender procedures, "a judicial authority of the Member State where the requested person has been arrested will have to take the decision on his or her surrender."

So now the UK Supreme Court is making the decision. If it rejects the appeal, Assange would be extradited to Sweden, where he faces immediate arrest and detention without bail (unless the European Court of Human Rights agrees to consider his case and directs Britain not to hand him over until its proceedings are over).

From Sweden Assange could be extradited to the U.S. (with whom Sweden has a "temporary surrender" agreement in place), where he could face charges of espionage or conspiracy over WikiLeaks' publication of hundreds of thousands of leaked

classified U.S. documents.

In February leaked emails from the private U.S. security firm Stratfor revealed that a secret U.S. grand jury has had a secret Indictment against Assange since at least January 26, 2011.

The extradition case will not look into the substance of the sexual assault allegations against Assange, but the events leading up to the issuing of the EAW are informative to the case.

A quick recap of the sexual assault allegations:

– During a 2010 visit to Sweden, Assange had consensual sex with two women after he arrived on August 13. The women subsequently spoke and realized they both had intercourse with Assange "in circumstances where respectively they had or might have been or become unprotected against disease or pregnancy," according to the Agreed Statement of Facts.

– On August 20 the two women went to the Swedish police, who took their visit as the filing of formal reports of "rape" of one woman (referred to as SW) and "molestation" of the other (referred to as AA). On-duty assistant prosecutor Maria Kjellstrand ordered that Assange be arrested.

– On August 21 Swedish chief prosecutor, Eva Finné, assessed the evidence and cancelled the arrest warrant against Assange, saying that she did not doubt the veracity of SW's account but "the content of the interview does not support the contention that a crime has been committed."

– On August 25 Finné determined that there was no crime committed against SW (i.e. the instance where Assange allegedly had sex with her while she wasn't fully awake) and that the preliminary investigation regarding molestation of AA (i.e. refusing to where a condom) would continue.

– Claes Borgström, a lawyer and Social Democrat politician, subsequently took on the case on behalf of the two women and appealed to Director of Public Prosecutions Marianne Ny to revive the rape investigation. Ny, who does not normally act for the prosecution in individual cases, overruled Finné and resumed the preliminary investigation into allegations of rape against SW on September 1.

– On September 27 Ny ordered that Assange be arrested. Assange's lawyers were informed on September 30, and by that time he had left Sweden. Ny stated that Assange "was 'not a wanted man' and would be able to attend an interview 'discreetly'" despite the warrant for his arrest, according to the Agreed Statement of Facts.

– In October and November Assange's lawyers offered a telephone or video-link interview (because telephone or video interviews with suspects abroad are lawful in Sweden and qualify for the purposes of a preliminary investigation), but the options were denied as Ny insisted that Assange be interviewed in person.

– After the first EAW was denied by UK's Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) because it "failed to specify the punishability in respect of each offence," Ny submitted a replacement EAW on December 2. It was certified by SOCA on December 6, Assange

was arrested on December 7 and has been under house arrest while he appeals the EAW.

Thus, by simply looking at the Agreed Statement of Facts and Issues — without discussing the Swedish gender politics involved or how the media have treated Assange — **it seems that Assange's argument that the EAW is invalid holds water because Marianne Ny seems more like an enthusiastic prosecutor than an impartial "judicial authority."**

WikiLeaks has already publicized what Stratfor watch officer Chris Farnham thinks about the whole situation. On December 6 (i.e. the day before Assange was arrested), Farnham sent an email to Stratfor CEO and founder George Friedman that was titled "Assange is off the hook..."

"BTW, close family friend in Sweden who knows the girl that is pressing charges tells me that there is absolutely nothing behind it other than prosecutors that are looking to make a name for themselves. My friend speaks rather disparagingly about the girl who is claiming molestation. I also think the whole rape thing is incorrect for if I remember correctly rape was never the charge."

After being informed that Assange was being accused under Sweden's loose definition of rape, Farnham replied: "If it really matters I can look into it, but from what I am hearing that is not the case. That's not to say that my friend is foolproof either. She knows nothing of law or politics, she just knows the girl in question and follows the news."

Assange's legal team has not been given copies of the complete case file because under Swedish law "the Appellant is only entitled to have access to this material once a final decision to prosecute is made," according to the Agreed Statement of Facts and Issues.

The UK Supreme Court are expected to tweet their ruling any day now.

<http://www.businessinsider.com>

Truth of Assange is stranger than fiction

*Elizabeth Farrelly
Sydney Morning Herald
April 12, 2012*

I'm not given to conspiracy theories, incompetence being so much easier to imagine, but one thing gives credibility to Clive Palmer's otherwise nutty CIA phantasm about US influence in Australia. It is Julian Assange, a story that hinges on the uncomfortable relationship between truth and power.

We expect truth-telling from our four-year-olds but not from our politicians. In the case of Assange, truth is actively and repeatedly punished. This implies that, as you move

up through society's power strata, there's a point where morality flips. A sort of moral inversion layer, beneath which the rules apply but above which they're reversed.

The modern Labor Party seems to illustrate this as well as anyone. It seemed rather a giggle last year when, after their electoral drubbing, NSW Labor felt the need for ethics classes to learn how to be "honest with ourselves and ... the people we represent". But prolonged electroconvulsive therapy might have been more in order, for whichever thread you pull, the last decade of Labor emerges like an episode of the Jason Bourne film franchise.

Start anywhere. Say, at Mark Arbib. Arbib, then a Labor senator crucial in deposing a first-term prime minister and crowning Julia Gillard, was **later revealed as a secret US government source**. He also owned a beachfront apartment in Maroubra, built by a Labor donor developer, as did Labor's former NSW treasurer Eric Roozendaal, both in the very same block where Moses Obeid, son of Labor MLC Eddie, also resided. For two years Arbib stayed in the Canberra apartment of Alexandra Williamson, staffer to Gillard and daughter of the embattled HSU boss Michael Williamson.

I tell you, it's the Philippines out there. When Craig Thomson popped up as an electoral contender the ALP must have kicked his tyres, seen his dodgy log-book and thought, yep, he's one of ours. Bring him in.

I mention all this not just to illustrate that high-level grubbiness is so normal we almost expect it, but to highlight a more sinister possibility; that we, like the Philippines, are a puppet US state, where truth comes second to power.

This kind of talk I've always resisted. Yet it is now undeniable that, at US behest, Julian Assange stands to lose his liberty, indefinitely, for telling the truth. **And the very same Labor Party, with its CIA-assisted PM and its concern for truth re-education, lifts not a finger to help him.**

It's quite clear that Assange is not guilty— not of rape, not of treason. As Malcolm Turnbull, responding to Gillard's "illegal" claim, told a Sydney University law school audience last year, it is prima facie clear that Assange has broken no Australian law. In words of one syllable, the Australian Federal Police agrees. There has been no breach of our law.

Christine Assange says when she began investigating this, it was like slipping through a wormhole into another, shadowy world where the rules do not apply. Australian lore sees her son as a cult-outlaw in the time-honoured tradition, a modern folk hero, wrongly maligned for helping us to see into that wormhole.

Assange has been under house arrest for 15 months. His family are in hiding and governments all over the world vilify him. A US sealed indictment could deliver decades in prison, or worse, his lawyers claim. Yet he has not been charged. Not with rape. Not with terrorism. Not with hacking. Not even with condomless sex.

The man is an Australian citizen in fear of his life, victim of a massive miscarriage of justice. But our government does nothing.

Were it anyone else— even on a genuine charge, formally laid— Gillard, Roxon and

Carr would be over there, holding hands, pressing buttons, making tea. But because it's Assange, and because he's been telling inconvenient truths about Big Brother, he is guilty until proved otherwise.

The sex charges are clearly ridiculous and the Swedish justice system so convoluted as to be, if you'll excuse the pun, impenetrable. Yet the Sweden-US bilateral extradition agreement requires neither charge nor evidence. The minute he lands in Sweden, Assange can be locked up in solitary, incommunicado, and indefinitely without charge.

Or he can be shuffled straight onto the US extradition plane and, under sealed indictment, into the secret horror of a grand jury. There will be no judge, and no defence materials. Just a jury drawn from the most militarised area of the US—Alexandria, Virginia.

This is weird. Assange didn't do the evil stuff. He exposed it (names redacted).

But join the dots. Over the same period, Karl Rove has been advising the Swedish Prime Minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt, known as "Sweden's Reagan". Julia Gillard, flipped into power by CIA-friendly Mark Arbib, describes herself rhythmically as "a true mate" to the US, "an ally for the 60 years past ... an ally for all the years to come". And in our Parliament a raft of sinister legislation has appeared.

Labor's special amendments to the Extradition Act allow the same, proofless "streamlining" of extradition from Australia. Its so-called "WikiLeaks Amendment" allows ASIO to spy, at the Attorney-General's discretion, on known supporters—despite the AFP's view that no law has been breached. And its controversial Cybercrime Security Bill allows routine collection and surveillance of private emails, texts and other personal data.

As Gillard told Barack Obama last year, "you can do anything today". Assange's story will make a great film, in years to come; Jason Bourne with a dragon tattoo. But it's not fiction. It's real. We may yet be forced to recognise that Gillard's "anything" may include totalitarianism by stealth. And this is Labor.

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/politics/truth-of-assange-is-stranger-than-fiction-20120411-1ws4o.html>

PRESSMEDDELANDE
Nordic News Network
12 april 2012

Assange-fallhistorien nu på svenska

Nordic News Networks detaljerade redogörelse om Assange-fallet finns nu på svenska via en länk på följande webbsida: <http://nnn.se/nordic/assange/historia.htm>

Denna fallhistoria, som till stor del bygger på protokollen från polishförhören, förklarar bland annat att:

- Den allvarligaste anklagelsen mot Julian Assange, denna om våldtäkt, grundas på ett ofullbordat polisförhör som inte har godkänts av vittnet. Förhöret fick nämligen avbrytas då vittnet blev så illa berörd av beskedet att Assange hade anhållits i sin frånvaro, att hon enligt förhørsledaren inte förmådde fortsätta. Hon lämnade polisstationen utan att godkänna protokollet. Senare berättade hon för en väninna "att hon blev överkörd av polisen och andra runt omkring."
- Den näst allvarligaste anklagelsen, om sexuellt ofredande, grundas på den andra målsägandens historia om en kondom som Assange avsiktligt skulle ha rivit sönder. Den kondom som lämnades som bevis testades av Statens kriminaltekniska laboratorium som dock inte kunde hitta något spar av kromosomal DNA, vilket innebär att den omöjligt kan ha använts vid samlag. Detta är ett av flera tecken på att denna målsägande har lämnat tveklaktiga bevis. Ändå fortsätter åklagaren att grunda misstanken om sexuellt ofredande på hennes vittnesmål, och har veterligen inte heller utrett de många frågetecken kring det.
- Både polisen och åklagaren har upprepade gånger brutit mot sina egna riktlinjer om hur ett sådant fall skall utredas.
- Julian Assange har i Sverige skarpt kritiserats för sitt ifrågasättande av det svenska rättssystemets hantering av sexbrottsfall. Det som inte brukar nämnas i samband med denna kritik är att framstående svenska jurister har i årtal framfört samma argument mot svensk praxis i sådana fall. Frågan är varför kritikerna ger sken av att det enbart är Assange som lyfter fram bristerna.
- Den svenska åklagaren har ljugit om den svenska lagens villkor när det gäller viktiga aspekter av Assange-fallet.

Swede speaks out on false NY sex crimes

The Local
13 April 2012

One of the two Swedish businessmen who were cleared of sexual assault charges leveled by a teenager in New York has spoken out about the ordeal, labelling the accusations a "complete fabrication".

"Luckily there was concrete evidence in the form of surveillance cameras, witnesses, and pass cards to the hotel that proved the whole story was a complete fabrication," one of the formally accused men, Niklas Adalberth, 30, told Swedish business magazine *Veckans Affärer* on Thursday.

Adalberth and Jens Saltin, 31, were charged with the of molesting a 19-year-old woman in a luxury hotel in New York in early February.

They were accused of straddling the victim, tearing off her clothes, and fondling her breasts, however the charges were cleared in late February.

Referred to in the Swedish media as an “IT-millionaire”, the co-founder the e-payments company Klarna verified that the whole story was false, and that there was no basis to the accusations.

“Jens Saltin and I had been in San Francisco and met up with some friends in New York. The next day we were falsely accused for something we hadn’t done, something that was completely foreign to everything we stand for,” he said.

Adalberth described the ordeal as a “Kafka-esque nightmare”, yet was happy with the way the incident was handled and put to rest. “Klarna handled this very professionally. The staff was informed immediately and all the big customers were contacted,” he said.

Based in Sweden, Klarna AB employs more than 600 people and has operations in Sweden, Norway, Finland, the Netherlands, Germany and Israel.

[Note contrast with Swedish media coverage of Assange case. —A.B.]

Government ducks and weaves on Assange

*Bernard Keane
Crikey (Australia)
18 April 2012*

After dodging and delaying FOI requests about its consideration of the case of Julian Assange for months, **the government has blocked the release of any material that would reveal its internal legal deliberations over Assange’s extradition to the United States.**

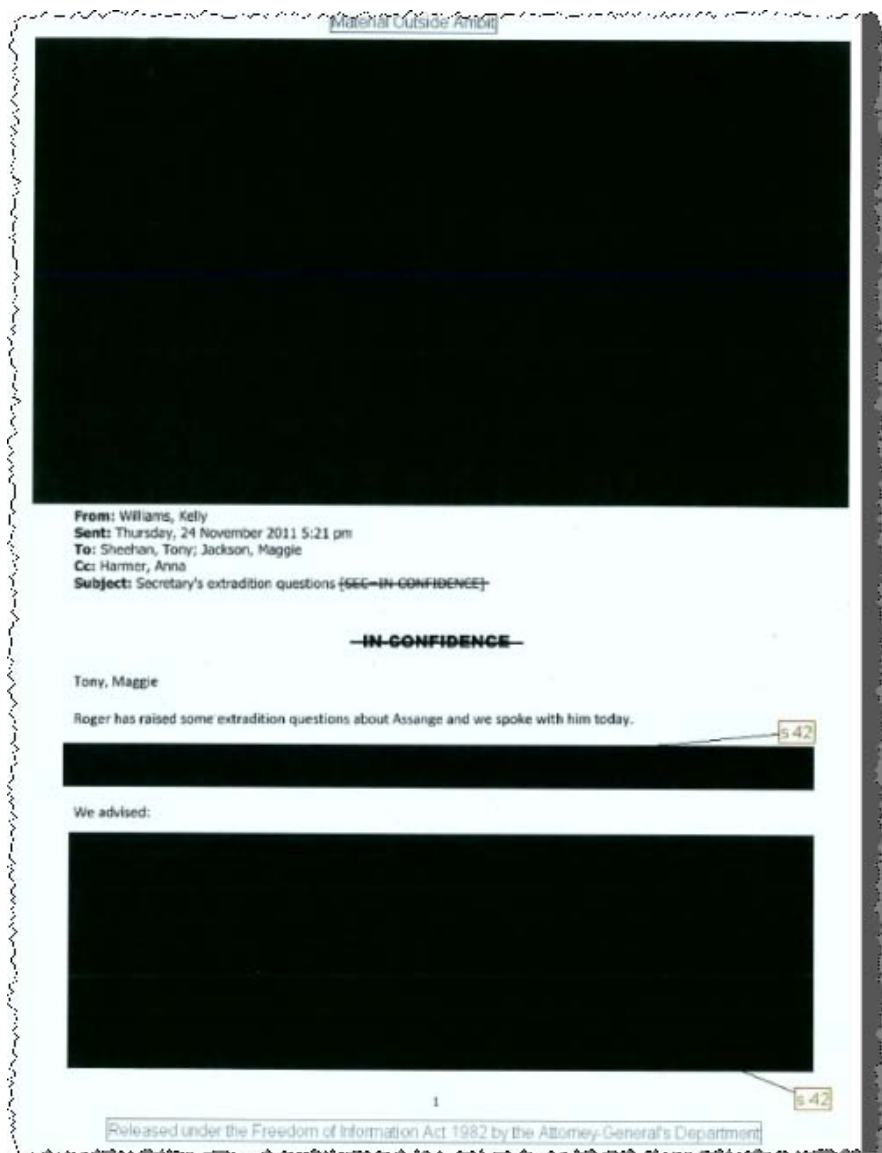
Greens Senator Scott Ludlam made an FOI application to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Attorney-General’s Department and their respective ministerial offices in December seeking documents relating to “the potential extradition or temporary surrender” of Assange to the US.

The response of the government has been a litany of excuses and self-justifications. After several months, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is still seeking to avoid responding. In March, DFAT said it would take them a remarkable four months to process the request and demanded that Ludlam justify why a request for documents about Assange’s extradition was a matter in the public interest. At the end of March, DFAT demanded another 30 days on top of the four months, on the basis that they’d only just realised they would have to consult with foreign governments over the request.

The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet quickly fobbed off the request entirely by **claiming that the request “would unreasonably divert the resources of the department”**, an excuse permitted under s.24 of the FOI Act.

So far only Attorney-General’s has responded, after trying to unsuccessfully convince the Information Commissioner to re-extend the deadline for responding, and actually breaching the response deadline. The result (PDF), when it finally arrived in late

March, featured extensive use of the famous black highlighter and bordered on nonsensical.



Among the treasures served up by Attorney-General's were:

Emails relating to AGD secretary oger Wilkins questions about Assange's extradition, redacted to the point of meaninglessness, on the basis of "legal professional privilege".

Detailed advice to Wilkins about Assange's extradition, including the issue of his facing the death penalty, was entirely redacted (legal professional privilege)

A question time brief for Robert McClelland, in which both the talking points and the background material is almost entirely redacted **because it "could cause damage to Australia's international relations"**

Emails between departmental staff about a request from McClelland's office for "lines" for use in response to possible questions about Assange after a newspaper

article.

Correspondence from people concerned about the issue and media articles

Some of the Greens' own correspondence and notices of motion, **one of which was bizarrely redacted despite being a public document.**

The redactions prevent any assessment of what exactly the government knows about the US government's sealed indictment for Assange. The government has played dumb on the issue, publicly declaring it knows nothing about the matter, despite it apparently being common knowledge in Washington circles (as revealed by the Stratfor emails) that a sealed indictment against Assange had been issued.

<http://www.crikey.com.au/2012/04/18/julian-assange-freedom-of-information-requests/>

Christine Assange Demands Attorney General's Resignation

WL Central
2012-04-18

In an emotional ABC radio interview today, Christine Assange, mother of WikiLeaks founder and editor-in-chief Julian Assange, has demanded the resignation of Australian Attorney General Nicola Roxon.

The demand came after Ms Roxon appeared with other panelists, including WikiLeaks lawyer Geoffrey Robertson QC, on an Australian political TV show, "Q And A", on Monday 16th April 2012.

Christine Assange says Ms Roxon "has just point blank unblinkingly lied to the Australian people all the way through that Q And A session."

Ms Roxon's appearance on the show was eagerly awaited because since December 2010 there has been almost complete silence on Assange and WikiLeaks from both major Australian political parties. Radio presenter Phil Kafcaloudes replayed the following segment from the Q and A show:

Roxon: "There isn't something at the moment where we can intervene. We've made representations about proper processes, we've done all of the things that you should. He is not in a country that has doesn't have a legal system that operates properly. Ah, even I, as I said at the beginning, think it's an odd process, that you can keep someone detained for this period of time without there being a charge."

Host: "Have you protested about that?"

Roxon: "We have made our views very clearly known to the—"

Robertson: "Not to the Australian public you haven't."

Roxon: "to the Americans. Well, I'm here doing an interview today. This is a very public thing to be doing."

Robertson: "Good. What have you said to the Americans?"

(clapping, laughter)

Roxon: "Well we've said lot's of things to the Americans."

Robertson: "Have you said we want him to come home first before you try to extradite him for an offense that you claim he has committed outside America?"

Roxon: "As you know, I don't make— Firstly, I don't make a claim about whether he's committed an offence, but other countries are able to make those assertions. If you are in another country or breaking the laws of another country, we have made very clear that we want all of the proper processes to apply. We have made very clear that he's an Australian and he's welcome to come home to Australia...."

Christine Assange began by denying that the Australian government has provided proper representation for her son. She said they did nothing until she stood outside former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's office on a Tuesday, and then a letter was sent out on the Wednesday. She also denied that Sweden has "a legal system that operates properly".

"Sweden has breached all it's own laws on this case from Day One," she said. "And the Australian government has said nothing. Flagrant abuses, abuses of not only police and prosecutorial procedure but human rights as well."

Ms Assange has previously tweeted a lengthy list of over 90 talking points about her son's legal problems, including embarrassing details about the Swedish government's handling of the case.

"Now Nicola Roxon knows full well the list of all the breaches because there was a cross-bench meeting on 2nd March 2011 where all of those breaches were listed by [WikiLeaks lawyer] Jennifer Robinson, in her submission to parliament."

"And just to make sure that they got it, I then emailed it to Nicola Roxon. In fact I emailed all the submissions, the briefs about the illegal breaches, and the politicization of the case, to every MP and every Senator. And Nicola Roxon got it as well."

Ms Assange said that Ms Roxon "has lied, continually, about the breaches."

PK: "Did you get a reaction from Nicola Roxon?"

CA: "Nothing."

PK: "Have you ever had any contact with Nicola Roxon?"

CA: "No."

PK: "Has she ever contacted you?"

CA: "No. No.. In fact they refused to even answer Julian's lawyers' letter for about five weeks, until I started jumping up and down with the media over it."

Ms Assange claimed to have noted "about 18 different lies" from Ms Roxon and cited several of them before the interviewer cut her off:

1. Roxon claimed not to know that it is easier to extradite Julian from Sweden than from the UK. In fact the US-Swedish bilateral treaty includes a Temporary Surrender Regime, which makes extradition much easier, while UK courts and the media are currently in an uproar over several high profile US extradition cases. Greens Senator Scott Ludlum made this very clear to the Australian Senate, **but both major parties blocked Ludlum's motion "to at least cut off that particular process"**.

2. Asked whether the so-called ASIO WikiLeaks amendment "lowers the bar" for Assange to be extradited to the USA, Roxon told the Q And A audience, "No I don't think it does." The amendment significantly expanded ASIO's powers to spy on WikiLeaks and other Australians engaged in activism overseas. Changes to the extradition act have also recently been made by Roxon's department.

Ms Assange noted that US Ambassador Bleich said a week before President Obama visited Australia (16th November 2011) that Australia's extradition obligations needed to be changed. Former Attorney General Robert McLellan was replaced by Ms Roxon less than a month later (14 December 2011).

"The extradition amendments DO impact on Julian," said Ms Assange. "She's lied there again."

3. At one stage (15:50+ mins into the Q and A show) Geoffrey Robertson was discussing the Swedish allegations against Assange when Ms Roxon interjected to state: "he fled from Sweden." Robertson angrily replied, "No he didn't!" (This erroneous public statement from Roxon follows Prime Minister Julia Gillard's earlier assertion that WikiLeaks was "illegal". Both women are trained lawyers.)

"She said that Julian fled Sweden," said Christine Assange. "Now she well knows that that is a lie. And she also knows that that is what they are doing to smear him. Julian was given permission to leave Sweden by the Swedish prosecutor."

An audience poll during the Q And A show found that 78% of respondent believe the Australian government is not doing enough to support Julian Assange. Host Tony Jones asked Ms Roxon: "Do you want to comment?"

Roxon replied with a nervous laugh: "Not particularly."

Julian Assange's lawyer 'prevented from boarding flight at Heathrow'

Jennifer Robinson says she was told she was on a 'watch list' and would need official approval to return to her native Australia

*Press Association/The Guardian
19 April 2012*

A lawyer for the WikiLeaks founder, Julian Assange, has said she was stopped at Heathrow airport and told she was on a watch list **requiring official approval before she could return to her native Australia.**

Jennifer Robinson said a member of airport security told her she "must have done something controversial" and that they would have to contact the Australian high commission in London before letting her on her flight.



Jennifer Robinson

The Australian human rights lawyer was later allowed on to a plane bound for Sydney, where she is due to speak at the Commonwealth Law Conference on Friday.

Australia's department of foreign affairs said it was not aware of any restrictions on Robinson's travel and added that its high commission in London had no record of receiving a call from the British authorities about her movements.

Robinson wrote on Twitter at 9.30 pm on Wednesday night: "Just delayed from checking in at LHR [London Heathrow] because I'm apparently 'inhibited'— requiring approval from Australia House @dfat [department of foreign affairs] to travel ...

She met Assange— who is fighting extradition to Sweden to face sex crime allegations— on Monday, according to a Tweet from the official WikiLeaks account.

The Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA), which is organising the conference at which Robinson will appear, voiced concerns about the incident. It said in a statement: "If these reports are accurate, then the CLA believe they raise profound issues concerning the independence of lawyers and their clients.

"The CLA points out that Article 13 of the UN principles on the role of lawyers sets out clearly that 'lawyers shall not be identified with their clients or their clients' causes as a result of discharging their functions."

An Australian department of foreign affairs spokesman said: "We are aware of claims by Jennifer Robinson, a member of Julian Assange's legal team, that she was prevented by UK border authorities from boarding a flight in London because her travel was in some way 'inhibited', and that she would not be able to travel without prior approval from Australian officials.

"As the department of immigration and citizenship confirmed publicly earlier today, no Australian government agency prevented Ms Robinson from boarding her flight at London's Heathrow airport. We are not aware of any Australian government

restrictions applying to Ms Robinson's travel.

"As an Australian with a valid passport, Ms Robinson would be free to return to Australia at any stage. The Australian high commission in London has no record of a call being received from UK authorities concerning her travel. We understand Ms Robinson has today departed London on a flight to Australia. We are seeking to verify Ms Robinson's claims with relevant UK authorities."

Virgin: Robinson stopped because of "response from security services"

Bernard Keane
Crikey
April 22, 2012

Virgin Atlantic, the airline that stopped Australian human rights lawyer Jen Robinson last Thursday and told her she was on an "inhibited list" that required approval from the Australian High Commission to return home, has told Crikey that "security services" were responsible for the incident and **directed further questions to the British Home Office.**

The stopping of Robinson, who was later allowed to board her Heathrow flight to Sydney via Hong Kong without any contact being made with Australia House, caused a furore that Attorney-General Nicola Roxon says prompted the government to request the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade — initially suspected by Robinson of being behind the incident — to seek an explanation from the UK.

The term "inhibited" is used by the US Department of Homeland Security to refer to passengers who should not be given access to aircraft or "sterile" areas of international airports without additional on-the-spot government approval.

Virgin's statement appears to sheet home [*transfer*] responsibility to UK security services. The company's Australian office told Crikey that its UK head office had advised:

"What happened with Ms Robinson **was absolutely a matter of security** so therefore something we can't really comment on. As the airline we don't make decisions on security issues like this, we only act on a response from the security services which is what happened with Ms Robinson last week. **This was not an airline issue, it was a security issues and something that security services or the Home Office could perhaps comment on?"**

Last Thursday evening ABC journalist Jeff Waters contacted the UK Border Agency and was told that the stopping of Robinson was nothing to do with UK authorities. Clearly Virgin's statement contradicts that. We now have DFAT, the UK Border Agency and the airline all blaming another party for Robinson being stopped.

A response is being sought from the Home Office.

<http://blogs.crikey.com.au/thestump/2012/04/22/virgin-robinson-stopped-because-of-response-from-security-services/>

Common Misconceptions of the Assange Case

WL Central
2012-04-20

Julian Assange has now been detained for 500 days without charge. This includes the 10 days he spent in solitary confinement on top of the 490 days he's spent electronically tagged under house arrest. After all this time the media is still spreading the same falsities about his case and people continue to attack him with the same misconceptions as they were a year and a half ago.

The facts of the Assange case must be made clear. These false claims have irrevocably damaged Mr. Assange's reputation and have led to a hostile media climate which harms WikiLeaks as an organization. These smears must continue to be challenged until accurate reporting is widespread.

Misconception #1: Julian Assange has been charged with a crime.

Since the allegations arose, press organizations around the world have been claiming Julian Assange has been charged with a crime. In fact, it is so widespread that Mr. Assange submitted a report to the Leveson Inquiry detailing his challenges with the Press Complaints Commission on trying to remedy this common falsity. But even after the submission, many media organizations still cannot seem to grasp this simple fact.

Julian Assange has not been charged with any crime in any country. Sweden is attempting to extradite him for the purpose of questioning related to sexual misconduct allegations. There are no charges and there have never been charges.

Misconception #2: Julian Assange is accused of rape.

On 20 August 2010, the initial prosecutor on the case unlawfully told Swedish tabloid Expressen that Julian Assange was wanted for rape, before even he was aware of the allegations. Within hours, a Google search for "Assange+rape" returned millions of results.

There are four allegations against Mr. Assange, the fourth which carries the Swedish title "mindre grov våldtäkt," translated to "minor rape." This is a concept which is not present in most legal systems. Originally the allegation was "ordinary rape," which carries a higher jail sentence, but this was downgraded to "minor rape" in November 2010.

The allegation is that, after complainant SW and Mr. Assange had consensual sexual intercourse several times through the night and early morning, Mr. Assange again initiated intercourse with SW while she was either "drowsy" or "asleep" ("drowsy" ("halvsov") according to text messages from SW, "asleep" according to the police report). SW expressed concern about continuing without a condom, but agreed to continue without one.

It should also be noted that SW's interview is not even approved by her, as she was upset after hearing Mr. Assange was being sought by the police and would not sign off on the document.

Misconception #3: Julian Assange fled Sweden to escape questioning.

A widely believed misconception is that Julian Assange left Sweden to escape questioning about the allegations of sexual misconduct. Even Australian Attorney-General Nicola Roxon believed this claim, recently reiterating it on national television, before being corrected by human rights lawyer Geoffrey Robertson QC.

Julian Assange stayed in Sweden for about 5 weeks to answer the allegations. Attempts to arrange interview were made through his lawyer Björn Hurtig, but all proposed dates were refused. When Mr. Assange left Sweden, he did so only after receiving approval from the Swedish prosecutor on the case, Marianne Ny.

Mr. Assange has offered himself to be questioned via telephone or video link from London, which are perfectly legal methods under Swedish law, despite Prosecutor Ny falsely stating otherwise. All offers by Mr. Assange have been rejected.

Misconception #4: If Assange is innocent, why doesn't he go to Sweden?

This is the most common question used to attack Julian Assange, yet it fails on so many levels.

If Julian Assange is extradited to Sweden he will be immediately placed in prison, in solitary confinement, and incommunicado. There is no bail system in Sweden, nor is there a time limit to detention, so Mr. Assange would likely spend up to a year in prison. And again, this is without having been charged of any crime.

If he is eventually charged, the trial will be held in secret. Sweden's legal system also features a panel of lay judges who hold no formal legal training and are appointed because of their political affiliation.

Mr. Assange then faces further extradition to the United States, where politicians have openly called for his assassination. Sweden holds a "temporary surrender" agreement with the U.S. which allows extradition without the usual lengthy procedure.

Furthermore, there is a basic human rights element to this issue. If the UK allows the extradition of Julian Assange to Sweden it means that anyone can be extradited between EU countries without charge and without evidence. By challenging his extradition to Sweden, he is challenging the EAW system as a whole, something which has faced criticism since it came into force in 2004.

'Terrorist' by Association, Assange's Lawyer on the Watch List?

WL Central
2012-04-22

Last Thursday, human rights and Julian Assange lawyer Jennifer Robinson was held up on her flight from London to Sydney for security reasons. Over the years, journalists have been interrogated and detained at borders, often for purely political reasons. This incident was unprecedented with a lawyer now facing similar treatment.

Robinson was told that she is on an "inhibited" list of mysterious origin and that the Australian High Commission in London needed to be contacted before her departure. At some point, she was given the green light to board without that call being made and was able to get to her destination. When pressed, Australian Attorney General Roxon showed concern about the incident. She said that "this is not the result of any action taken by the Australian Government. We believe [Robinson], as an Australian who is not subject to any criminal charges or allegations, should be free to travel in and out of Australia."

The Guardian reported that "The Australian high commission in London has no record of a call being received from UK authorities concerning her travel". Virgin Atlantic, the airline that stopped Robinson, deferred responsibility to security services, while the UK Border Agency and DFAT each deny involvement.

Bernard Keane at Crikey found that the term 'inhibited', used to describe Robinson's flight status, was not used by Australian or British agencies, but that it was listed in the US Department of Homeland Security's operating manuals for airlines.

Robinson has represented Julian Assange in his legal battle against extradition to Sweden. Was she on some kind of US watch list because of her association with Assange? There is clear precedent with other people associated with WikiLeaks and Bradley Manning who have been stopped and interrogated when entering the US. **She is not the only WikiLeaks associate or supporter to be detained at an airport.**

David House, founder of the Bradley Manning Support Network, is currently pursuing a court case against the US government regarding similar border harassment for his political affiliations. He has been repeatedly interrogated and his computer confiscated while entering the US.

Computer researcher and journalist Jacob Appelbaum described several accounts of interrogations and surveillance since he volunteered for the whistle-blowing site WikiLeaks. He has been a target of government surveillance and hassled at the US border. He is also under a controversial court order from the US to obtain his email communication. He spoke in an interview on DemocracyNow! about his experience:

They wanted to know about my political views. They wanted to know about my work in any capacity as a journalist, actually, the notion that I could be in some way associated with Julian.... They didn't ask me anything about terrorism. They didn't ask me anything about smuggling or drugs or any of the customs things that you would expect customs to be doing. They didn't ask me if I had anything to declare about taxes, for example, or about importing things. They did it purely for political reasons and to intimidate me... denied me a lawyer. They gave me water, but refused me a bathroom, to give you an idea about what they were doing.

Are these people being intimidated by the US government in a kind of insinuation of guilt by association? What is really troubling is the lack of factual reasoning for this seeming guilt. Contrary to misconceptions delivered by the corporate media, Assange and WikiLeaks have not been charged with anything. Yet they have generally been treated as criminals, with prominent US politicians and pundits even calling for Assange's assassination. It is a classic Gandhian formula— first they ignore you, then laugh at you and then try to destroy you. WikiLeaks and Assange have certainly experienced these three phases. From establishment media smears and ridicule to high

US officials calling him a high tech terrorist, Assange has gone through character assassination and been terrorized in the public mind.

In a way, it seems those who are associated with Assange or WikiLeaks are also being treated as potential 'terrorist associates'. The pattern of intimidation and demonization of people who have never been violent or even charged with breaking a law is similar to the treatment of Assange himself. In the eyes of the US government, perhaps they all appear as dangerous individuals who need to be intimidated, controlled and tracked. On the face of it this is patently absurd. None of these people have ever been violent or advocated violence.

Yet now with this Robinson case, a very dangerous line has been crossed— the 'inhibiting' of a lawyer from re-entering her home country from England, far from the shores of the US. What is unique and disconcerting about this situation is that she is a lawyer and this will likely have a chilling effect on all lawyers, as one of their own has been apparently harassed simply for associating with her clients. This is ominous in its implications for justice systems worldwide.

The international organization Commonwealth Lawyers' Association (CLA) issued a statement concerning Robinson's interception and called for an explanation. They addressed deep concern regarding their profession's independence by citing Article 13 of the UN Principles on the Role of Lawyers that "lawyers shall not be identified with their clients or their clients' causes as a result of discharging their functions". In addition, Robinson was not entering or leaving the US. This incident revealed that the US may be intervening in foreign border controls to apply their own political blacklists in other countries, which raises the real specter of loss of sovereignty to a lawless hegemony.

What we may have here is the political crime of intimidation. The Department of Homeland Security is apparently treating journalists and now maybe even lawyers as 'associative terrorists'.

Oscar-and Emmy-nominated filmmaker and journalist Laura Poitras spoke about her own experience of repeated intimidation at the US border. In an interview with DemocracyNow! she described how she was detained, interrogated and searched by federal agents. She recounted a recent incident where while she was taking notes during the interrogation with a pen and she was ordered to put it away:

They said that my pen was a dangerous weapon... that my pen was a threat to them... I mean, in terms of the context, you have to understand that I'm surrounded by border agents who are all carrying guns, and I'm taking out... a pen that they find threatening. And so, this was profoundly upsetting.

This inane picture of government agents viewing a pen as a weapon is very telling. Imagine the picture of a pen in the hand of nonviolent woman who is surrounded by armed agents. There is something quite compelling in this image. The pen can be seen as representing the ideals of the Press, the Fourth Estate and those who advocate for free speech and laws that protect human rights and equal justice. To those authorities who stop journalists and human right lawyers at the border, this symbol of the pen clearly appears to be a threat. It is similar to the blatantly unconstitutional laws passed in some states in the US against the videotaping of police officers in public.

In the name of security and stopping 'terrorism' a question arises. Who are actually the ones creating an atmosphere of terror? Isn't it those who are attempting to make lawyers, journalists and the public more fearful? The word terrorist itself has become a catch-all term defined by empirical power to label and control anyone who legitimately questions their authority.

Those clinging to power act as if they actually know that the pen is mightier than the sword and any physical weapon. Could what is revealed in this abuse of border control be a desperate attempt by a failing power to intimidate people globally who expose abuse by the US government? By singling out those who are associated with WikiLeaks and Julian Assange, the US government is violating the very ideals enshrined by the First Amendment; those of free assembly (association), speech and press.

This kind of political persecution must be borne witness to by the international community and not tolerated, because any one of us could be next and treated as a 'terrorist by association'. History has shown that this is one step down the dangerous road toward tyranny.

Assange's mainstream friends U-turn after show boom

RussiaToday
24 April 2012

The media that once praised Julian Assange, hailing him a hero for his work as a whistleblower, has now drastically changed its tune, after the debut of his talk show on RT. While some say it's due to journalistic jealousy, others believe the U-turn is political. Laura Smith reports from London.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdylCzya3b8&feature=youtu.be>

Inget Assange-besked i sikte: "En katastrofal situation"

Snart har det gått tre månader men ännu har inget hänt i frågan om Wikileaksgrundaren ska lämnas ut eller ej.

Nyheter24
2012-04-24

LONDON. Det "väntades dröja en månad" innan Supreme Court skulle ge besked om Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange ska utlämnas till Sverige där han misstänks för våldtäkt. Nu har det gått nästan tre och inget besked har kommit.

– Det är en katastrofal situation där man riskerar att allmänheten uppfattar det som en parodi på rättvisa, säger tidigare överåklagaren Sven-Erik Alhem till Nyheter24.

– Det är oerhört överraskande. Det är ingen rättslig bedömning eftersom det varit uppe i två tidigare instanser, säger Joakim Nergelius, professor i rättsvetenskap vid Örebro universitet, till Nyheter24. [Professorn tycks inte förstå vad det handlar om. --A.B.]

Enligt experterna är det ingen av de inblandade som gynnas i målet ju längre tiden går. Snarare blir det värre för alla.

– Sen rättvisa är nästan aldrig riktig rättvisa, säger Alhem.

Det handlar bland annat om att vittnen som kan behöva höras igen inte minns lika tydligt vad som hänt och inte minst Assanges egen historia blir knappast tydligare ju fler månader och år som går.

Nergelius riktar också kritik mot den svenska utredningen som han menar bör ifrågasättas.

– Sedan i december 2010 har det funnits möjlighet att förhöra Assange i London men svenska myndigheter har valt att inte göra det. Det är ett misstag och större blir det ju mer tid som går, säger han.

Sven-Erik Alhem påpekar också att det hade varit bättre att hålla förhör med australiensaren i hans husarrest i England. Den förre överåklagaren passar dock även på att kritisera Assange för den utdragna processen.

– Om jag vore i hans kläder, eftersom han menar att han är oskyldig, skulle jag genast bege mig till Sverige för att få allt det här överstökad, säger han [*och därmed viftar bort alla konstigheter i polisens och åklagarens hantering av fallet* – A.B.].

Skulle ett besked om utlämning av Julian Assange till Sverige komma tror Joakim Nergelius ändå att processen här kan gå relativt snabbt.

– Det mesta i förundersökningen lär vara gjort, det enda som återstår är egentligen att höra honom själv, säger han.

• *Viktor Adolfsson*

<http://nyheter24.se/nyheter/inrikes/683972-ingen-assange-besked-i-sikte-en-katastrofal-situation>

AB: 2012-04-27

Assange gör årets debattshow i tv

Tuttar ihop känd vänsterikon och högerradikal i rysk kanal

SVT Debatt och Magnus Betnér, släng er i väggen. The world tomorrow med Julian Assange är årets debattprogram, alla kategorier.

Första avsnittet (17 april) avrättades av kritikerna. Av flera skäl. Den ryska statliga tv-kanalen RT.com har en tydlig vänsteragenda och anklagas samtidigt för att vara Putintrogen. Inte helt logiskt, men valet av kanal provocerar.

Att han dessutom gjorde den första intervjun på sex år med terroristen och Hizbollahchefen Hassan Nasrallah gjorde inte saken bättre. Nasrallah tuggade föga underhållande propaganda.

Men avsnitt två (24 april) kan bli klassiskt. Assange bjuder in vänsterikonerna Slavoj Žižek och högerradikalen David Horowitz till en synnerligen underhållande skrik- och skrattfest som kulminerar när Žižek vrålar "HE IS STILL A COMMUNIST" mot den före detta Svarta Pantrar-medlemmen Horowitz.

Efter en av de hetsigaste och roligaste debatterna i webbtv-historien förenas de båda ärkefienderna i åsikten att Europa förlorat allt. Men där Žižek tycker att Europa var bra så länge det varade, är Horowitz dom mycket hård:

– Europa är en kulturell temapark, det saknar helt betydelse.

Att höra en ultrakonservativ tänkare som inte är särskilt kulturkonservativ är bara det mycket uppfriskande.

• *Martin Aagård*

Assange Dons Mask at 'Shadows of Liberty' London Premiere

Common Dreams staff
May 25, 2012

Wikileaks founder Julian Assange made a rare public appearance in London last night, hiding his face behind a mask, as the decision on his extradition case nears.

Assange was on stage at a pre-BAFTAS (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) event to speak of his role in the new **documentary *Shadows of Liberty*, which tackles the disintegration of press freedom in the US.**

"This is going to be my last time in public so I thought I should start with a situation where you won't be able to see me anymore...."

"We have a serious commitment to pursuing the work that we are doing. I personally have a serious commitment to pursue the things that I find to be important. I think all of us are at our best when we are pursuing an ideal that we find to be important to ourselves and important to others."

"Given that we only live once, we should make every day count. I feel that I have made my days count so I certainly would not want to exchange days that can be counted for days that cannot."

Shadows of Liberty examines the new media monopoly by corporations in America versus the public battle for truth and democracy. Appearing in the documentary beside Assange are figures such as Dan Rather, Bob McChesney, Daniel Ellsberg, Danny Glover, Chris Hedges, Norman Solomon and Amy Goodman, among others.

* * *

The International Business Times reports:

Wikileaks' founder Julian Assange has donned a Guy Fawkes' Anonymous mask in what he claims to be his "last public appearance" at a pre-Baftas event in London.

Less than a week before his extradition ruling, Assange talked publicly about his role in the documentary *Shadows of Liberty*, which is about press freedom in the US.

"I think all of us are at their best when we are pursuing an ideal that we find to be important to ourselves and important to others. I feel that I've made my days count, so I certainly would not want to exchange days that be counted with days that cannot."

He chose to wear a mask which has become associated with the hacking collective Anonymous, which has staged several cyber-attacks to websites of governments and organizations all over the world.

"It's probably my last time in public so I thought I should start with a situation where you won't be able to see me anymore," he said in an interview with Australia's ABC news

Assange could be extradited to Sweden in a month to face sexual assault allegations. He is accused of raping a woman in Stockholm back in 2010. A panel of seven Supreme Court Judges are set to decide on the issue. He denies the claims and says they are politically motivated for its works with Wikileaks.

"I think all of us are at their best when we are pursuing an ideal that we find to be important to ourselves and important to others," Assange said. "I feel that I've made my days count, so I certainly would not want to exchange days that be counted with days that cannot."

If he loses the UK appeal next week there could be another one at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

"One last avenue of appeal to the European Court of Human Rights and it would be for the courts to determine whether it will hear that appeal but we should get that back very, very quickly if the appeal is filed," human rights lawyer Jennifer Robinson told ABC news.

Assange's lawyers told the judges that the Swedish prosecutor who issued the European Arrest Warrant did not have the authority to do so.

Swedish state media grasps at straws to smear Assange with link to murder case

WL Central
2012-05-27

Swedish state radio [*“state radio” only in the sense that, for example, the BBC is —-A.B.*] attempted early this morning to lay the blame for difficulties in the ongoing investigation of an unrelated Swedish murder case on Julian Assange.

Their article published online attempts to claim Assange is obstructing the course of justice by appealing his case before the UK Supreme Court and that killers pursued by Swedish authorities might go free as a result of a ruling in his favour.

Two brothers were arrested in London on suspicion of involvement in the November 2011 murder of a 22 year old man in Stockholm's Old Town. The man was found fatally wounded and later passed away in hospital. The two brothers fled Sweden after accusations were brought against them. The one brother agreed to be extradited back to Sweden where he is now sitting in detention, but the other has refused.

Radio Stockholm interviewed Joakim Eriksson, the prosecutor handling the case, who said he hoped for help in the extradition proceedings based on the Supreme Court's ruling in Julian Assange's case, which will be handed down on 30 May.

This latest gambit comes less than 72 hours before the ruling is to be announced in London. The Swedes seem again to be involved in a 'wag the dog' scenario— or more correctly: to change the entire EU to suit their ideas of jurisprudence.

The Swedish authorities have already distinguished themselves by having their prisons condemned by human rights organisations. They have no trial by jury save in freedom of the press proceedings. They don't even have educated jurists sitting on their court benches. [*Yes, they do. But there are also “lay judges” who are presumed to be more in touch with so-called ordinary lives. —-A.B.*] They offer no bail whatsoever to people in Julian's situation. They vehemently opposed his house arrest in December 2010, insisting he spend the holidays in Wandsworth prison.

They open, then shut, then reopen the Assange case, then refuse to come to an agreement to question Assange, refuse to use accepted means of interrogation for over 500 days. They hint that they want Assange in isolated custody to 'soften him up', and they refuse to notify Assange of the accusations against him in a language he understands.

They also refused to let Assange's attorney Björn Hurtig view the complete case documentation and attempted (unsuccessfully) to stop him from witnessing at the High Court in Belmarsh this past February. [*Not entirely accurate. The attempt at censorship involved only certain evidence. —-A.B.*]

And now they're trying to blame Julian Assange for an attempt by the highest court in England to bring about a much-needed reform in EAW policy.

Assange påverkar mordutredning

P4 Radio Stockholm (public radio)
2012-05-27

Hur det går för Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange som vägrar lämna England för att förhöras i Stockholm kan få konsekvenser för hur ett mord på en 22-årig man i Gamla stan ska kunna lösas.

I november i fjol dog en 22-årig man i Gamla stan i Stockholm efter att ha blivit stucken i magen med en kniv. Två bröder är misstänkta för mordet. Båda flydde till England. men den ene vill inte bli överlämnad till Sverige och mycket hänger nu på vad som kommer att hända med fallet Julian Assange. Assange är misstänkt för sexbrott i Sverige.

Det var tidigt en lördagmorgon i november ifjol som 22-åringen blev knivskuren till döds och misstankarna riktades mot två bröder. De flydde till England men greps senare där. Den ene gick frivilligt med på att överlämnas till Sverige och sitter sedan dess häktad i Stockholm men den andre broder vill inte överlämnas till Sverige, säger åklagare Joakim Eriksson till Radio Stockholm.

Joakim Eriksson hoppas på att få en viss draghjälp i utlämnandet av den andre brodern beroende på vad Högsta domstolen i Storbritannien säger i fallet om Julian Assange.

Assange är misstänkt för sexbrott men det handlar inte om vilket brott som begåtts utan om principer; dvs har en svensk åklagare rätt att överhuvudtaget utfärda en arresteringsorder.

Högsta domstolen i Storbritannien lämnar sitt beslut på onsdag den 30 maj och åklagare Joakim Eriksson som utreder mordet i gamla stan får helt enkelt vänta på det beslutet.

A petition to Nick Clegg on behalf of Julian Assange

Submitted by JohnSmith
WL Central
2012-05-27

On Sunday 27 May 2012, Swedish state media [*i.e. public service* — *-A.B.*] again attacked Julian Assange, this time in an attempt to link him to an unrelated ongoing murder investigation and to blame him for the difficulties Swedish authorities have had in their investigation.

This latest incident shows how thoroughly Swedish state media are biased against Julian Assange and how they've poisoned public opinion against him to the extent he can no longer receive a fair trial.

We urge our readers to write to Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and bring this to his attention, to ask Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg to protect Julian Assange from

unfair extradition. A template letter, based on an earlier effort by Justice for Assange, is provided below.

Send to: nick.clegg.mp@parliament.uk

Dear Mr Clegg,

I am writing to bring to your attention my concern about the deeply flawed European Arrest Warrant (EAW) system, which mandates that our judges put 'mutual recognition' of Europe's many different— and often incompatible— judicial systems above the need to check whether the evidence even shows there is a *prima facie* case to answer. Literally thousands of people have been extradited to Europe via EAWs— their lives disrupted, losing their jobs, homes, family and access to support networks or English-speaking lawyers— to face lengthy imprisonment awaiting trial under a legal system that is alien to them, often on what amounts to very trivial charges. Where is the UK courts' right to insist on proportionality before this happens? Or to insist that European prosecutors use Mutual Legal Assistance to question people before issuing these draconian EAWs? Why must our judges operate under a system which tells them they must ignore evidence even though it plainly shows that extradition is not justified?

The case of Julian Assange, which is presently before the UK Supreme Court, is particularly disturbing. His extradition via the EAW is demanded by an investigating prosecutor for questioning in a case concerning consensual but unprotected sex, where he has not been charged, and where the forensic DNA evidence indicates there has been wrongdoing and abuse of process in issuing the extradition warrant. Were Assange to be extradited to Sweden, the Swedish judicial system would allow for indefinite pre-trial detention and for trials to be held behind closed doors, heard by a judge and three politically appointed lay jurors who have no legal training. Furthermore, he faces an overwhelmingly hostile media environment in Sweden, and there are justifiable fears about the "temporary surrender" mechanism available in the US/Sweden bilateral treaty for onward rendition to face potential espionage charges in the US, which has had a secret sealed indictment against Assange for more than a year.

The Irish Supreme Court has just unanimously ruled that European Law does not permit extradition for the purposes of questioning only. In the UK, however, unless the Supreme Court upholds his appeal on the basis that a partisan prosecutor is not a proper judicial authority, Assange's case will have created the perfect storm of precedents— meaning that, henceforth, any person can be extradited from the UK to anywhere in Europe, without charge, without evidence, by any prosecutor, anywhere, and without proper judicial oversight.

Recent developments make Mr Assange's situation even more worrying. Sweden's Foreign Minister Carl Bildt has taken to writing blog posts and multiple tweets declaring Wikileaks is planning a smear campaign against him and this is therefore an attack on Sweden. This is based on entirely fabricated articles by the Swedish newspaper *Espressen*, which was also responsible for breaking the confidentiality of a preliminary investigation by relaying the news "WikiLeaks' Julian Assange hunted down, suspected of rape" to the world's media hours before a senior Swedish prosecutor decided the rape allegation was false. Prejudicial public remarks have also been made by Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, Justice Minister Beatrice Ask

and Prosecutor General Anders Perklev. It is inconceivable that Julian Assange will receive a fair trial in Sweden in a case which has become so highly politicised there.

Under the Human Rights Act 1998, UK Home Secretary Theresa May has a legal obligation to safeguard individuals' rights under the European Convention of Human Rights, including Article 6, the right to a fair trial; and I would respectfully ask you to remind the Home Secretary of her obligations in respect of this case.

Yours sincerely,

The US/Sweden agreement

*Understanding the Wikileaks Grand Jury
May 27, 2012*

Next Wednesday, the UK Supreme Court will officially release its decision regarding Julian Assange's extradition to Sweden to respond to allegations of sexual offences, while no charge has been placed yet.

However if the founder of Wikileaks gets extradited Sweden may not be the final destination of this long legal journey.

Indeed in March 14th 1983— while the Cold War was still dividing the world and influencing political and diplomatic decisions— Ronald Reagan, then President of the United States— signed a treaty with Sweden in order to “make more effective the Extradition Convention signed at Washington October 24, 1961,” in other words to facilitate the extradition of individuals considered criminals or potential criminals by the United States and Sweden.

This treaty would force Sweden to hand Julian Assange over to the United States, if the US was to ask Julian Assange's extradition. Indeed, Article I states that “each Contracting State undertakes to surrender to the other (...) persons found in its territory who are sought for the purpose of prosecution, who have been found guilty of committing an offense, or who are wanted for the enforcement of a sentence.”

This treaty also applies to anyone suspected of “conspiring in, attempting, preparing for, or participating in, the commission of an offense.”

Hence a simple request from the United States would lead to Julian Assange's extradition to the United States. *[This point is disputed by various experts. --A.B.]*

Technically the United States does not have to wait for Sweden to sort out the sexual offence allegations. Article VI(b) indeed mentions that someone prosecuted in the requested state (in Assange's case Sweden) can be handed over to the requesting country (in this case the US) for the prosecution and may be handed back to the requested state after the decision has been taken, following an agreement decided upon by the two states.

With this framework the US could ask Sweden for Assange upon his arrival and after being prosecuted in the US for espionage, the US and Sweden would decide whether he should be sent back to Sweden to eventually sort out the sexual offence allegations.

Article XII of the treaty could also have a decisive influence in the coming days— if Julian Assange were to be extradited to Sweden. The article indeed allows the provisional arrest of someone whose extradition has been requested. Interpol is in this case asked to intervene.

Understanding the Wikileaks Grand Jury will be live tweeting from the Supreme Court on Wednesday. Check out the blog or our twitter account (@wlgrandjury) for frequent updates starting from 8:30.

<https://wlgrandjury.wordpress.com/>

New leaks show our Freedom of Information system is broken— Greens

28 May 2012

Revelations of what the Australian Government knew about the US campaign against WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange expose the fatal flaws in our FOI system, the Greens said today.

Australian Greens spokesperson for Communications, Senator Scott Ludlam said the FOI system was in "critical condition" after his December 2011 FOI requests yielded virtually nothing about the potential extradition of Australian citizen Mr Assange to Sweden or the USA.

"The world needs publishing organisations like Wikileaks while governments maintain a culture of non-disclosure and while delays, excuses and redactions are the results of FOI requests," Senator Ludlam.

"We now know— due only to diplomatic cables published in the Sydney Morning Herald— that the Australian Government has closely monitored the US Department of Justice investigation into WikiLeaks for at least 18 months. The US campaign to get Assange has been the subject of US-Australian intelligence exchanges, and the Australian embassy in Washington reported 'a broad range of possible charges are under consideration, including espionage and conspiracy'."

"Yet my requests to the Attorney General, Foreign Minister, Prime Minister, Department for Foreign Affairs, Attorney General's Department and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet were met with refusal, delay, excuses and one set of virtually useless documents.

"After a four month delay and breaching the timelines set by the Information Commission, the Attorney General's Department provided some documents blacked out so as to be meaningless, including a redacted versions of my own Senate motion, possibly an attempt at humour.

"A cursory glance at the timeline tracking these requests shows that my office has responded very promptly to every request for clarification, reduction of scope, request for public interest reasons and payment, yet the Departments exploit the times allotted— or even beyond them— for maximum delay.

"While not charging people \$30 for FOI requests is welcome, promises made for a culture of disclosure, or assurances that "embarrassment to the government" or "causing confusion and unnecessary debate" would not be used to withhold access to documents have not been upheld when the government is at risk of political embarrassment," Senator Ludlam concluded.

<http://greensmps.org.au/content/media-releases/new-leaks-show-our-freedom-information-system-broken-greens>



AFTONBLADET AVSLÖJAR

Panikplanen – få hjälp av kändisar

► [Så ska Julian Assange frias från våldtäktsanklagelserna](#)

Eva Franchell, Ingvar Carlsson, Lena Mellin, Thage G Peterson, Katarina Sandström, Stellan Skarsgård, Helene Bergman, Hans Blix, Helle Klein, Sven Lindqvist, Robyn, Olle Svenning, Cecilia Uddén och Hans Alfredson finns med på listan över kända svenskar som våldtäktsanklagade Julian Assange (överst) vill ha hjälp av.

AB: 2012-05-27

Panikplanen— få hjälp av kändisar

Assange vill ha deras stöd för att frias från våldtäktsanklagelserna

På onsdag kan Julian Assange lämnas ut till Sverige.

Nu går hans anhängare till motoffensiv.

De har tagit fram en lista på kända svenskar— som ska hjälpa Wikileaks-grundaren att bli fri.

Två svenska kvinnor har polisanmält Julian Assange, 40, för våldtäkt och sexuellt ofredande.

På onsdag ska Storbritanniens högsta domstol besluta om han kan utlämnas till Sverige eller inte. Julian Assange nekar till anklagelserna och säger att han fruktar att i nästa steg lämnas ut till USA.

Samtidigt förbereder anhängarna att försvara Assange. Pr-konsulten Harald Ullman är sedan i fjol anlita för att hjälpa honom att rentvå sig.

Ullman arbetar tillsammans med en mindre grupp, som Assange själv ska ha varit med att sätta samman.

Tystlåten grupp

Enligt uppgift till Aftonbladet består gruppen förutom Ullman av den australiske journalisten och USA-kritikern **John Pilger**, Assanges assistent Joseph Farrell, den svensk-amerikanske journalisten Al Burke och samhällsdebattören och läkaren Rigmor Robèrt.

– Du får ta det här med Al Burke, säger Robèrt när Aftonbladet ringer.

Men även Burke är tystlåten:

– Vi är några som har diskuterat fallet och har samma syn, mer än så är det inte.

Men enligt uppgift har gruppen arbetat med att ta fram en lista på svenska kändisar som ska knytas till saken. Det är allt ifrån artister och skådespelare som Robyn och Stellan Skarsgård till före detta politiker som Ingvar Carlsson och Thage G Peterson.

Påverka i det dolda

Förhoppningen är att vissa av dem ska påverka makthavare i det dolda. Andra ska skriva artiklar eller bara sprida sin stjärnglans.

”Om man förklarar på ett bra och tydligt sätt säger folk förvånansvärt ofta ja”, skriver Al Burke i ett mejl till gruppen.

Enligt vad Aftonbladet erfar har personerna ännu inte kontaktats. Något som Aftonbladet-journalisterna Lena Mellin och Eva Franchell— båda med på listan— bekräftar.

– Man ska inte blanda ihop Wikileaks med misstankarna om våldtäkt. Om någon hör av sig kommer jag att säga att rättvisan ska få ha sin gång, säger Franchell. Även Lena Mellin utesluter allt samarbete.

Harald Ullman, som själv är övertygad om att Assange är oskyldig, vill inte prata om listan.

– Om han kommer hit är det annat vi planerar. Det handlar bland annat om hur vi ska hantera alla journalister som kommer att vilja intervjua honom. Det har varit tvärlugnt ett tag, men det är klart att arbetet nu □aktualiseras.

Vad hoppas ni uppnå med att knyta kändisar till fallet?

– Det vill jag inte kommentera.

Julian Assange har grundat sajten Wikileaks, som bland annat offentliggör hemligstämplat material. Sedan hösten 2010 misstänks han för våldtäkt i Sverige. Sverige har begärt att han ska lämnas ut från Stor□britannien där han sitter i husarrest— något som prövats i flera domstolar.

• *Staffan Lindberg*

PRESSMEDDELANDE

Nordic News Network

Datum: 28 maj 2012

Kontakt: Al Burke

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Aftonbladet kokar soppa på en spik

“Panikplanen— få hjälp av kändisar” lyder rubriken på en stort uppslagen artikel i Aftonbladet 2012-05-27 (<http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article14886966.ab>). Underrubriken är “Assange vill ha deras stöd för att frias från våldtäktsanklagelserna”.

Enligt artikeln skulle jag och några andra försöka “påverka makthavare i det dolda” för att få deras hjälp med att “rentvå” Assange från våldtäktsanklagelserna. För att förstärka budskapet har man prytt texten med porträtt på några stackars kändisar som på så sätt skulle påverkas.

Det stämmer att jag har diskuterat olika former av stöd till Assange med andra personer. Det har nog varit många sådana diskussioner runt om i landet sedan anklagelserna återupptogs av åklagare Marianne Ny efter att ha avfärdats av åklagare Eva Finné.

Annars är artikeln grovt missvisande.

För det första råder det inte någon “panik” så vitt jag vet. Tanken om en svensk kommitté till stöd för WikiLeaks och Julian Assange väcktes redan för drygt ett år sedan. Om det hade funnits ett inslag av panik hade det nog blivit en stödkommitté vid det här läget, men så är inte fallet.

Huvudsyftet med en sådan kommitté vore att försöka motverka den sorts negativa och missvisande rapportering som denna artikel är ett exempel på.

För det andra stämmer det inte heller att syftet med en eventuell kommitté som jag har varit med om att diskutera skulle vara att hjälpa Assange att "frias från våldtäktsanklagelserna". I den korrespondens som reporter Staffan Lindberg tycks bygga sin artikel på står det: "Åtminstone till att börja med skall huvudsyftet vara att förhindra utlämning av Julian Assange från Sverige till USA."

Vilket är en helt annan sak. Frågan är varför Staffan Lindberg inte nämner detta i sin artikel, utan i stället skriver om "att frias från våldtäktsanklagelserna". Någon sådan diskussion i detta sammanhang har i alla fall inte jag deltagit i.

För det tredje torde det vara uppenbart att WikiLeaks och Assange har behov av stöd i Sverige. Det förstår väl alla som har följt tongivande svenska mediers vinklade bevakning av Assange-fallet och WikiLeaks under de senaste 18 månaderna. Om denna problematik och besläktade frågor kan man läsa i en redogörelse för Assange-fallet som finns på: <http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/historia.htm>

Sist bör det påpekas att den namnlista som Staffan Lindberg hänvisar till bara var ett *förslag* till några tänkbara kandidater till en eventuell stödskommitté som har diskuterats men som inte ens har börjat bildas. I den korrespondens som Aftonbladet tydligen har tillgång till noteras att "I de flesta fall har jag inga kunskaper om dessa personers inställningar till Assange eller WikiLeaks."

Det gäller alltså att tolka det som Aftonbladet, Expressen m.fl. rapporterar om Assange-fallet med försiktighet och skepsis.

Al Burke
2012-05-28

Authorities still gunning for Assange, cables show

Philip Dorling
The Age (Australia)
May 28, 2012

WIKILEAKS publisher Julian Assange remains the target of a major US government criminal investigation and the subject of continuing US-Australian intelligence exchanges, Australian diplomatic cables obtained by The Age reveal.

Australian diplomats have closely monitored the US Department of Justice investigation into WikiLeaks over the past 18 months with the embassy in Washington reporting that "a broad range of possible charges are under consideration, including espionage and conspiracy".

Australian diplomats are dismissive of Mr Assange's claims the US investigation is retribution for WikiLeaks' publication of leaked US military and diplomatic reports. Instead they have highlighted US prosecutors' claims that alleged US Army leaker private Bradley Manning dealt directly with Mr Assange and "data-mined" secret US databases "**guided by WikiLeaks list of 'Most Wanted' leaks**".

Mr Assange will learn on Wednesday the British Supreme Court's decision on his appeal against extradition to Sweden to be questioned about sexual assault allegations. Mr Assange, who has not been charged with any offence in Sweden, fears extradition to Stockholm will facilitate his ultimate extradition to the US. He has also expressed concern that a successful appeal against extradition to Sweden will prompt the US to immediately seek his extradition directly from Britain.

Despite extensive redactions, the most recent instalment of Australian diplomatic cables released under freedom of information to The Age, show the US and Australian Governments **continued high-level exchanges on WikiLeaks through last year.**

The political sensitivity of the discussions is reflected in the "secret" and "exclusive" classification of a number of the cables, indicating a strictly limited distribution within the Australian government.

The embassy in Washington provided Canberra with regular updates, including reporting on the issuing of subpoenas to compel WikiLeaks associates to appear before a grand jury in Virginia and US Justice Department efforts to access Twitter and other internet accounts as "casting the net beyond Assange to see if any intermediaries had been involved in communications between Assange and Manning".

An Australian embassy representative attended the pre-court-martial hearing for private Manning in December. The embassy also obtained "confidences or legal commentary" from private law firms "on aspects surrounding WikiLeaks and/or the positions of Julian Assange and Bradley Manning". An embassy report that month noted that "by virtue of the secret nature of grand jury investigations", details of the investigation "cannot be confirmed on the record legally". Further reporting has been redacted on grounds that its release would damage Australia's diplomatic relations.

Last month, Attorney-General Nicola Roxon said the Australian government had made representations to the US government that any effort to extradite Mr Assange should be conducted through "all of the proper processes".

"We have made our views very clearly known to the Americans," Ms Roxon told ABC television's Q&A program.

The released Washington embassy cables, sent to Canberra between November 1, 2010, and January 31, 2012, do not contain any references to representations made by Australian diplomats to US officials concerning "proper" extradition processes; only a request in December 2010 that Australia be forewarned of any extradition moves so as to better manage the public relations and media aspects.

Ms Roxon's office last week told The Age that since becoming Attorney-General in December last year, she had made representations concerning Mr Assange to US Ambassador Jeffrey Bleich, US Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and US Deputy Attorney-General James Cole.

But Ms Roxon's spokesman declined to say when the representations were made and it appears the discussions with Ms Napolitano and Mr Cole took place this month, after the Attorney-General's comments on the Q&A program.



Turerna kring Assanges dom har skadat Sverige

OISÍN CANTWELL [Hur det än går med överlämningen i morgon så har cirkusen skadat tilltron till rättvisan – och utredningen](#)

AB: 2012-05-29

Turerna kring Assanges dom har skadat Sverige

I morgon avgör Storbritanniens högsta domstol om Julian Assange ska överlämnas till Sverige.

Hur det än går så har cirkusen skadat Sveriges juridiska anseende utomlands.

Alla konstiga turer kan dessvärre också leda till att rättvisa inte skipas.

Det Supreme court i London ska ta ställning till är en teknisk aspekt av fallet:

Är en svensk åklagare en tillräckligt oberoende juridisk myndighet för att ha rätt att utfärda en europeisk arresteringsorder? I Storbritannien fattas motsvarande beslut av domstol.

Det skulle förvåna om de sju domarna kommer fram till någonting annat än att Wikileaks grundare ska lämnas ut. Två underrätter har redan fattat just det beslutet. Och att länder kan ha olika juridiska bestämmelser är i sig inga konstigheter.

Säkra kan vi dock inte vara. Om Assange får rätt så uppstår en situation som möjligen faller dem med sinne för absurd humor i smaken, nämligen att Storbritannien underkänner hur Sverige har utformat sitt rättssystem. *[Nej, frågan är vad som **brittisk lag föreskriver** och om det skall gälla i detta fall. —A.B.]* Vad händer då?

Om den misstänkte kommer till Stockholm väntar först häktningsförhandling. Han är häktad i sin frånvaro för våldtäkt, tre fall av sexuellt ofredande samt olaga tvång. Och efter det, nästan två år efter att de påstådda brotten ägde rum, är det dags för förhör.

Jag skulle inte bli förvånad om utredningen läggs ner en tid □ efter förhöret. Inte för att jag är övertygad om Assanges oskuld. För det är jag inte. Jag var inte närvarande i sängkammaren och har ingen aning om vad som hände. (Det vet för övrigt inte heller alla de som på nätet har anklagat kvinnorna för både det ena och det andra.)

Men när åklagare lägger ner förundersökningen och tar upp den igen är det svårt att dra någon annan slutsats än att bevisläget är bräckligt.

Hur världspressen kommer att reagera om detta fall slängs i papperskorgen utan att anklagelserna ens prövats i rättegång ska vi bara inte tala om. [*Och den svenska pressens beteende? —A.B.*]

Alla knasiga turer har ju redan väckt förvåning. **Låt mig påminna: en åklagare bekräftade glatt att Assange var anhållen i sin frånvaro. En man som ska betraktas som oskyldig tills motsatsen är bevisad var plötsligt våldtäktsman runt hela jorden.**

Det var förbryllande gjort av åklagaren. För det finns, om inte annat, taktiska skäl till att inte upplysa en utländsk medborgare om att han ska gripas. Åklagaren borde rimligen inte vilja att han sätter sig på första bästa plan och försvinner för alltid.

Sedan kom en ny åklagare och la ner utredningen. Och efter det ännu en åklagare som drog i gång allt igen. Själv fick jag förklara för förvirrade journalister som ringde från när och fjärran att åklagare gör självständiga bedömningar och att bevisvärdering inte är en exakt vetenskap.

Det finns fler konstigheter. Varför förhördes inte Assange under de veckor han trots allt skrotade runt [???] i Stockholm i väntan på kallelse från polisen?

Men inte heller det brittiska rättsväsendet har imponerat. Det är svårbegripligt att det tagit högsta domstolen så här lång tid att komma fram till beslut.

Allt detta skadar tilltron till rättvisan. Och det skadar utredningen. De inblandades minnesbilder har bleknat, det blir svårare att reda ut vad som har hänt.

Men framförallt skadar det tre människor. Å ena sidan Julian Assange, som orimligt länge har suttit i husarrest med fotboja och anmälningsplikt.

Och å andra sidan två kvinnor, utsatta för en exempellös hatkampanj på internet, som lika orimligt länge har tvingats gå runt och vänta på att få sin sak prövad. [*Det finns minst ett annat exempel: Hatkampanjen mot Assange som bl.a. Cantwell tidigare bidragit till. —A.B.*]

• *Oisín Cantwell*

Four days after Julian Assange verdict, US Secretary Clinton to visit Sweden

*Submitted by issylvia
WL Central
2012-05-29*

It is the first bilateral visit to Sweden by a US Secretary of State in a long time, Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt writes, as he wishes a warm welcome to US Secretary Hillary Clinton who will arrive in the country just 4 days after Britain's Supreme Court announces its decision on whether Julian Assange is to be extradited to Sweden.

The announcement of Clinton's visit to Sweden, which will center around the subjects of "Internet freedom, green energy, Afghanistan and the Middle East", as well as other broad topics such as democracy and counter-terrorism, took place just 3 days after the Supreme Court published a date for Julian Assange's verdict to be issued on (the Supreme Court published the date of its judgment on May 23, Secretary Clinton's visit was announced on May 26).

Julian Assange's verdict will be known tomorrow, May 30 and his extradition to Sweden would occur within the 10 following days. Although extradition to Sweden would facilitate Mr. Assange's subsequent surrender to the United States, his extradition to the US is likely to be sought even he is allowed to remain in the UK. Therefore after the verdict is made public, regardless of the outcome, four countries are lined up to say no to his potential extradition to the United States through a series of rallies that will occur in many different cities.

Countries participating in the #Rally4JA initiative include the United States, where 5 cities will protest, the United Kingdom, from where the extradition could happen amidst continuing calls for urgent reform of extradition laws that do not comply with safeguards required by the Joint Committee on Human Rights, and Australia, Mr. Assange's homeland. Germany will also participate in the global call for protection of Julian Assange's civil rights, as well as individuals from all over the world who are campaigning for this cause by disseminating facts concerning irregularities in Sweden's investigation against Mr. Assange, often misrepresented by the media, and the risks he faces if extradited to the US.

It is worth stressing that a US Secret Grand Jury in Virginia has had a sealed indictment against him for over a year. Its existence revealed by WikiLeaks earlier this year, with the publication of emails from US private intelligence firm STRATFOR referring to the potential arrest of WikiLeaks' editor-in-chief (and the financial blockade imposed on WikiLeaks since December 2010) in the following terms: "[b]ankrupt the arsehole first, (...) ruin his life. Give him 7-12 yrs for conspiracy." *[The existence of an indictment has not been confirmed by an authoritative, independent source. --A.B.]*

Furthermore, numerous public calls for Julian Assange's assassination have been made in this country by prominent figures and, WikiLeaks has just made public, multiple European citizens have been detained and interrogated about Julian Assange by US authorities this week.

In Australia, documents obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request have revealed Julian Assange's extradition to the United States and possible charges of conspiracy and espionage to be the subject of numerous exchanges between Australian and US Intelligence.

In the United States, American soldier Bradley Manning has been held in prison for over 2 years, awaiting judgment. Manning, who allegedly submitted classified material to WikiLeaks exposing war crimes and worldwide corruption, now finds himself, for the second consecutive year, nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Given the intricate network of political pressure surrounding Julian Assange's extradition, it is safe to assume that the United States "internet freedom" agenda to be discussed next week in Sweden will include, if not focus, on Julian Assange's imminent surrender.

<http://wcentral.org/node/2623>



Gareth Peirce, a lawyer representing WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, addresses the media outside the supreme court this morning.

Julian Assange loses extradition case— live coverage

*Paul Owen
The Guardian
30 May 2012*

8am: Good morning. The supreme court will rule this morning on whether Julian Assange should be extradited to Sweden to face allegations of rape and sexual assault. The WikiLeaks founder denies the accusations.

The judgment will be announced at 9.15am. Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers, the president of the supreme court, will give a summary of the point of law raised by the case, the court's decision, and a brief explanation of why it has reached that decision.

Today's ruling does not deal with the substance of the accusations— which relate to a trip Assange took to Sweden in 2010, after which he was accused by two women with whom he had had sex of four offences of unlawful coercion and sexual misconduct including rape.

Instead it relates to one specific question: can a prosecutor rather than a judge legally order someone's extradition?

In Britain generally only judges can approve arrest warrants. But the warrant for Assange was issued by Sweden's public prosecutor, as is normal there.

Assange's lawyers argue that the Swedish system is unfair because it puts the power to issue arrest warrants in the hands of the same prosecutors who are trying to put the accused person in jail.

After a court ruled in February 2011 that Assange should be sent to Sweden to answer the accusations against him, the WikiLeaks founder appealed, lost, and then took the case to the supreme court. This February the supreme court heard two days of dense legal argument about whether a Swedish prosecutor constitutes a judicial authority **under the European arrest warrant framework and the Extradition Act 2003, which incorporates it into British law**, along with discussions of the history of the European arrest warrant framework going back to the 1957 European convention on extradition.

Assange's QC, Dinah Rose, argued that the European arrest warrant's use of the term "judicial authorities" was meant to mean a judge or magistrate, and not a prosecutor, who is not independent. For Sweden, Clare Montgomery QC argued that the term "judicial authorities" was always meant to encompass prosecutors in some EU countries, and there was no requirement for the figure issuing the warrant to be independent.

If Assange loses today he can appeal to the European court of human rights. The ECHR will then respond within 14 days. If it decides to take the case, it can also order "interim measures" to stay Assange's extradition until the case is heard.

However, the Crown Prosecution Service says that if the ECHR agrees to take the case it will not extradite him until the case has been heard, with or without interim measures: **"If the ECHR takes the case then his current bail conditions would remain in force and he would remain in the UK until the proceedings at the ECHR have concluded." That could be months away.**

However, it seems unlikely that the ECHR would agree to take the case. Barrister Carl Gardner of the Head of Legal blog told the Guardian that such an application would be a "steeply uphill" struggle for Assange:

His argument could only be that extradition (an application against the UK would have to be about the extradition itself) would breach article six [of the European convention on human rights— the right to a fair trial] indirectly, because a trial in Sweden would be a "flagrant denial of justice"— more than just an ordinary unfair trial.

The only time I think the ECHR has ever said extradition/ deportation/ removal on these grounds would be in breach is I think Abu Qatada's case this year, in which it said the risk of use of evidence gained by torture would be a flagrant denial of justice. Assange's complaint would be much less powerful than that.

Assange may choose not to appeal to the ECHR. A source close to the WikiLeaks founder told the Guardian during February's supreme court hearings that he was unlikely to do so.

If the ECHR refuses to take the case Assange will be extradited to Sweden "as soon as arrangements can be made", the CPS says. Once in Sweden, Assange would probably be kept in custody— bail does not exist there— and if he is charged a trial might begin in a few months.

If Assange wins, however, he will not be extradited, and the system of European arrest warrants will be thrown into doubt, because many European countries have a system similar to Sweden's.

Footage of the proceedings will be streamed live here. My colleagues Owen Bowcott and Esther Addley will be tweeting live from court, and we will be covering everything live here on this blog.

8.46am: Karen Todner of Kaim Todner Solicitors, which has fought many extradition cases, has told the Associated Press she thinks Assange's prospects of success have increased:

When he first started out, I thought: "He hasn't gotten much of a chance," but now I'm much more hopeful. I would say that in the last few months there has definitely been a swing in favor of defendants in relation to extradition.

But she suggested that if Assange wins Sweden could reissue the extradition warrant through a judge.

And a spokeswoman for Sweden's prosecutors told Reuters that if he wins the Swedish arrest warrant will still be valid in any other European country bar Britain....

9.17am: All rise as the justices enter the court.

9.17am: Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers, the president of the supreme court, begins speaking. He says the Swedish extradition request has raised a point of law for the court to address. That has nothing to do with the actual accusations against Assange, he says.

9.18am: Phillips runs through the brief recent history of the European arrest warrant system. This introduced a new rule whereby the state requesting extradition no longer had to prove the case to the other state.

9.20am: Phillips says the point of law— does a prosecutor have the right to order extradition or must that be done by a judge— had not been simple to resolve and the decision on the supreme court was 5-2.

9.20am: In French the words judicial authority can be used to mean a public prosecutor, Phillips says. Many countries use public prosecutors. The majority of justices agree that this means a public prosecutor is included in the Extradition Act.

9.22am: Lady Hale and Lord Mance did not agree, he says.

9.22am: That means Julian Assange has lost his case.

9.22am: The Swedish public prosecutor is a judicial authority. The request for Assange's extradition has been lawfully made and his appeal has been dismissed, Phillips says.

9.23am: Dinah Rose QC, for Julian Assange, says she has not had time to study the decision properly yet but she says **it means that a majority of members of this court have made their decision based on the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties—but that was never brought up at the time, she says.** She is considering an application to argue that this matter should be "reopened", Rose says.

9.24am: **Lord Phillips gives her two weeks to make an application to reopen this case.**

9.25am: Rose asks if the extradition can be stayed for two weeks too. Phillips says that is a reasonable request and grants that.

9.27am: Assange was not in court today.

9.31am: The supreme court has just sent its full judgment. The press statement reads:

The issue is whether an European arrest warrant ("EAW") issued by a public prosecutor is a valid Part 1 EAW issued by a "judicial authority" for the purpose and within the meaning of sections 2 and 66 of the Extradition Act 2003.

By a majority the court has concluded that the Swedish public prosecutor was a "judicial authority" within the meaning of both the framework decision and the Extradition Act.

It follows that the request for Mr Assange's extradition has been lawfully made and his appeal against extradition is accordingly dismissed.

It adds:

The supreme court by a majority of five to two (Lady Hale and Lord Mance dissenting) dismisses the appeal and holds that an EAW issued by a public prosecutor is a valid Part 1 warrant issued by a judicial authority within the meaning of section 2(2) and 66 of the 2003 Act.

9.34am: Here are the supreme court's reasons for its judgment:

Article 34 (2)(b) of the Treaty on European Union provides that framework decisions are binding on member states as to the result to be achieved but that national authorities may choose the form and method of achieving this. For the reasons given by Lord Mance in his judgment the supreme court is not bound as a

matter of European law to interpret Part 1 of the 2003 [Extradition] Act in a manner which accords with the framework decision, but the majority held that the court **should do so in this case.**

The immediate objective of the framework decision was to create a single system for achieving the surrender of those accused or convicted of serious criminal offences and this required a uniform interpretation of the phrase "judicial authority". There was a strong domestic presumption in favour of interpreting a statute in a way which did not place the United Kingdom in breach of its international obligations.

An earlier draft of the framework decision would have put the question in this appeal beyond doubt, because it stated expressly that a prosecutor was a judicial authority. **That statement had been removed in the final version. In considering the background to this change, the majority concluded that the intention had not been to restrict the meaning of judicial authority to a judge [despite numerous statements of British lawmakers that it did impose such a restriction --A.B.]. They relied, as an aid to interpretation, on the subsequent practice in the application of the treaty which established the agreement of the parties. Some 11 member states had designated public prosecutors as the competent judicial authority authorised to issue EAWs. Subsequent reviews of the working of the EAW submitted to the European council reported on the issue of the EAWs by prosecutors without adverse comment and on occasion with express approval. [See Lady Hale's objection to this argument, below: "Nobody in this country seems to have addressed their mind to the issue until it arose in this case. Failure to address minds to an issue is not the same as acquiescence in a particular state of affairs --A.B.]**

Lord Phillips felt that this conclusion was supported by a number of additional reasons: (1) that the intention to make a radical change to restrict the power to issue EAWs to a judge would have been made express, (2) that the significant safeguard against the improper use of EAWs lay in the preceding process of the issue of the domestic warrant which formed the basis for the EAW, (3) that the reason for the change was rather to widen the scope to cover some existing procedures in member states which did not involve judges or prosecutors and that the draft referred to "competent judicial authority" which envisaged different types of judicial authority involved in the process of executing the warrant.

Lord Dyson preferred not to infer the reasons for the change and did not find the additional reasons persuasive. Lord Walker and Lord Brown also found these reasons less compelling. Lord Kerr relied on the fact that public prosecutors in many of the member states had traditionally issued arrest warrants to secure extradition and a substantial adjustment to administrative practices would have been required.

Parliamentary material relating to the debates before the enactment of the 2003 Act were held by the majority to be inadmissible as an aid to construction under the rule in *Pepper v Hart* [1993] AC 593, given the need to ensure that the phrase "judicial authority" had the same meaning as it had in the framework decision. Lord Kerr remarked that that it would be astonishing if parliament had intended radically to limit the new arrangements (thereby debarring extradition from a

number of member states) by use of precisely the same term as that employed in the framework decision.

Lord Mance, dissenting, held that the common law presumption that parliament intends to give effect to the UK's international obligations was always subject to the will of parliament as expressed in the language of the statute. In this case, the correct interpretation of "judicial authority" in the framework decision, a question of EU law, was far from certain. Thus if parliament had intended to restrict the power to issue EAWs to judges or courts, that would not have required a deliberate intention to legislate inconsistently with the framework decision. **As the words in the statute were ambiguous, it was appropriate to have regard to ministerial statements, and those statements showed that repeated assurances were given that an issuing judicial authority would have to be a court, judge or magistrate.**

Lady Hale agreed with Lord Mance that the meaning of the framework decision was unclear and that the supreme court should not construe a UK statute contrary both to its natural meaning and to the evidence of what parliament thought it was doing at the time.

9.41am: [Here is the judgment in full](#) (pdf).

9.42am: Legal commentator Joshua Rozenberg was just on BBC News talking about the request by Julian Assange's QC, Dinah Rose, for two weeks to decide whether to ask the supreme court to reopen the case. He said:

This is a very unusual thing. It's not happened since this court was set up. It happened in the Pinochet case in the House of Lords. Very unusual, and means there's everything left to play for still.

He said that since Assange was not in court his lawyers had not been able to take instructions from him yet regarding what he wanted them to do. "We're waiting to see what he says. In the meantime he can stay in this country for at least two weeks, while they consider making this unprecedented application to reopen the case on the basis that it was decided on a point of law in the Vienna Convention on the Interpretation of Treaties that was simply not argued by either side and which the court gave no notice to either the Crown Prosecution Service, representing the Swedish authorities, or Mr Assange's lawyers, that they were considering taking into account."

Rozenberg added:

It would be very embarrassing if the supreme court felt the need to reopen the case and **it's extraordinary, isn't it, that they might have considered something which they gave the parties no opportunity to argue.** From time to time judges do their research and they add points, minor points, that have not been considered, but it appears that the decisive point in this case was one that wasn't argued, and that's something which is pretty unusual, and that's what prompted this unexpected intervention from Dinah Rose which took Lord Phillips so much by surprise that he mixed her up with the other counsel, Clare Montgomery.

10.04am: Here is a summary of this morning's events:

- Julian Assange has lost his appeal against extradition to Sweden at the supreme court. By a majority of five to two, the justices decided that a public prosecutor was a "judicial authority" and that his arrest warrant therefore had been lawfully issued.
- But lawyers for the WikiLeaks founder were given two weeks to decide whether to challenge one of the points made in the judgment, and Assange's extradition will be stayed at least until then. Dinah Rose QC, for Assange, said that the justices had made their decision based on the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties— but the provisions of that convention had not been raised during the hearing.
- Legal commentator Joshua Rozenberg said this meant there was "everything to play for still", and it would be "very embarrassing" if the supreme court had to reopen the case on the basis that "they might have considered something which they gave the parties no opportunity to argue".
- In brief, the judges ruled that the the UK had signed up to the European framework on extradition in order to help create a single system for surrendering accused people, and that it was always intended that the 11 EU member states that allow prosecutors to issue extradition orders— as Sweden, but not the UK, does— would be able to continue doing so.
- Lord Mance, one of two dissenting justices, said the wording of the framework decision was ambiguous and so it was appropriate to consider what ministers said at the time, which was that it would be a judge, court or magistrate that issued the order.
- Assange was not in court. His solicitor, Gareth Peirce, told the Guardian's Owen Bowcott that he was stuck in traffic.

10.29am: My colleague Esther Addley has been speaking to Gareth Peirce, Julian Assange's lawyer. Peirce said that Assange's team will ask the supreme court to reopen the case based on the fact that the justices made their decision based on the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which was not discussed in court.

If that fails, Assange's supporter John Pilger, the Australian journalist, told Esther that his team would appeal to the European court of human rights.

Peirce told her it was premature to say that before domestic legal routes had been exhausted. "It's fair to say that the mood within the Assange camp is to take this as far as they can," Esther said.

The supreme court has just put out this statement:

Following this morning's judgment by the supreme court of the United Kingdom in *Assange v The Swedish Prosecution Authority*, Ms Rose (counsel for the appellant, Mr Assange) has indicated that she may make an application to reopen the court's decision.

Ms Rose suggested that the majority of the court appear to have based their decision on the interpretation of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, on which no argument was heard and no opportunity of making submission was given.

The supreme court has granted Ms Rose fourteen (14) days to make such an application. If she decides to do so, the justices will then decide whether to reopen the appeal and accept further submissions (either verbally through a further hearing, or on paper) on the matter.

We will keep you updated on progress with this application and the justices' consideration of any such application.

With the agreement of the respondent, the required period for extradition shall not commence until 13 June 2012, the 14th day after judgment in accordance with section 36(3)(b) of the Extradition Act 2003.

10.59am: The full judgment makes several references to the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.... The convention was adopted in 1969 and codifies the principles of international treaties.

- On page 25 of today's judgment, Lord Phillips, the president of the supreme court, **notes that the convention allows judges to consider how a treaty has been implemented in practice in order to interpret its intentions.** He uses this principle to point out that EU member states, the European commission and European council have all acted as if the extradition agreement allowed prosecutors to issue extradition orders.
- On page 49, Lord Walker says he finds the above point "determinative" in his rejection of Assange's case. On page 53, Lord Kerr also uses the Vienna convention as evidence in rejecting Assange's case. Lord Dyson does the same on page 61.
- **However, on page 77, Lady Hale, one of the dissenting justices, makes some points which may be similar to any case Assange's team may make if the case is reopened. Hale notes:**

Article 31.3(b) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties provides that there shall be taken into account, along with the context, "any subsequent practice in the application of the treaty which establishes the agreement of the parties regarding its interpretation". While the practice need not be that of all the parties to the treaty (as in this case it obviously is not) the practice has to be such as to establish the agreement of all the parties as to its interpretation.

Given the lack of common or concordant practice between the parties, is the failure to date of those countries which do not authorise prosecutors and other bodies to object to those who do sufficient to establish their agreement? **Nobody in this country seems to have addressed their mind to the issue until it arose in this case. Failure to address minds to an issue is not the same as acquiescence in a particular state of affairs. Subsequent practice does not give support to the respondent's extreme position and there has been no consideration of the principles which might distinguish some prosecutors from others. This seems to me to be a rather flimsy basis on which to hold that we are obliged to construe a United Kingdom statute contrary both to its natural meaning and to the clear evidence of what parliament thought that it was doing at the time.**

- And on page 94 Lord Mance claims "**suspect practice consisting of the use and nomination of executive authorities by a few states cannot come near establishing 'the agreement of the parties regarding [the] interpretation of the Framework Decision'** within the meaning of article 31.3 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties."

So it seems there is plenty of scope for legal argument on this point should the case now be reopened.

11.10am: Jago Russell of campaign group Fair Trials International has attacked Sweden over its use of pre-trial detention. Russell said: "Although Sweden is rightly proud of its justice system, its overuse of pre-trial detention means that, if extradited, he is likely to be imprisoned and placed under extremely restrictive conditions." The charity also summarised what would happen to Assange if he is extradited:

Mr Assange will be arrested on his arrival in Sweden and taken to a Swedish police station. Within 96 hours of being detained he will be brought to court, for a decision as to whether he should be remanded in custody until trial ... This hearing is normally in private, unlike in many other countries, including the UK, where such hearings are normally in open court. As soon as the investigation is over, a decision will be taken about whether to formally charge him. Swedish law requires a person to be physically present before charges can be laid, so this can only happen once Mr Assange is on Swedish territory. Alternatively, prosecutors may decide not to charge Mr Assange and to release him.

Fair Trials International is calling for reform of the European arrest warrant system to guard against its "abuse and overuse" and wants the EU to legislate "to require all EU countries to respect basic fair trial rights and ensure people are not kept in pre-trial detention for excessive periods"....

11.29am: A Liberal Democrat peer and MEP has attacked the length of Julian Assange's court case. Lady (Sarah) Ludford, MEP for London, says that one of the positive aspects of the European arrest warrant is its "making extradition to trial quicker and less bureaucratic." But:

Lengthy court proceedings like this on procedural issues however defeat the objective, with justice delayed being justice denied.

It might therefore be helpful if EU legislation was clearer on definitions such as "judicial authority", although it is difficult to do so without encroaching on national competence for criminal justice systems.

She says she is going to ask her fellow MEPs to raise the judgment with the European commission and the European council....

11.52am: WikiLeaks spokesman Kristinn Hrafnsson has blamed Washington for today's ruling. "This is not the final outcome. What we have here is retribution from the US," he said, according to Reuters.

Claes Borgstrom, the lawyer who represents the two Swedish women who accuse Assange of sex crimes, dismissed such claims in comments to the Associated Press. "He is not at a greater risk of being handed over from Sweden than from Britain," Borgstrom said.

Per Samuelson, one of Assange's two Swedish lawyers, said he was confident his client would be cleared if he had to go to Sweden. "I feel a strong conviction that he will, in Sweden, in due time, one way or another, be vindicated—he will be exculpated and acquitted ... I look forward to this with confidence," he told Reuters.

12.30pm: My colleague Owen Bowcott reports that Assange's lawyers can begin appealing against the judgment to the European court of human rights at the same time as requesting the supreme court reopen the case.

12.40pm: Joshua Rozenberg has the inside story on how Dinah Rose's "quick legal footwork" ensured Julian Assange a two-week stay of extradition this morning.

The judges had been warned that Dinah Rose QC, his fearless counsel, wanted to address the court. But they were not prepared for what she had to say.

That was largely their own fault. Normally, draft judgments are circulated to counsel up to a week before delivery. That enables the lawyers to point out minor errors: a name mistyped, a date wrong and so on. It's something of a safeguard for the judges. **But since it was the WikiLeaks man whose appeal they were hearing, the supreme court justices were taking no chances. To avoid leaks, lawyers were not shown the judgments until 8.30 this morning.**

That was just enough time for Rose to work out that the court had based its reasoning on a point that had never been argued at the two-day hearing in February. Assange, who didn't turn up for the judgment, knew nothing of what was being done on his behalf.

He also gives a rough summary of what might happen when Assange's team asks the supreme court to reopen the case:

In the end, the judges may decide that they were entitled to take the Vienna convention into account. In that event, they would presumably confirm the decision they delivered today. But given two weeks to prepare her case, Rose could well come up with other arguments. In the meantime, Assange can stay in the UK.

2.02pm: Julian Assange's lawyer Gareth Peirce is quoted in this story by Owen Bowcott and Esther Addley:

The majority of the judges believe that parliament was seriously misled when it approved the European arrest warrant system. Parliament thought a "judicial authority" meant a judge or court but the majority of supreme court judges based their decision on what is the practice in Europe and decided it on the basis of the Vienna convention, which was never argued before the court.

Veteran Australian journalist John Pilger, a supporter of Assange's, was also quoted.

He was putting a brave face on today's events:

I don't think this judgment is a blow. We are disappointed but it came so close.
Three of the judges [who found against Assange] were tipping in our favour.

There was a consensus [on the bench] that parliament had been misled on this law. The court has now agreed to allow Julian Assange's legal team to go back and reconsider this. This case moves in mysterious ways and *we are about to move into another mysterious stage of this whole unnecessary process.*

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Transcript: Summary of UK Supreme Court judgment in Assange extradition case

Transcript of the UK Supreme Court handing down the judgment in Julian Assange v Swedish Prosecution Authority, 09:15 on 30 May 2012.

UK Supreme Court President Lord Nicholas Phillips: The Swedish public prosecutor has requested the extradition of Mr Assange on charges of serious sexual offenses. (Note: Mr Assange has not been charged with any crime.) That request has raised a point of law of general public importance. It is not a point in respect of which the particular facts of Mr Assange's case have any relevance. This summary is about that point of law.

It used to be the case that this country would not extradite a person to another European country until a court here had considered the evidence against that person. The court would not approve extradition unless the evidence justified his being subjected to a criminal trial. All that changed in 2001 when we gave effect to the 1957 European Convention on Extradition. The following year, the provisions of that convention were superseded by an agreement reached between the members of the European Union. Terms of that agreement were set out in a European Union framework decision which this country was under a duty to implement. The framework decision directed that if a judicial authority in one state requested the extradition of a person from another state, the latter state would give effect to the request without considering the evidence. It was for the requesting state to consider whether the evidence justified extradition.

The United Kingdom gave effect to the framework decision in the Extradition Act 2003. That act provided that subject to certain conditions this country will extradite a person if we receive a request from a judicial authority in another member state. Point of law is simply what do the words 'judicial authority' mean.

Mr Assange has argued that they mean a court or judge. Sweden's request has been perused by a public prosecutor who is not a court or judge, so Mr Assange's argument that the request is invalid and he doesn't have to go back to Sweden. Point of law is simple to state, but it has not been simple to resolve. Indeed, we have only reached our decision by a majority of five to two.

There was discussion in Parliament about the words 'judicial authority' when the bill which became the Extradition Act was being debated. The bill used the words 'judicial authority' because those words were in the framework decision, and the Act was designed to give effect to the framework decision. It is clear that some members of Parliament believed the words 'judicial authority' in the framework decision meant a court or a judge. Indeed, one minister specifically stated to the Parliamentary committee that this was the case. But he was mistaken.

'Judicial authority' is the English translation of the French words 'autorité judiciaire'. The framework decision is in both English and French, so it is necessary to have regard also to what the French phrase means. French phrase has a wider meaning than the English phrase. In French, the words 'judicial authority' can be used for public prosecutor. When the member states implemented the framework decision, many of them appointed public prosecutors to perform the role of the judicial authority. There was no suggestion that this was contrary to the framework decision. Having particular regard to this fact, the majority of the court are agreed that in the framework decision the words 'judicial authority' or 'autorité judiciaire' bear a meaning that includes a public prosecutor. Two members of the court, Lady Hale and Lord Mance, consider that this does not determine the meaning of judicial authority in the Extradition Act. In that Act, they mean a court or judge, as the minister had explained.

The other members of the court do not agree. Parliament's intention in passing the Extradition Act was to give effect to the framework decision. This was necessary in order to produce a uniform and coherent system of extradition in Europe. It was also necessary in order to comply with the duty of the United Kingdom under international law. So there is a presumption that the words 'judicial authority' should have the same meaning in the Extradition Act that they have in the framework decision. The understanding of some members of Parliament or the statement of the minister as to the meaning of the framework decision does not displace this presumption.

For these reasons, the majority has concluded the the Swedish public prosecutor was a judicial authority within the meaning of both the framework decision and the Extradition Act. It follows that the request for Mr Assange's extradition has been lawfully made and his appeal against extradition is accordingly dismissed.

Dinah Rose QC: My Lords, my Lady, I understand that you've notified but we did have one matter we wanted to raise. You will appreciate that we've only had a very limited opportunity to study this lengthy and learned decision and also that we've had no opportunity as of yet to consult with our client. However, there is one matter which causes us considerable concern on our initial reading of the decision. And that is that it would appear that a majority of the members of this court have decided the point either principally or solely on the basis of the interpretation of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, a point with respect was not argued during the appeal and which we were given no opportunity to address.

Now obviously this court will have in mind its recent decision in the case of *Lukaszewski*, holding that Article 6 applies to extradition proceedings of the United Kingdom. We are therefore currently considering our position and whether or not it will be necessary with great regret to make an application to this court that this matter should be reopened so that we have an opportunity to argue this point. I say this only

to flag it up, because obviously at the moment we need to study the judgments and consult with our client. And I appreciate the urgency of the situation and therefore thought I ought to make that known publicly as soon as possible.

Lord Phillips: Yes, thank you, Ms Montgomery, you must consider...

Rose QC: I am not technically Ms Montgomery, although easily mistaken for her.

Lord Phillips: Ms Rose. I beg your pardon. You must consider the judgment at proper leisure and if you wish to make an application we will afford you the opportunity to do so.

Rose QC: Yes. I don't know how long your Lordships and your Ladyship would be prepared to give us to make that application. We're obviously operating under some difficulty given the imminent bank holiday weekend.

Lord Phillips: We'll afford you two weeks.

Rose QC: My Lord, in those circumstances, as I understand it the order that was agreed was that this order should be stayed for seven days. But given the point I've just raised, can I ask your Lordships and your Ladyship to vary that order so that it is stayed for 14 days to permit us to make that application.

Lord Phillips: That seems a reasonable request and we'll accede to it.

Rose QC: I am grateful.

How the UK's Supreme Court is wrong on the Julian Assange Appeal

*Submitted by Peter Kemp
WL Central
2012-05-31*

Notwithstanding the clear UK meaning of 'judicial authority' to mean a magistrate, judge or court; notwithstanding that Parliamentary debates and reading speeches reiterated that definition; notwithstanding the primacy of the UK parliament to enact law for effect in the UK; notwithstanding the Framework Agreement using the same word(s) in an official English version of it as the Extradition Act: the Supreme Court **has stated by majority that parliamentarians were conned because an obscure Convention gives a contrary, minority meaning.**

This article shall attempt to address— in the main— the issue of application of Article 31.3(b) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties as applied in the majority judgement at the UK Supreme Court Appeal (brought by Julian Assange as plaintiff) handed down on 30th May 2012.

While the writer [*an Australian lawyer --A.B.*] is no expert on UK and European law, I have much more than a passing familiarity with the right to argue legislative intent in court thanks to our Australian (and NSW) Acts Interpretation Act which allows the introduction into legal argument of extrinsic material such as parliamentary second reading speeches to clarify legislation that is ambiguous or obscure.

For a time the UK case law of *Pepper v Hart* [1993] AC 593 held sway and allowed such extrinsic material but it appears to have been watered down in later decisions such that it appears to be non-operative if not extinct. The UK's legislative intent in the case of the UK's Extradition Act 2003 was quite clear, (as is the definition of a 'judicial authority' in a UK context) as Lord Mance in dissent put it:

I conclude that, whatever may be the meaning of the Framework Decision as a matter of European law, the intention of Parliament and the effect of the Extradition Act 2003 was to restrict the recognition by British courts of incoming European arrest warrants to those issued by a judicial authority in the strict sense of a court, judge or magistrate.

THE MAJORITY

The majority ruled that parliamentary intent had no bearing, or was outweighed by other factors and especially the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which states:

31.3. There shall be taken into account, together with the context:
(b) any subsequent practice in the application of the treaty which establishes the agreement of the parties regarding its interpretation;

Lord Phillips said about that treaty (p.67):

In the fifth place the manner in which not merely the Member States but also the Commission and the Council acted after the Framework Decision took effect was in stark conflict with a definition of judicial authority that restricted its meaning to a judge. Article 31.3(b) of the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties permits recourse, as an aid to interpretation, to "any subsequent practice in the application of the treaty which establishes the agreement of the parties regarding its interpretation".... The practices of the Member States in relation to those they appointed as issuing and executing "judicial authorities" coupled with the comments of the Commission and the Council in relation to these, provide I believe a legitimate guide to the meaning of those two words in the Framework Decision.

How Lord Phillips can reconcile this with **the UK Minister's explicit definition of 'judicial authority' (Magistrate, Judge or Court) in the Parliamentary debate on the Extradition Bill** as 'agreement' per the Vienna Convention to later practices of some other EU EAW nations: is a moot point that will likely be raised by Julian Assange's lawyers in due course.

A later question that arises: did the UK acquiesce in some other nations nominating prosecutors as judicial authorities? And is that at all relevant? But this of course is in

the context of **only a minority of EU nations that are using prosecutors as 'judicial authorities' for the purposes of the EAW system**, (which I won't go into as that detail is lengthy and laid out in the judgement).

At one level of logic, minority 'practice' per the Vienna Convention is highly suggestive of the utilization of a minority definition and cannot by any stretch be, or result in, a 'majority' definition. Lord Phillips is applying the meaning of the two words to the Framework Agreement in an EU context, which he is saying overrides any contrary meaning in the UK Extradition Act.

The problem with that is that the UK enacted an Extradition Act, it did not enact the Framework Agreement word for word (nor enact any legislation in the French language— and on that subject, that was another red herring raised by Lord Phillips. This was a justification he used for excising the UK meaning of 'judicial authority' by asserting that French was the 'original' translation, more on that later.)

To say that a minority practice therefore can be determinative or a 'legitimate guide' leading to the definition of a judicial authority encompassing a 'prosecutor' for the majority: raises serious questions in law.

Lord Walker (para 92-94) agreed with the majority on the basis:

The reasoning of the majority that I find most compelling is that on the application of the Vienna Convention... and on the non-application of the principle in *Pepper v Hart*... [extrinsic material as above]

... If the parliamentary material is disregarded, as I think it must be, the Vienna Convention point is to my mind determinative.

Lord Kerr (p.106) raised the point that prior to the Framework Agreement it was traditional for some continental prosecutors to issue extradition warrants, and that this was not extinguished (shades of the the *Mabo* decision of the High Court of Australia) in the provisions in the Framework decision.

As far as the Vienna Convention was concerned, citing a commentary on it in relation to defining 'agreement':

... it is suggested that what is required to establish the agreement of the parties is that there should be active practice on the part of at least some of the parties to the treaty; that this should not be haphazard; and it must have been acquiesced in or— at least— not objected to by the other parties. Lord Dyson considered that the practice of appointing prosecutors as judicial authorities was sufficiently widespread and free from objection to meet these criteria and, in so far as this conclusion relates to judicial authorities who issue European Arrest Warrants, I agree.

Even if it meets the criteria, should it be determinative considering the Convention says only to 'take it into account' and 'in context' only? The key to this argument is in wiping out the intent and law of the UK Parliament and make paramount as a basis of reasoning, a somewhat obscure Convention.

(p.108) ... The critical question in the present appeal is whether there is a sufficiently widespread and uncontroversial practice in relation to issuing

authorities to allow that provision to come into play in the case of prosecutors who issue European Arrest Warrants. As I understand it, Lord Dyson's conclusion that there is has been accepted by Lord Mance and I agree with both.

I don't think Lord Mance agreed that it was a critical question. **The critical question really is whether or not the UK is a nation able to enact legislation without judges enforcing continental interpretations based on minority practice.**

(p.109)... the Framework Decision does not exclude prosecutors from the category of issuing judicial authorities.

In practice, that is a fact, but does that imply and apply a form of compulsory uniformity to the UK which has legislation that excludes prosecutors as judicial authorities?

Lord Dyson on the question of the Vienna Convention (p.131):

The fact that it is only in the majority (and not all) of the Member States that the issuing judicial authority is a judge is not inconsistent with the existence of an agreement established by subsequent practice that a public prosecutor may be a judicial authority within the meaning of the Framework Decision. There is nothing to suggest that Member States which do not have public prosecutors as their issuing judicial authorities criticise those that do.

Rather than 'not inconsistent' a better choice of word(s) is 'anomaly' which by resolving the case against Assange in the way they did means a principle of 'lowest common denominator' is being applied among other criticisms. I would have thought the ongoing review of the Extradition Act due to numerous complaints inherently is critical of an EAW regime which not incidentally includes prosecutors as judicial authorities.

THE DISSENTERS

Lady Hale (p.191) also referred to Article 31.3(b) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties and asked the question:

Given the lack of common or concordant practice between the parties, is the failure to date of those countries which do not authorise prosecutors and other bodies to object to those who do sufficient to establish their agreement?

Nobody in this country seems to have addressed their mind to the issue until it arose in this case. **Failure to address minds to an issue is not the same as acquiescence in a particular state of affairs. Subsequent practice does not give support to the respondent's extreme position and there has been no consideration of the principles which might distinguish some prosecutors from others.**

This seems to me to be a rather flimsy basis on which to hold that we are obliged to construe a United Kingdom statute contrary both to its natural meaning and to the clear evidence of what Parliament thought that it was doing at the time.

Hear hear. I anticipate supporters of Julian Assange will agree, as well as many if not most Australian practitioners of law.

Further from Lady Hale (p.192.)

We have to interpret the Act of Parliament. Even without reference to the parliamentary materials, it seems clear that the term "judicial authority" is restricted to a court, tribunal, judge or magistrate. First, that is the natural meaning of "judicial" in United Kingdom law. We may talk about the "legal system" or the "justice system" when we mean, not only the courts, but those involved in the administration of justice. But when we use the word "judicial" we mean a court, tribunal, judge or magistrate.

Second, the Act uses the same term in relation to both the issuing and executing "judicial authority". The executing judicial authority undoubtedly has to be a court. There is a strong presumption that the same words in the same statute— especially in the same place— mean the same thing.

Better than a presumption when there is no contrary indication in the Act itself.

Third, the point about the European Convention on Human Rights is not that article 5.3 applies to the issue of a European arrest warrant. It clearly does not. The point is that it uses the word "judicial" ("other officer authorised by law to exercise judicial power") in a sense which is clearly only compatible with a court, tribunal, judge or magistrate who is independent of the parties to the case. It could not include the prosecutor who is conducting the case. **This indicates a European understanding of the word "judicial" which coincides with ours.**

The decision of the majority judges by their selective application of contrary interpretations of the same words against the appellant Assange is worrying to say the least.

(p.193.) It is also quite clear from the parliamentary history detailed by Lord Mance that "judicial" was deliberately inserted into the Bill in order to limit the authorities who could issue European arrest warrants to bodies which we would recognise as judicial. In this respect, I would place more weight on the parliamentary history— in terms of the changes made to the Bill during its passage through Parliament— than on the assurances given by ministers. **Why make the amendments eventually made unless to make the matter clear?**

Indeed.

Lady Hale's conclusion.

(p.194.) As Lord Filkin said to the House of Lords (Hansard (HL Debates), 1 May 2003, col 858), Parliament is sovereign. **This is not a case where Parliament has told us that we must disregard or interpret away the intention of the legislation.** I would therefore have allowed this appeal.

Lord Mance on the Vienna Convention (p.242.)

For subsequent practice in the application of the parties to be relevant to be taken into account in the interpretation of the Framework Decision, it must under article 31.3 be practice which "establishes the agreement of the parties regarding its

interpretation". It must be practice "which clearly establishes the understanding of **all the parties** regarding its interpretation", although "subsequent practice by individual parties also has some probative value": Brownlie, Principles of Public International Law, 7th ed (2008) pp 633-634.

Disagreeing with Lord Phillips:

Evidently suspect practice consisting of the use and nomination of executive authorities by a few states cannot come near establishing "the agreement of the parties regarding [the] interpretation of the Framework Decision" within the meaning of article 31.3 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

The overriding principle (p.265):

...our loyalty must be to Parliament's intention in enacting the Extradition Act 2003. The implications of this in the present context are in my view clear.

Lord Mance's conclusion (p.266)

In the result, **I conclude that, whatever may be the meaning of the Framework Decision as a matter of European law, the intention of Parliament and the effect of the Extradition Act 2003 was to restrict the recognition by British courts of incoming European arrest warrants to those issued by a judicial authority in the strict sense of a court, judge or magistrate.** It would follow from my conclusions that the arrest warrant issued by the Swedish Prosecution Authority is incapable of recognition in the United Kingdom under section 2(2) of the 2003 Act.

Parliament could change the law in this respect and provide for wider recognition if it wished, but that would of course be for it to debate and decide. I would therefore allow this appeal, and set aside the order for Mr Assange's extradition to Sweden.

Further arguments against the decision.

Craig Murray, former Ambassador and human rights activist expresses rather well the aspect of ignoring UK legislative meanings, taking a swipe at Lord Kerr:

But Kerr then goes on to say that only in the context of European surrender/ extradition, "judicial authority" should be understood in a way that is absolutely contrary to its normal English meaning. In a cavalier way **Kerr dispenses with a fundamental principle of English Law for centuries, that words are to be construed in their ordinary sense— which every law student in the land learns in week 1 of their course.**

Then a swipe at Lord Phillips:

The majority all rested their dismissal of the appeal on the grounds that the parliamentary Act of 2003 must be interpreted in line with the EU decision or "Framework Agreement" which it was created to implement. **They specifically state that where there is conflict the EU Framework Agreement must take precedence over British law.**

What follows is absolutely astonishing. The Framework Agreement in its English version specifically states, in Article 1, that the European Arrest Warrant must be issued by a "judicial decision".

i.e. by a court and not a prosecutor.

Lord Philips seeks to get round this by a morally disgusting piece of legal casuistry. He states in terms that the French text should be followed and not the English (para 56 of the judgement). He argues: "The French version is the original and is to be preferred".

But:

... There is no "preferred original". Lord Philips is just getting over an insuperable obstacle to his argument.

Conclusion

It would appear that the Supreme Court's majority decision of the UK in the Assange appeal has not only ignored legal traditions including the primacy of Parliament in making the law, it has decided that any non-UK instrument such as a Framework Agreement treaty or even a Convention in interpreting treaties (neither enacted into UK domestic legislation) can be marshalled, along with some spurious reasonings, to overturn UK law.

The Court has apparently taken upon itself to enforce a sub-narrative of EU conformity and solidarity, **which means that any EU instrument signed onto by the UK can and will be interpreted by the Supreme Court by:**

- 1) The most convenient 'official EU' language at hand that suits the purpose;
- 2) The most convenient Convention that suits the purpose;
- 3) The worst practice of the worst EU members in relation to the UK's legal heritage.

And when all is done they can say that parliamentarians were conned, but the reality is that the power to legislate has been severely impugned and they have usurped and conned the legislature.

This decision means that whenever an EU instrument such as the Framework Agreement is agreed to, the UK parliament may as well enact it word for word, preferably in every official EU language since whatever they intend, whatever they legislate in English, the Supreme Court in its perversity now appears to view the law as if it sits somewhere in a legal mishmash of a triangle combining the best that say Spain, Bulgaria and Estonia have to offer to replace the UK's legal heritage.

<http://wlcentral.org/node/2630>

Assange v Swedish Prosecution Authority: the (mis)application of European and international law by the UK Supreme Court

Tiina Pajuste

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Very little needs to be said by way of introduction to the recent decision of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom in *Assange v The Swedish Prosecution Authority* ([2012] UKSC 22) the wider context of which is by now notorious.

A brief restatement of the facts is, however, desirable.

The Appellant, an Australian national visiting England, was the subject of a European Arrest Warrant issued by the Respondent, the Swedish criminal prosecution authority. As a consequence, the Appellant was arrested in England, and promptly challenged the validity of the warrant on various bases. His challenge was denied in the first instance before a District Judge, and then on appeal by the Divisional Court (*Assange v Swedish Judicial Authority* [2011] EWHC 2849 (Admin)). He finally appealed to the Supreme Court on a single point, namely that s. 2(2) of the Extradition Act 2003 (UK) required that the warrant be issued by “a judicial authority”. The Appellant contended that the Respondent as a prosecutorial body was not ‘judicial’ in nature and accordingly, that the warrant was invalid. The Court was therefore required to determine the meaning of “judicial authority” as provided for in the Extradition Act and, more particularly, whether the Respondent fell within the definition so developed.

An additional layer of complexity, however, was added to the matter by the fact that the Extradition Act was not a solely municipal piece of legislation. Part 1 of the Act was passed to give effect to the Council Framework Decision on the European Arrest Warrant and Surrender Procedures between Member States of the European Union (the Framework Decision), which itself used the term “judicial authority” in a number of places. The meaning of “judicial authority” as it appeared in s.2(2) of the Extradition Act therefore depended on the meaning to be given to the term as it appeared in the Framework Decision. The Court, applying the **Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (VCLT)**— and particularly Article 31(3)(b) thereof, concerned with the subsequent practice of states— determined that a prosecutorial body could be considered a “judicial authority” for the purposes of the Framework Decision, and accordingly that the warrant was valid for the purposes of the Extradition Act ([2012] UKSC 22, para 67 (Lord Phillips PSC), para 94 (Lord Walker JSC), paras 106-108 (Lord Kerr JSC), paras 130-1, 154, 171 (Lord Dyson JSC). Cf *ibid*, para 191 (Lady Hale), para 242 (Lord Mance)).

This conclusion, with respect, was incorrect as a matter of European and international law: VCLT Article 31(3)(b) cannot be legitimately used to support the Court’s interpretation of “judicial authority”. In the first place (to be considered in this post), the Court erred in applying VCLT Article 31(3)(b) to the Framework Decision as (a) the jurisprudence of the **European Court of Justice (ECJ)** demonstrates that court’s aversion to the use of subsequent practice as a tool of interpretation, (b) the Framework Decision is not a treaty, and (c) the ECJ has never applied the VCLT to secondary EU acts. In the second (to be considered in the next post), **even if VCLT Article 31(3)(b) was applicable to the Framework Decision, the conditions for its application were not met in *Assange*.**

Part 1: Non-applicability of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties to the Framework Decision

The Supreme Court in Assange ignored the practice of the ECJ when it applied VCLT Article 31(3)(b) in interpreting the Framework Decision. It is true that the ECJ has affirmed that the customary international law of treaties forms part of the European legal order, and it generally follows the VCLT (implicitly or explicitly). However, despite the ECJ adhering to the general rule embodied in Article 31, it applies the principles embodied in the article in a “Community manner”, greatly emphasising the importance of the object and purpose rather than that of the literal meaning, and disregarding subsequent practice as a supplementary method of treaty interpretation.

A. The ECJ’s approach to subsequent practice

The ECJ has never explicitly relied on Article 31(3)(b) in its case law. As far as Community law is concerned, **especially in relation to the EC Treaty, the Court does not accept arguments of subsequent practice. The Court has held that “mere practice” cannot change the treaty.** Originally this approach applied only to the choice of legal basis for Community acts, but the Court extended it to the interpretation of the EC Treaty in Case C-327/91. In this case, between France and the Commission, France brought an action under the first paragraph of Article 173 of the EC Treaty and Article 33 of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) Treaty for a declaration that the Agreement signed on 23 September 1991 by the Commission and the United States regarding the application of their competition laws was void. In interpreting Article 228 of the EC Treaty regarding the conclusion of agreements by the Community, the Court held that “a mere practice cannot override the provisions of the Treaty” (Case C-327/91, *France v Commission*, [1994] ECR I-3641, para 36).

The Court affirmed this in Opinion 1/94. The Court, in interpreting Article 114 of the EC Treaty, reiterated that “the Court has consistently held that a mere practice of the Council cannot derogate from the rules laid down in the Treaty and cannot, therefore, create a precedent binding on Community institutions with regard to the correct legal basis (see Case 68/86 *United Kingdom v Council* [1988] ECR 855, paragraph 24)”. In a later paragraph of the Opinion the Court concluded that institutional practice in relation to autonomous measures or external agreements adopted on the basis of Article 113 could not alter its conclusion (Opinion 1/94, [1994] ECR, p. I-5267, paras 52, 61).

On the basis of these cases Kuijper correctly concludes that “[s]ubsequent practice” as an aid to interpretation of treaty texts is seriously neglected and **frankly rejected when interpreting the EC Treaty and the instruments based on it** (Kuijper (1998) 25 LIEI (1998), 23). The Supreme Court in Assange did not enquire whether the VCLT Article 31(3)(b) would be applicable; **it was just assumed it was, without any legal reasoning.**

B. The secondary acts of the EU do not qualify as “treaties”

Article 2 of the VCLT provides that “(a) ‘treaty’ means an international agreement concluded between States in written form and governed by international law, whether embodied in a single instrument or in two or more related instruments and whatever its particular designation”. The instrument to be interpreted in Assange was the Council Framework Decision 2002/584/JHA of 13 June 2002 on the European Arrest

Warrant and the Surrender Procedures between Member States. Framework decisions were pre-Lisbon legal instruments of the second pillar of the European Community created on the basis of Article 34 of the Amsterdam Treaty and used exclusively within the EU's competences in police and judicial cooperation in criminal justice matters.

Article 34(2)(b) gave the Council the right to adopt framework decisions for the purpose of approximation of the laws and regulations of the member states. Framework decisions were created by the Council, an organ of an international organisation (the EU); the procedure for the adoption of a framework decision was different from the procedure of concluding a treaty; and there were no parties to the instrument as it was a unilateral act of the EU. **For these reasons alone, framework decisions do not fall under the definition of "treaty" contained in Article 2 of the VCLT and, accordingly, the VCLT is not applicable to their interpretation.** It is surprising that the Supreme Court failed to take into consideration the legal nature of the act in question and did not justify their decision to apply the VCLT in interpreting the Framework Decision.

C. The ECJ has never applied the VCLT to secondary acts

A survey of the judgments of the ECJ reveals that the Court has never referred to the VCLT in interpreting secondary acts of the EU. Instead, it refers to the "principles of interpretation", the content of which becomes clear from an examination of its case law, and not from international law sources on treaty interpretation. In *Foreningen* the Court held that:

"It is common ground that Directive No 77/187 does not contain an express definition of the term 'employee'. In order to establish its meaning it is necessary to apply generally recognized principles of interpretation by referring in the first place to the ordinary meaning to be attributed to that term in its context and by obtaining such guidance as may be derived from community texts and from concepts common to the legal systems of the member states."

In *Bosphorus* the Court, interpreting a regulation, stated that it is evident from the ECJ's case-law that "in interpreting a provision of Community law it is necessary to consider its wording, its context and its aims" (Case C-84/95, *Bosphorus*, [1996] ECR I-3953, para 11). More recently, in *Reliance Industries*, the Court had to interpret both international agreements and EC anti-dumping and anti-subsidy regulations. In interpreting the former the Court stated that: "a treaty under international law [...] must, in accordance with Article 31(1) of the Vienna Convention on the Laws of Treaties of 23 May 1969, 'be interpreted in good faith in accordance with the ordinary meaning to be given to the terms of the treaty in their context and in the light of its object and purpose'" and held that:

"That rule of interpretation corresponds to the rule applied by the Community judicature when called upon to interpret a provision of Community law. Thus, the Court of Justice has repeatedly held that, in interpreting a provision of Community law, it is necessary to consider its wording, its context and its aims" (Case T-45/06, *Reliance Industries Ltd v Council of the European Union and Commission of the European Communities*, [2008] ECR II-02399, para 100).

The ECJ does not apply the VCLT to the interpretation of regulations; rather it applies a Community rule of interpretation, albeit one with a similar content to Article 31(1). Importantly, the Court does not refer to the entirety of Article 31, which would include subsidiary means of interpretation, in explaining the content of its interpretative rule.

The Supreme Court wrongly, and without any analysis, assumed that VCLT Article 31(3)(b) is applicable in the interpretation of secondary European acts such as the Framework Decision. It also neglected to look into the interpretative rules of the EU. The result was a fundamental mistake in the legal reasoning of the Court.

http://www.cjicl.org.uk/index.php?option=com_easyblog&view=entry&id=22&Itemid=102

Why the Assange Case Is Important

John Pilger
Dagens Nyheter/Truthout
30 May 2012

On 30 May, Britain's Supreme Court turned down the final appeal of Julian Assange against his extradition to Sweden. In an unprecedented move, the court gave the defense team of the WikiLeaks editor permission to "re-apply" to the court in two weeks' time. On the eve of the judgment, Sweden's leading morning newspaper, *Dagens Nyheter*, known as DN, interviewed investigative journalist John Pilger who has closely followed the Assange case. The following is the complete text of the interview, of which only a fraction was published in Sweden.

DN: Julian Assange has been fighting extradition to Sweden at a number of British courts. Why do you think it is important he wins?

JP: Because the attempt to extradite Assange is unjust and political. I have read almost every scrap of evidence in this case and it's clear, in terms of natural justice, that no crime was committed. The case would not have got this far had it not been for the intervention of Claes Borgstrom, a politician who saw an opportunity when the Stockholm prosecutor threw out almost all the police allegations. Borgstrom was then in the middle of an election campaign. When asked why the case was proceeding when both women had said that the sex had been consensual with Assange, he replied, "Ah, but they're not lawyers." If the Supreme Court in London rejects Assange's appeal, the one hope is the independence of the Swedish courts. However, as the London *Independent* has revealed, Sweden and the US have already begun talks on Assange's "temporary surrender" to the US— where he faces concocted charges and the prospect of unlimited solitary confinement. And for what? For telling epic truths. Every Swede who cares about justice and the reputation of his or her society should care deeply about this.

DN: You have said that Julian Assange's human rights have been breached. In what way?

JP: One of the most fundamental human rights— that of the presumption of innocence— has been breached over and over again in Assange's case. Convicted of no

crime, he has been the object of character assassination—perfidious and inhuman—and highly political smear, of which the evidence is voluminous. This is what Britain's most distinguished and experienced human rights lawyer, Gareth Peirce, has written: **"Given the extent of the public discussion, frequently on the basis of entirely false assumptions... it is very hard to preserve for [Assange] any presumption of innocence.** He has now hanging over him not one but two Damocles swords of potential extradition to two different jurisdictions in turn for two different alleged crimes, **neither of which are crimes in his own country.** [And] his personal safety has become at risk in circumstances that are highly politically charged."

DN: You, as well as Julian Assange, don't seem to have confidence in the Swedish judicial system. Why not?

JP: It's difficult to have confidence in a prosecutorial system that is so contradictory and flagrantly uses the media to achieve its aims. Whether or not the Supreme Court in London find for or against Assange, the fact that this case has reached the highest court in this country is itself a condemnation of the competence and motivation of those so eager to incarcerate him, having already had plenty of opportunity to question him properly. What a waste all this is.

DN: If Julian Assange is innocent, as he says, would it not have been better if he had gone to Stockholm to sort things out?

JP: Assange tried to "sort things out," as you put it. Right from the beginning, he offered repeatedly to be questioned— first in Sweden, then in the UK. He sought and received permission to leave Sweden— which makes a nonsense of the claim that he has avoided questioning. The prosecutor who has since pursued him has refused to give any explanation about why she will not use standard procedures, which Sweden and the UK have signed up to.

DN: IF the Supreme Court decides that Julian Assange can be extradited to Sweden, what consequences/risks do you see for him?

JP: First, I would draw on my regard for ordinary Swedes' sense of fairness and justice. **Alas, overshadowing that is a Swedish elite that has forged sinister and obsequious links with Washington. These powerful people have every reason to see Julian Assange as a threat.** For one thing, their vaunted reputation for neutrality has been repeatedly exposed as a sham in US cables leaked by WikiLeaks. One cable revealed that "the extent of [Sweden's military and intelligence] co-operation [with NATO] is not widely known" and unless kept secret "would open up the government to domestic criticism." Another was entitled "WikiLeaks puts neutrality in the dustbin of history." Don't the Swedish public have a right to know what the powerful say in private in their name?

Judges play language game to extradite Assange

RT

30 May 2012

The decision to extradite WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has caused outcry, with critics saying it is based on dubious legal credentials. **In the ruling EU law overrides UK jurisdiction, the final judgment dictated by the meaning of a French word.**

The ruling has been dubbed as “extraordinary” by Gerard Batten of the UK Independence Party. He said that the judgment overruled a “centuries-old principle of English law” that states that “you cannot be a judge in your own case.”

According to UK legislation, the extradition order placed against Assange was invalid because the Swedish prosecutor who issued it acted beyond his jurisdiction. Batten's view was echoed by Supreme Judge Lady Hale, who says the term “judicial authority” is restricted to court, tribunal, judge or magistrate only.

In Assange’s hearing the judges cited that the Venice Convention in which a judicial authority under the broader French definition of the word also encompassed prosecutors. **“Although our own parliament and our own government minister believe a judicial authority means a proper court or a proper judge. That was overturned and it was decided that the meaning of the word in French was actually what mattered,”** Batten told RT. He added that “it means that now English law has been decided on the meaning of a French word.”

Julian Assange lost his marathon legal battle against his extradition to Sweden this morning in the UK Supreme Court. However, the judge granted his team of lawyers two weeks to make an application to reopen the case.

Supreme Court President Nicholas Phillips accepted that the case had “not been simple to resolve.” Two members of the court voted against the ruling but were overruled by the five other jury members. They took issue with imposing the French definition of the act on Assange’s case.

Assange’s lawyer Dinah Rose argued that the decision was taken based on legal points that were not argued in the original appeal, and as such the defense had not had time to address them.

The founder of WikiLeaks may also make an appeal to the European Court of Human Rights in order to delay his extradition to Sweden.

<http://www.rt.com/news/assange-wikileaks-trial-extradition-581/>

'Swedish prosecutors determined to convict Assange... of something'

RT

30 May, 2012

As the UK Supreme Court gives the green light to extradite WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to Sweden, journalist Al Burke told RT that Swedish prosecutors have too much riding on the whistleblower's case to simply drop it.

Wednesday's decision to extradite the scandal-stirring whistleblower Julian Assange has caused both uproar and bewilderment. In the Supreme Court's ruling, international law trumps domestic jurisdiction, and the final judgment is dictated by the term "judicial authority" as interpreted by French legal practice.

Assange's lawyers have 14 days to apply to reopen the extradition case. The whistleblower's legal team has secured the right since the ruling was not made under the UK legal system, so they did not have adequate time to prepare.

For Stockholm, the 18-month stand-off with the British justice over the Australian cyberspace activist has turned into a marathon they just cannot afford to lose says Al Burke, a journalist and author with the Sweden-based Nordic News Network.

RT: What are your predictions for where the case goes once Assange is handed over?

Al Burke: The Swedish prosecutors have invested so much prestige in this case that I suspect they are under a lot of pressure to get him convicted of something. So they probably won't just walk away. Everything I have seen thus far indicates to me that the prosecutor in charge is rather seriously determined to convict him of something.

RT: The court's decision has revived fears this extradition is just a pretext for Assange's further prosecution, possibly in the US, and on far more serious charges, such as conspiracy and espionage. Do you see that as a possibility?

AB: I have studied US foreign policy and the government's activities for quite a while and I can say this: It would surprise me if they do not try to get at Assange in the way you have described. I think that is a given.

RT: How is the news of Assange's looming extradition likely to be received in Sweden, judging by how the media there has been covering the proceedings so far?

AB: All I have seen so far on the web is pretty consistent with the way it has been all along, in the past eighteen months or so. The reporting is mainly hostile and negative towards Julian Assange and his attempt to avoid extradition to Sweden.

RT: Why do you think in the mainstream media, Assange has gone from celebrated truth-teller to a criminal? Was this a planned smear campaign or just an unfortunate coincidence?

AB: Some attribute it to his personal difficulties in dealing with editors in "standard journalism." As for myself, I suspect it may be due to an inferiority complex. WikiLeaks has shown the world how incompetent most of the mainstream news organizations are. I don't think they like that.

'Assange process sends totally wrong signal to whistleblowers'

In the grand scheme of things, Assange's court battle in the UK sends the "totally wrong message" to whistleblowers, says investigative journalist Tony Gosling.

"Many people around the world making a tremendous amount of money out of the War on Terror would like to see Assange disappear," the journalist told RT. "We see an attack on the most important people and most important website in the world, which journalists used when vital information could not be transmitted through mainstream media because of editorial considerations."

The fact that Assange is a radical publisher doing real investigative journalism is one of the reasons he is under attack, concludes Gosling.

<http://www.rt.com/news/sweden-prosecutor-convict-assange-637/>

[Note: This is a somewhat abridged transcript. Video in MP4 format at:
<http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/rt-120530.mp4>]

DN: 2012-05-30

Assange kan överlämnas till Sverige

Julian Assange kan snart vara på väg till Sverige. På onsdagen meddelade brittiska HD att Wikileaks-grundaren, som misstänks för våldtäkt, kan överlämnas från Storbritannien.

Supreme Court, brittiska motsvarigheten till Högsta domstolen, hade att avgöra om en svensk åklagare ska ses som "juridisk myndighet" och därmed innehar rätten att utfärda en europeisk arresteringsorder.

En oenig domstol, fem röster mot två, beslutade att så var fallet och därmed bekräftade man att Julian Assange ska kunna överlämnas till Sverige. Hade man stoppat överlämnandet hade Assange gått fri.

Inom kort väntas nu Wikileaks-grundaren, som misstänks för bland annat ett fall av våldtäkt och två fall av sexuellt ofredande, resa till Sverige.

– Jag tror att det måste gå snabbt. Men eftersom att alla gränser redan har överskridits så blir jag inte förvånad om det tar ytterligare lite tid. Men vi pratar inte om månader, utan tio dagar till två veckor, säger Christoffer Wong, lektor vid juridiska fakulteten i Lund som forskar om EU-straffrätt och har specialstuderat fallet Assange.

Trots beslut i högsta instans har inte försvaret gett upp. Anledningen är att domstolen baserade beslutet på bestämmelser i Wienkonventionen om traktaträtten, något som varken åklagare eller försvarare blivit varse.

Julian Assanges försvarare Dinah Rose bad efter beslutet därför om att skjuta på överlämnandet i två veckor, då hon ville diskutera den delen med sin klient för att om möjligt öppna fallet på nytt.

Domaren godkände försvarets begäran.

Brittiske rättskommentatorn Joshua Rozenberg är förvånad över utvecklingen.

– Det skulle vara väldigt pinsamt om Högsta domstolen var tvungen att återöppna fallet och det är ju extraordinärt att de kanske har grundat sig på något som de inte låtit parterna argumentera kring, säger Rozenberg till BBC.

Under cirka ett och ett halvt år har Julian Assange suttit i husarrest i Storbritannien medan den rättsliga prövningen dragit ut på tiden. Nu ser den ut att fortsätta i Sverige.

Enligt Christoffer Wong kommer man på svensk mark först att besluta om Assange ska häktas eller om han ska försättas med restriktioner, till exempel i form av ett resförbud.

Han kommer att häktas om man anser att det finns fara för flykt, risk för undanröjande av bevis eller att han ska fortsätta brottsligheten.

– Men man har redan säkrat teknisk bevisning och vittnen och målsäganden har redan blivit förhörda. Och man ser nog ingen risk att han kommer att fortsätta brottsligheten heller. Så jag tror inte att det blir häktning, säger Christoffer Wong.

Därefter väntar det som saknas i utredningen— förhör med den anklagade.

– Efter förhör med honom får åklagaren sedan ta ställning till om man ska väcka åtal eller inte. Om man inte gör det så går han fri.

När kommer i så fall åtal att vara väckt?

– Jag tror inte att det kommer bli så långdraget. Jag tror att det kan gå ganska snabbt, några veckor till en månad. Man har i princip all teknisk bevisning och man har hört alla vittnen och målsäganden. Det som återstår är att man ska få fram den misstänkta version.

• *Lasse Mannheimer*

DN: 2012-05-30

Borgström: "En lättnad"

På onsdagen beslutades att Julian Assange ska överlämnas till Sverige. "En lättnad, men ett väntat besked", säger advokat Claes Borgström, som representerar de två kvinnorna som anmält Assange för våldtäkt, till DN.se.

Hur tar dina klienter beskedet om att Assange utlämnas till Sverige?

– Det är en lättnad, men det är ett väntat besked i och för sig.

Vad gör ni nu?

– Vi kan göra lika lite nu som vi har kunnat göra tidigare. **Mina klienter har förhört många gånger av polisen.** De är inte formellt part i det här målet ännu, det blir de först när det väcks åtal. Det vi kan göra nu är bara att vänta, men det här är naturligtvis ett steg framåt efter all tid som har gått.

Att Assanges advokat fick Storbritanniens Högsta domstol att skjuta på överlämnandet i två veckor oroar inte Claes Borgström.

– Det kommer inte utmynna i något annat än att han kommer att utlämnas till Sverige, det är jag övertygad om. Det kommer bara att dra ut på tiden ännu mer. Så här har det sett ut från början, de har flyttat fokus från vad misstankarna egentligen gäller och sett till att tiden går.

– Men det är till nackdel för bevisläget att det har tagit så här lång tid. Det är inget som på något sätt, varken psykologiskt eller rättsligt gynnar mina klienter.

För kvinnorna har tiden sedan anmälan varit påfrestande, fortsätter Borgström:

– De har beskrivits som att de har hittat på det här, att det är en konspiration, eller att de vill åt Wikileaks som organisation och inte Assange personligen, vilket är helt vansinnigt fel. Eller att de samarbetar med CIA, och allt det där är struntprat. *[Inget av detta har Assange påstått. --A.B.]* Men det har ju inte gjort det lättare för dem. Deras namn och adresser har lagts ut på nätet och de har beskrivits på ett kränkande sätt sedan en lång tid. Jag har aldrig varit med om några målsägande som har varit i närheten av de kränkningar som de här två kvinnorna utsätts för.

• *Signe Oskarsson*

AB: 2012-05-30

Julian Assange utlämnas till Sverige

LONDON. I dag meddelades att Julian Assange ska utlämnas till Sverige. Den våldtäktsmisstänkte Wikileaks-grundaren har suttit i husarrest i England i 15 månader medan han överklagat utlämningen genom samtliga brittiska instanser.

Ordförande Lord Philips läste upp beslutet. Runt honom satt de övriga fem övriga domare som varit med och fattat beslutet. Julian Assange är inte med i salen, men hans mamma fanns på plats bland åhörarna när beslutet lästes upp.

Sex [??] domare fattade beslutet tillsammans. Men de var inte eniga. Två av domarna ansåg att Sveriges begäran om utlämning inte är korrekt och tycker inte att Assange ska lämnas till Sverige.

Assanges försvarare ber om tid för att lämna in en ansökan där man vill väcka ännu en fråga som man anser att domstolen inte tagit ställning till. Lord Philips beviljar Assanges team 14 dagar för att lämna in den ansökan.

I sina argumentering förklarar Lord Philips att trots att en parlamentsledamot i parlamentet uttryckligen sagt att uttrycket "judicial authority" innebär en domare eller

domstol så är detta fel. Även en åklagare kan, som i fallet med Sveriges begäran om Assanges utlämning, utfärda en europeisk arresteringsorder.

Julian Assange var inte på plats i Supreme Court idag, men efter att beslutet lästs upp är Wikileaks andreman Kristinn Hrafnsson besviken.

- Jag är både besviken och förvånad. **Det verkar ju som att domarna inte är överens med parlamentet om vad som faktiskt stämmer.** Där har ni något att skriva om, säger han till Aftonbladet.

Sverige har begärt Assange utlämnad enligt en europeisk arresteringsorder och två brittiska domstolar har redan bestämt att han ska utlämnas. Men Assange överklagade till högsta instans, Supreme Court.

Utanför Supreme Court i London hade ett 40-tal tv-team och lika många fotografer samlats redan en dryg timme innan beslutet väntas meddelas.

En samling demonstranter med Julian Assanges ansikte på sina affischer står också utanför domstolen mitt emot det brittiska parlamentet.

I Sverige har polis höjt säkerheten och har särskild beredskap för eventuella hackerattacker under dagen.

- Vi har särskild uppmärksamhet på samhällskritiska system i dag, säger Anders Ahlqvist, chef för IT-brottssektionen vid Rikskriminalpolisen, till TT.

Händelser som retar upp nätaktivister och hackare har tidigare haft en tendens att utlösa cyberattacker mot regeringar och myndigheter i flera länder.

Den här brottsligheten är internationell till sin karaktär och därmed är det intressant att följa vad som händer i andra länder, säger Ahlqvist till TT.

Julian Assange grundade avslöjarsajten Wikileaks som bland annat publicerat stora mängder hemliga dokument och avslöjat amerikanska militärens tortyr av irakiska fångar. Hösten 2010 släpptes också tiotusentals hemliga diplomatrapporter från amerikanska ambassader världen över.

Assange häktades i sin frånvaro i december 2010 misstänkt för sexbrotten och efter att han greps i England har han suttit i husarrest i väntan på beslutet.

Torbjörn Ek
Emmelie Wallroth

<http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article14900423.ab>

AB: 2012-05-30

Assanges kamp beklämmande

Räkna med att cirkus Julian Assange fortsätter att snurra. Allt pekar på att han kommer att överklaga dagens beslut om att han ska utlämnas till Sverige. Brittiska jurister tror dock inte att en överklagan till Europadomstolen kan stoppa en utlämning.

Det blir allt mer beklämmande att följa Assanges **kamp mot omvärlden**.

Hjälten har fotboja. På Wikileaks hemsida avslöjas inga nyheter längre. Där ligger bara en vädjan om pengar. **Rebellen visade sig vara en nyliberal narcissist som visserligen ifrågasatte stater, men som numera mest bryr sig om sig själv.**

Nu är det han mot den svenska rättvisan.

Det har gått snart ett och ett halvt år sedan Julian Assange greps av brittisk polis misstänkt för våldtäkt, sexuellt ofredande samt olaga tvång. Brotten ska ha begåtts mot två kvinnor när han besökte Sverige i augusti 2010. Dagens beslut i brittiska högsta domstolen innebär alltså att han kan utvisas till Sverige för förhör.

Det rättsliga efterspelet har blivit allt mer bisarrt. Det har gått snart två år sedan Julian Assange hade sex med de två svenskorna och fortfarande har han inte förhörts. Varför valde den svenska åklagaren att göra förhørsfrågan till ett internationellt jippo? Han kunde ha förhörts när han var i Sverige och visst, han kunde ha tagit flyget över till Stockholm.

Hans rädsla för att bli utlämnad till USA är ju i det närmaste paranoid.

Nätkampanjerna för Julian Assange fortsätter med oförändrad styrka. Den långa rättsprocessen har skadat de två kvinnorna som demoniserats, svartmålat och hängts ut av Assanges stödtrupper. **Offren är redan dömda.**

Nu kan man tycka att det är dags att ta itu med Julian Assange. Och medan han får försvara sig kan världens alla nätaktivister hedra Wikileaks genom att avslöja maktmissbruk och orättvisor **i stället för att som nu krossa två unga tjejer.**

• *Eva Franchell*

<http://www.aftonbladet.se/ledare/ledarkronika/evafranchell/article14901596.ab>

* * *

Translation

Posted Friday 1st June 2012 from [Twitlonger](#)

Assange's deplorable fight

Expect circus Assange to continue to spin. As soon as the British Supreme Court delivered its judgment Assange's defense tried to slow down the extradition process by requiring more time.

Even in Britain this is an unusual request.

It is becoming increasingly depressing to follow Assange's fight against the outside world.

The hero is tagged. Wikileaks homepage no longer reveals news anymore. There is just a pleading for money. The rebel proved to be a neo-liberal narcissist who admittedly challenged states, but now cares mostly about himself.

Now it is him against the Swedish justice system.

It's been almost a year and a half since Assange was arrested by British police on suspicion of rape, sexual molestation and unlawful coercion. The crimes were allegedly committed against two women when he visited Sweden in August 2010. Today's decision in UK Supreme Court means that he can be extradited to Sweden for questioning.

The legal aftermath has become increasingly bizarre. It's been almost two years since Assange had sex with the two Swedes, and still he has not been questioned. Why has the Swedish prosecutor turned his questioning into an international stunt? Assange could have been questioned when he was in Sweden, or he could take a flight over to Stockholm.

His fears of being extradited to the U.S. is bordering paranoia.

The internet campaigns for Assange continue unabated. The long legal process has injured the two women who have been demonized, smeared and hung out to dry by Assange supporters. The victims have already been condemned.

It is finally time to deal with Assange. And while he may defend himself, the world's netizens should honor Wikileaks by exposing abuses of power and injustice instead of crushing two young girls.

— *Eva Franchell*

<http://www.twitlonger.com/show/h19il0>

* * *

Subject: Annas kompis?
Date: 31 May 2012
From: Al Burke <editor@nnn.se>
To: Eva Franchell <eva.franchell@aftonbladet.se>

Eva Franchell,

Enligt uppgift är du kompis med Anna Ardin, som möjligen kan förklara -- men knappast ursäkta -- dina irrationella utfall mot Julian Assange och det journalistiska maktmissbruk som detta utgör.

Du får gärna bestrida denna uppgift. I brist på svar antar jag att den stämmer och får publiceras som korrekt.

Hälsningar,
Al Burke

[Inget svar t.o.m. 2012-06-30]

DN: 2012-05-30

Assange riskerar åtal för spioneri i USA

Amerikanska myndigheter utreder möjligheterna att ställa Wikileaks grundare Julian Assange inför rätta för spioneri eller dataintrång. Saken kan avgöras av den brottsutredning som pågår mot Wikileaks utpekade källa Bradley Manning.

Den amerikanska prövningen av Assangefallet ligger för närvarande i händerna på en så kallas "grand jury" som ska avgöra om anklagelserna håller för ett formellt åtal. Uppenbarligen har det inte varit lätt att koppla ett hållbart juridiskt grepp— juryn har arbetat sedan december 2010.

USA:s justitieminister Eric Holder sade då att han gett klartecken till "betydande" insatser i brottsutredningen rörande Wikileaks, utan att gå in på detaljer. Enligt Assanges advokat Mark Stephens innebar det att en jury sattes i arbete.

Upprinnelsen till utredningen är att Wikileaks publicerat stora mängder hemligstämplat material om USA:s krigföring i Irak och Afghanistan samt olika diplomatiska kontakter.

Enligt The Guardian har FBI riktat in utredningen på grupper av hackare kring den tekniska högskolan MIT i Massachusetts. Syftet ska vara att få fram information om hur Assange fått kontakt med sin källa. Minst en person har kallats till förhör inför juryn.

Hur det går i fallet Assange hänger nära samman med den rättegång som förbereds mot Bradley Manning, soldaten och underrättelseanalytikern som utpekats som Wikileaks källa. Åklagaren har presenterat material som påstås visa på ett nära samarbete mellan Manning och Assange redan på ett tidigt stadium.

Det anses troligt att det amerikanska rättsväsendet laborerar med två olika brottsrubriceringar, den ena spioneri, den andra dataintrång.

Mot bakgrund av den pågående amerikanska utredningen, fruktar Assanges anhängare att USA ska begära honom utlämnad från Sverige, dit Assange nu överlämnas av brittiska myndigheter. I Sverige ska han förhöras om de anklagelser rörande sexbrott som riktats mot honom.

Enligt Christoffer Wong, lektor vid juridiska fakulteten på Lunds universitet, har Sverige dock inte de befogenheterna.

– Sverige har begärt Assange överlämnad hit för ett mycket speciellt ändamål. Man kan inte göra något annat, utan att få ett godkännande av Storbritannien. Så det är inte upp till Sverige att avgöra om han ska överlämnas till USA, säger Christoffer Wong i en DN-intervju. *[Wong talar om juridik, men risken ligger i politiken. --A.B.]*

De två fallen Assange och Manning ingår i en bred offensiv mot läckor inom statsapparaten som dragits i gång under president Barack Obamas tid vid makten. DN.se har tidigare rapporterat om detta här.

• *Hans Rosén*

Assange loses Sweden extradition appeal

The Local
30 May 12

The lawyer for the women who accused Julian Assange of sex crimes welcomed Wednesday's ruling which paves the way for the WikiLeaks founder's extradition, while a legal expert explained there is a chance the case against Assange may not proceed to trial in Sweden.

"I've always assumed that Assange would be extradited. The regulations involved are pretty simple. European Arrest Warrants aren't that complicated," lawyer Claes Borgström told the Svenska Dagbladet (SvD) newspaper.

Borgström represents the two women who alleged that Assange sexually assaulted and raped them *[an inaccurate description of the accusations --A.B.]* while he was visiting Sweden in August 2010.

Assange has admitted to having sex with the women, but claims it was consensual and that the accusations are politically motivated. *[He has not stated that the two women's accusations are politically motivated, but that the behaviour of Swedish authorities is. --A.B.]*

While Borgström welcomed the decision, he was critical at how long the UK Supreme Court took to arrive at its ruling. "I can't understand why it's taken so long," he said.

Speaking with the AFP news agency, Borgström said he expects Assange will be extradited soon.

"The decision (that Assange can be extradited) was what we expected... It's unfortunate that it has been delayed further, but he will ultimately be extradited," he said. "We expect an indictment fairly soon after he gets here, maybe within a month," Borgstroem said, adding it "could be during the summer."

Borgström has yet to discuss Wednesday's ruling with his clients, **but told SvD he believes they are relieved.** "They wish to see him held responsible for what he did. Anything else would have been horrible," he told SvD.

Meanwhile, a legal expert hinted that, even once Assange is extradited to Sweden, it's possible that his case might not proceed to trial. Speaking with The Local ahead of the verdict, Chistopher Wong, a legal scholar at Lund University said that it would be hard to imagine a scenario whereby Assange didn't end up in Sweden following the rejection of his appeal.

"This is the final decision in the legal process and the UK authorities will have no choice but to surrender him to Sweden," said Wong.

Once in Sweden, Assange would likely be held in some sort of restricted custody, according to Wong. "There will probably be restrictions on his movements, but he won't necessarily be held in a jail cell," he said.

Once Assange is back in Sweden, prosecutors can then continue their investigation into the alleged sex crimes of which Assange stands accused [*suspected, not formally accused -A.B.*].

In a statement issued following the ruling, the Swedish Prosecution Authority (Åklagarmyndigheten) said that the UK court's decision meant that "Julian Assange will be surrendered to Sweden within 10 days after a legally binding judgment".

However, Director of Public Prosecution Marianne Ny, who is leading the Assange probe, isn't planning to make any public comments about the case until an eventual detention hearing in Sweden, the agency added.

According to Wong, prosecutors will likely interview Assange in order to get his version of events from the August 2010 encounter which prompted the rape accusations.

Wong explained that, while remote, there is indeed a possibility that prosecutors could drop the case altogether after speaking with Assange. "Most of the forensic evidence has already been gathered and prosecutors believe they have a strong case and enough evidence for a conviction," he said.

"But it all depends on what Assange tells them. [*Not at all. There is already abundant evidence that he is innocent. --A.B.*] It is possible that he may offer up an explanation for what happened that makes the prosecutor rethink how strong a case she has. If that's the case, then it would be her duty to not bring the case to trial."

Many Assange supporters have questioned why prosecutors in Sweden have pursued Assange so vigorously in the absence of formal criminal charges.

But Wong explained that the criticism of the Swedish criminal justice system is unfounded and stems primarily from a simple "misunderstanding" in terminology.

"There is no formal indictment, but he is a criminal suspect and has been informed of the suspicions against him," said Wong. "If the same thing had happened in England, he would have been formally charged at that point and then prosecutors would have continued their investigation. But in Sweden they do things differently." [*A dubious interpretation. --A.B.*]

Thus according to Wong, critics' anger over efforts to bring Assange back to Sweden to face questioning without having been formally charged is somewhat misdirected and an "emotional reaction" to the different terminology and legal processes.

"People are simply reacting to the term, I think. Just because he's not been charged doesn't mean he's not a criminal suspect and there is evidence against him," he said.

• *David Landes/AFP*

[*Mr. Wong's analysis should be treated with caution. --A.B.*]

SvD: 2012-05-30 (hemsida)



Manning och Assange— anklagade i skilda världar

Världskändisen Julian Assange har i ett och ett halvt år undvikit det svenska rättssystemet på en engelsk herrgård. I dag blev beslutet om ulämning uppskjutet igen. Samtidigt har en ung soldat suttit isolerad och mentalt nedbruten i väntan på krigsrätt för läckor till Wikileaks.

Det slutgiltiga beskedet kom inte i går, trots att ett beslut i högsta instans vanligtvis är sista ordet. Direkt efter att Supreme court meddelat att Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange ska överlämnas till Sverige, där han är häktad i sin frånvaro misstänkt för bland annat våldtäkt, protesterade Assanges advokat Dinah Rose.

– Försvaret menar att domstolen fattat beslutet på grund av en aspekt som aldrig fördes fram i förhandlingen, som advokaterna därför inte fick chans att argumentera mot, säger brittiske rättsexperten Joshua Rozenberg.

Nu får Assange 14 dagar på sig att begära att Supreme court ska ta upp fallet på nytt. Om rätten beslutar att öppna processen kan det ändras och bli till Assanges fördel.

Ett annat stort rättsfall med anknytning till Wikileaks har löpt parallellt med turena kring Assange. Den amerikanske soldaten Bradley Manning misstänks vara den som läckt de stora mängder hemligt material som gjort Wikileaks och Julian Assange världskända.

Sedan i maj 2010, tre månader innan Assange misstänks ha begått sexbrotten och sju månader innan han greps i London, sitter Manning fängslad i USA misstänkt bland annat för att ha "hjälpt fienden". I februari i år åtalades Bradley Manning, och riskerar dömas till livstid i den militärrättegång som ska hållas i september. För drygt en månad sedan fick Manning avslag på en begäran att åtalet ska ogiltigförklaras, eftersom försvaret inte fått ta del av viktigt material.

Julian Assange har tillbringat större delen av sin tid som frihetsberövad med fotboja i herrgården Ellingham Hall, som gäst hos journalistklubbgrundaren Vaughan Smith. Assange har fortsatt jobba med Wikileaks, gett intervjuer, jobbat som programledare för en rysk tv-show och smitt på planer att ställa upp i senatsvalet i hans hemland Australien nästa år.

Bradley Mannings tid som frihetsberövad har sett annorlunda ut. Han satt isolerad 23 timmar varje dygn i nästan ett år efter gripandet. Advokater har vittnat om hur han klätts av naken och lämnats ensam i cellen, och FN:s specielle rapportör om tortyr Juan Ernesto Mendez har kallat behandlingen av Bradley Manning grym, omänsklig och förnedrande. Sedan i april förra året har många restriktioner hävts. Manning får nu ta emot besök och träffa andra häktade. I en intervju med Guardian berättar en faster som ofta besöker Manning att hans mentala tillstånd förbättrats avsevärt i takt med att restriktionerna mildrats. Manning sysselsätter sig nu med att träna, umgås med andra intagna och läsa.

Hans pappa har skickat honom Stieg Larssons Män som hatar kvinnor, och han prenumererar på New York Times och Vanity Fair. Vid åtalsförhandlingen i februari blev Manning förvånad och generad över vilket uppmärksamhet han fick i medierna.

– Men han tycker att det känns bra att folk inte har glömt honom, säger fastern till Guardian.

[Ingen skribent nämns. Man förstår varför ingen vill ta ansvaret för detta. — A.B.]

SvD: 30 maj 2012

Assange behöver inte vara orolig

Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange ska så äntligen överlämnas till Sverige. Under den snart två år långa processen har hans sympatisörer tyvärr lyckats sprida en nidbild av det svenska rättssystemet. Förhoppningsvis kan den bilden nu ändras, skriver professorn i civilrätt Märten Schultz.

Det tog tid, men till slut kom den oundvikliga utgången. Julian Assange ska överlämnas till den svenska rättvisan, även om hans advokater sannolikt kommer att försöka få beslutet omprövat.

Beskedet från Storbritanniens Supreme Court var det enda möjliga. Alternativet, att acceptera de invändningar som Assangeförsvaret anfört, skulle ha inneburit att Storbritanniens högsta instans underkännt Sverige som rättsstat. *[Nej, den hade bara beslutit hur brittisk lag skall tillämpas i England. --A.B.]* Och det vore helt orimligt.

Det är ett problem för Sverige att den bild av vår rättsordning som har spritts av Assangeteamet och dess sympatisörer är **en nidbild. En karikatyr.** *[I så fall finns det en hel del framstående svenska jurister som spridit som "nidbild" --A.B.]* När inflytelserika personer— som filmaren Michael Moore, feministen Naomi Wolff och journalisten John Pilger— utgår från karikatyren i sina attacker på det svenska rättssystemet blir problemet massivt. I stora delar av världen präglas i dag intrycket av svensk rätt av de uppgifter som Assanges sympatisörer velat förmedla. Det är inte i sig så konstigt. Det är dessa uppgifter som har dominerat i fallet hitintills, eftersom företrädare för den svenska rättsordningen och andra svenska jurister har misslyckats med att nå ut med en mer rättvisande bild av den svenska rättvisan. *[Nonsens. Svenska medier har konsekvent förmedlat åklagarsidans och Claes Borgströms åsikter. -- A.B.]*

Om du som svensk jurist reser utomlands och träffar jurister från andra länder som intresserat sig för Assangefallet kan man få häpnadsväckande frågor: Stämmer det att män fälls till ansvar för våldtäkt i Sverige på den enda grunden att en kvinna påstått att hon blivit våldtagen? Är det våldtäkt i Sverige när en kondom går sönder? Är det korrekt att svenska domare stämmer av med Justitiedepartementet innan de dömer i känsliga mål? Har den svenska Riksåklagaren haft möten med företrädare för amerikanska ambassaden innan Assange begärdes utlämnad från Storbritannien? Är det i realiteten politiker som dömer i svenska domstolar? Är det sant att den offentliga maktapparaten i Sverige impregneras av feministisk ideologi och att svenska tjänstemän får lära sig att kvinnor aldrig ljuger? Kommer den svenska polisen sätta Assange direkt på ett plan till Guantanamo om han överförs hit?

Alla dessa frågor återspeglar felaktiga föreställningar om det svenska rättsväsendet. Svaret på alla frågor är i princip "nej" *[enligt prof. Schultz --A.B.]*, även om någon av frågorna innehåller halvsanningar. *[Då är det inte så konstigt att utländska jurister ställer frågor, eller hur? --A.B.]*

Julian Assange var som talesperson för Wikileaks i Sverige sommaren 2010. Ironiskt nog var den svenska juridikens goda rykte en av anledningarna till resan, han ville undersöka om Wikileaks kunde åtnjuta särskilt skydd under de på yttrandefrihetens område unikt starka svenska grundlagarna. Under besöket inträffade händelser som gjorde att Assange anklagades för sexuella övergrepp av två kvinnor. Innan något förhör kunde hållas med den brottsmisstänkte lämnade han landet. *[Med åklagarens medgivande och efter fem veckors fördröjning i Sverige. --A.B.]* Han har därefter inte velat återvända till Sverige *[han erbjöd sig att återkomma på minst ett tillfälle, men fick nobben av Marianne Ny --A.B.]* och det har tagit närmare två år för att få frågan om överlämnande slutligt prövat av de engelska domstolarna. *[Det är knappast Assanges fel. --A.B.]*

Beslutet från Supreme Court innebär enbart att Assange ska överföras till Sverige för att höras i samband med förundersökningen. Det betyder inte att Assange kommer att ställas inför rätta, eller ens åtalas. Det är således fullt möjligt att han överförs till Sverige, förhörs och sedan släpps om de svenska myndigheterna bedömer att det inte finns tillräcklig grund för åtal. Vad vi däremot vet redan i dag är att Assange kommer att få en rättvis behandling av det svenska rättsväsendet. *[Ett uttryck för blind tro. --A.B.]*

Rättssäkerheten i Sverige är hög (även om det naturligtvis förekommer brister i enskilda fall, liksom i alla rättssystem). Det gäller även vid sexualbrott, där svenska Högsta domstolen så sent som för några år sedan tydligt underströk att samma höga beviskrav ska gälla vid misstankar om våldtäkt som vid andra brott. *[Hur har det varit i praktiken? Se Lambertz, Truel m. fl. --A.B.]*

De andra aspekterna av kritiken mot den svenska rättsordningen bygger till stor del på myter och missuppfattningar. Det svenska straffrättsliga regelverket *[regelverket är en sak, domstolsprocessen en annan --A.B.]* när det gäller sexualbrott avviker inte från de flesta andra. Jag döms inte för våldtäkt för att min kondom går sönder under en sexualakt. *[Jo då, om det är "avsikligt" så som Anna Ardin hävdar. --A.B.]* Däremot kan jag dömas för våldtäkt om jag har sex med en sovande eller medvetlös person, precis som i många andra länder *[och som inte gäller i detta fall --A.B.]*

De svenska domare som kan komma att döma om Assange ställs inför rätta kommer inte att ta order från några myndigheter, och kommer inte heller att låta sig påverkas av påtryckningar från annat håll. *[Hur kan Schultz veta det? --A.B.]* (Min uppfattning är att korruptionsgraden i den svenska domarkåren är extremt låg.) *[Att kunna påverkas är inte samma sak som att vara korrumpad. --A.B.]* Vi har politiskt utsedda lekmän som domare i domstolarna— vilket jag själv för övrigt är skeptisk emot— men dessa agerar inte som politiker i sin dömande befattning och de undersökningar som har gjorts tyder inte på att deras politiska uppfattningar påverkar mål. *[Det är inte huvudfarhågan, utan att de kan vara lätt påverkbara. --A.B.]*

Och— nej— Assange kommer inte att sättas på ett CIA-chartrat plan av den svenska polisen så snart han kommit hit. Sverige är nämligen en rättsstat. Julian Assange kan vara trygg i förvisningen om att hans sak kommer att ges en rättvis och neutral behandling av svenska myndigheter och domstolar. Förhoppningsvis är det också den bilden av svensk rättvisa som från och med nu kommer att förmedlas till omvärlden— i stället för den karikatyr som Assangesympatisörerna har spridit. *[Detta inlägg är en karikatyr. --A.B.]*

• MÅRTEN SCHULTZ, professor i civilrätt, Stockholms universitet

SvD: 8 juni 201

Visst har Assange fog för sin oro

I Sverige sker en slentrianmässig överanvändning av häktning med restriktioner, vilket fallet Julian Assange tydligt illustrerar. Behandlingen är både onödig, förnedrande och hindrar försvaret, skriver Assanges advokat Per E Samuelson.

Fallet Julian Assange har medfört intensiv internationell kritik av den svenska rättssäkerheten. Professorn i civilrätt, Mårten Schultz (Brännpunkt 31/5) går dock i god för att Sverige är en rättsstat. Vilken erfarenhet han har av vårt system med häktningar, restriktioner, rutiner för advokatbesök i häktena förtäljer inte historien. Schultz vet inte vad han talar om.

Det är på tiden att någon med erfarenhet från verkligheten slår näven i bordet och säger som det är: **Sverige är ingen rättsstat! I Sverige sker en slentrianmässig överanvändning av häktning med restriktioner. En användning som är onödig, förnedrande och berövar den misstänkte möjligheten att förbereda sitt försvar.**

Att börja en rättegång med att frihetsberöva och isolera den misstänkte från omvärlden är på sin plats när det gäller grov brottslighet och skuldfrågan är tydlig. Att behandla Anders Breivik i Norge och Anna Lindhs mördare Mijailovic så är självklart. Att låta de vara på fri fot före rättegången är stötande och otänkbart.

Men om saken handlar om vem som talar sanning av två jämbördiga, i samhället ytterst välanpassade, icke kriminella personer måste man ställa sig frågan varför en av parterna ska hållas häktad och isolerad före rättegången. Rättsaffären mot Assange hör dit.

Den inleddes i augusti 2010 då ett första polisförhör med Assange hölls. Han var då på fri fot. Åklagaren begärde i slutet på september 2010 att få hålla ytterligare ett polisförhör och insisterade nu på att det måste ske med Assange bakom lås och bom. Därför har hon begärt Julian Assange häktad, utfärdat en europeisk arresteringsorder och begärt honom överlämnad. **Stockholms tingsrätt och Svea hovrätt har gett henne rätt och häktat Julian Assange i sin frånvaro.**

Detta kan inte Julian Assange och omvärlden förstå. Varför kan inte även det andra polisförhøret genomföras med honom på fri fot? Assange är inte svensk. Han bor inte i Sverige. Han har hela världen som arbetsfält och behöver kunna resa fritt. Varför kan inte Sverige acceptera det och kalla honom till ett förhör utan att koppla det med krav på häktning och isolering. Han skulle komma till ett sådant förhör. Förhøret skulle genomföras. Han skulle åka igen. Om det blir rättegång skulle han komma tillbaka och genomföra den. Om Sverige hade handlagt fallet på det sättet hade saken varit utagerad för länge sedan.

Men man insisterar alltså på att den enda godtagbara är att Assange ska tvingas till Sverige. **Väl här ska han genast gripas av polis och föras till häktet. Till häktningsförhandlingen ska han sedan föras i handbojor och häktas. Därefter ska han förbli i häkte tills rättegången är över.**

Varför är Assange, omvärlden och jag— en av Assanges advokater— kritiska mot detta?

Det är för det första onödigt. Åklagaren kan återkalla arresteringsordern och häva häktningen varefter ett förhör i Sverige kan arrangeras mycket snabbt. Eller ordna förhör i England eller på den svenska ambassaden i London. Det är för det andra förnedrande. Varför ska man börja med att behandla Assange som skyldig? Här finns inget åtal, ingen rättegång, ingen fällande dom.

I en rättsstat låser man in skyldiga, inte oskyldiga. Genom att låsa in folk innan man vet om de är skyldiga blir effekten av den svenska överanvändningen av häktningar att massor av människor som är oskyldiga ändå har suttit inlåsta. Detta är orättvist, upprörande och stötande.

Man försvårar även Assanges möjligheter att förbereda sitt försvar. Isolerad i en cell får man vanligtvis bara ha kontakt med sin försvarare. **Under tiden kan åklagaren och målsägandena i lugn och ro tala med vittnen, diskutera och lägga upp strategier. Varför ska en av parterna berövas den möjligheten?**

Fallet Julian Assange illustrerar därmed väl skadeverkningarna av den svenska slentrianmässiga överanvändningen av häktning med restriktioner. Sverige har också fått kritik för denna överanvändning. **En kritik som inte kommer från Assange och hans anhängare utan från olika respekterade internationella aktörer. Detta ser inte professor Mårten Schultz och andra svenskar.** Av grumliga skäl är man förblindad.

Det är inte lätt att tänka utanför ramen. Man tar för givet att det man gör är rätt just för att man gör det. Många som jobbar inom rättsväsendet gör just detta tankefel. **Det handlar också om nationalism. Den internationella kritiken blir till ett angrepp på Sverige och då skyndar svenskarna till försvar.**

I utlandet skymms inte sikten av sådana ögonbindlar. Man har en betydligt mera restriktiv attityd mot att häkta folk. Och att isolera folk från omvärlden görs nästan aldrig. Ofta går folk fria mot borgen och kan därmed förbereda sitt försvar på ett med åklagaren jämbördigt sätt.

Så mitt råd till Sverige och svenskarna och Mårten Schultz är: Sluta gadda ihop er mot Assange, öppna ögonen och se verkligheten! Den behandling som det svenska rättsväsendet har förberett för Assange är onödig, förnedrande, pekar ut honom som skyldig i förväg och förhindrar honom att förbereda sitt försvar.

PER E SAMUELSON, en av Julian Assanges advokater

SvD: 8 juni 2012

En vrångbild av det svenska rättsväsendet

REPLIK | FALLET ASSANGE

Thomas Ahlstrand

På Brännpunkt 8/6 skriver advokaten Per E Samuelsson, som försvarare av Julian Assange, en artikel som innehåller en hel del felaktigheter, överdrifter och vrångbilder, dels om utredningen mot Assange, men dels också om Sverige som rättsstat. Bland annat skriver han att Sverige överanvänder häktning sinstitutet, att vi häktar oftare än andra, jämförbara länder. Det är nog inte sant. I vart fall kan jag inte se att han presterar siffror eller annat material. Det är heller inte sant att våra häktningstider är osedvanligt långa, de är tvärtom jämförelsevis mycket korta.

Det är inte heller sant att "åklagaren och målsägandena i lugn och ro talar med vittnen, kan diskutera och lägga upp strategier" medan den misstänkte sitter häktad. Det är kanske så advokat Samuelsson arbetar när han lägger upp försvar, men det är inte så åklagare och poliser driver förundersökning enligt rättegångsbalken.

Vad som däremot är sant är att vi håller de häktade i isolering mycket oftare och längre än många jämförbara länder. Det beror på— och det vet advokat Samuelsson förstås— att i Sverige är det vad som framförs i rättssalen som gäller, inte vad som sagts vid de förberedande förhören. I de flesta andra länder är det tvärtom; dom-stolarna räknar

med att en tilltalad har pratat sig samman med medmisstänkta och andra och tar inte sent påkomna berättelser på allvar.

Så skulle vi kunna ha det här också. Om vi till exempel införde ett system, där den misstänktes uppgifter kunde låsas på ett tidigt stadium under en brottsutredning, innan han eller hon fick möjlighet att anpassa sina uppgifter till den bevisning som polisen kan ta fram, och sedan inte var tillåten att vare sig ändra eller ta tillbaka eller fylla ut sin berättelse, till exempel i ett förklaringsförhör inför en domare och med försvarare närvarande, skulle isoleringen av de häktade kunna hävas, och många av dem som i dag är häktade skulle kunna avvakta sina rättegångar på fri fot.

Och det skulle vara mycket bättre än nuvarande system, bättre för de misstänkta, bättre för rättssäkerheten, bättre för rättstryggheten, bättre för statsfinanserna, och bra mycket bekvämare för åklagare och polis som skulle slippa bördan och besväret med att ha misstänkta i häkte. De som skulle förlora vore ett visst slag av organiserade brottslingar som sätter i system att inte säga något förrän i domstol, och deras advokater. Fast det gjorde kanske inte så mycket.

THOMAS AHLSTRAND, vice chefsåklagare, internationella åklagarkammaren i Göteborg

Det finns problem med Sveriges rättsväsen— Göteborg 2001 och Assange

Anders S.

<http://blog.zaramis.se/>

2012-06-08

I Svenska Dagbladet pekar försvarsadvokaten Per E Samuelsson på det som är det värsta problemet med svenskt rättsväsen. De långa och ofta helt obefogade häktningstiderna. **Efter kravallerna i Göteborg 2001 hölls unga personer häktade i månader utan rättegång. Några blev sen frikända. Det gällde bland annat några tyskar. Den tyska staten såg till att de kom bort från Sverige snabbt. Andra misstänkta tyskar vägrade Tyskland utlämna till Sverige då man inte betraktade det svenska rättssystemet som rättvist, rättssäkert och människovärdigt. Man ansåg att de misstänkta inte skulle kunna få en rättvis rättegång i Sverige.** Då handlade det precis om i nuvarande fall med Julian Assange om brott där det finns politiska komplikationer.

En del andra blev dömda till långa fängelsestraff men kriminalvården tycket de kunde åka utomlands i väntan på plats i fängelse som de senare också avtjänade. **Häktningarna var följaktligen helt onödiga ur rymningssynpunkt och utredningssynpunkt.** De syftade endast till att psykiskt tortera unga människor.

Den kritik av det svenska rättsväsendet som idag förs fram av Julian Assange och advokater som arbetat med hans fall samt många andra är ingen ny kritik. Det är är välkänd kritik som framförts av andra länders rättsväsen och statliga ämbetsmän långt tidigare. Det finns alltså fog för att tro att rättsprocessen mot Julian Assange inte kommer att gå rätt till. Bevis finns i form av **Göteborgsrättegångarna. Förutom de**

extrema häktningstiderna dömdes folk utan att bevis fanns, på ren hörsägen och på motstridiga vittnesmål. Rätten bortsåg i flera fall helt enkelt från alla vittnesmål som talade för den åtalades oskuld. Man bortsåg från att olika poliser berättade olika historier, sa emot sig själva och varandra.

De personer som Tyskland vägrade utlämna fick sina rättegångar genomförda i Tyskland istället. Där underkändes polisvittnesmål som lett till fleråriga straff i Sverige och istället frikändes åtalade eller så fick de relevanta straff. I Sverige utdömdes nämligen mycket hårdare straff än normalt för de brott som det handlade om. Så inte i Tyskland. Tyskland lyckades den gången stoppa utlämning till Sverige. Åtalade från Nederländerna och Storbritannien försökte också förhindra utlämning men misslyckades. Det handlade i samtliga fall om personer där åtalsbeslut redan fanns.

I fallet Julian Assange finns inget beslut om åtal. Åklagaren vill bara höra honom. Något som mycket väl kan ske med Julians Assange i frihet. Han kan kallas till förhör i Sverige, han kan förhöras i Storbritannien. Som Per E Samuelsson skriver:

Den inleddes i augusti 2010 då ett första polisförhör med Assange hölls. Han var då på fri fot. Åklagaren begärde i slutet på september 2010 att få hålla ytterligare ett polisförhör och insisterade nu på att det måste ske med Assange bakom lås och bom. Därför har hon begärt Julian Assange häktad, utfärdat en europeisk arresteringsorder och begärt honom överlämnad. Stockholms tingsrätt och Svea hovrätt har gett henne rätt och häktat Julian Assange i sin frånvaro.

Detta kan inte Julian Assange och omvärlden förstå. Varför kan inte även det andra polisförhöret genomföras med honom på fri fot? Assange är inte svensk. Han bor inte i Sverige. Han har hela världen som arbetsfält och behöver kunna resa fritt. Varför kan inte Sverige acceptera det och kalla honom till ett förhör utan att koppla det med krav på häktning och isolering. Han skulle komma till ett sådant förhör. Förhöret skulle genomföras. Han skulle åka igen. Om det blir rättegång skulle han komma tillbaka och genomföra den. Om Sverige hade handlagt fallet på det sättet hade saken varit utagerad för länge sedan.

Hade man gjort så hade förhöret sen länge varit avklarat, Julian Assange antingen åtalad eller fallet nedlagt. Det hade varit bättre för alla. Jag tror visserligen inte Assange riskerar utlämning till USA, men i övrigt har fallet hanterats mycket konstigt och sannolikt beror den underliga hanteringen på att fallet har politisk betydelse (på många olika sätt). Svenskt rättsväsen har aldrig kunnat hantera den typen av fall på ett bra och korrekt sätt. Det såg vi tydligt efter Göteborg 2001. **Den bild som Per E Samuelsson ger är absolut ingen nubb eller vrånbild av svenskt rättsväsen utan det är så det fungerar som åklagaren Thomas Ahlstrand skriver.**

Ahlstrand var dessutom en av de åklagare som agerade värst under rättegångarna efter Göteborg 2001 och han har ingen som helst trovärdighet när det gäller frågor om rättssäkerhet. Han genomförde i samband med rättegångarna efter Göteborg 2001 möten i förväg med andra åklagare och med domare där man bestämde hur straffen skulle bli, där man bestämde att man skulle döma hårdare i alla fall som handlade om Göteborg 2001 än vad som var normalt för den typen av brott.

Det svenska rättssystemet har en del problem med rättssäkerheten. Långa häktningstider är ett. Politiskt styrda rättegångar ett annat, där sättet som domare utses

på spelar roll. Många jurister, åklagare och domare vill försämra systemet ytterligare (Mårten Schultz som tycker att Assange inget har att frukta är en av dem)

<http://blog.zaramis.se/2012/06/09/det-finns-problem-med-sveriges-rattsvasen/>

SvD: 11 juni 2012

Inga nyanser i kritiken mot rättsväsendet

Advokat Samuelson tecknar en deprimerande bild, men den är knappast rättvisande.

Slutreplik: Mårten Schultz

Sverige är inte en rättsstat! Det kategoriska uttalandet— komplett med utropstecken— görs av Julian Assanges försvarsadvokat Per E Samuelson (Brännpunkt 8 juni). Det är inte förvånande. Det är det Samuelson får betalt för, att ta fram de argument som kan tala till uppdragsgivarens fördel.

Det Samuelson skriver är dessutom helt i linje med vad Assanges stora team av jurister och pr-konsulter hävdade länge. Samtidigt är det deprimerande. Samuelson hävdar nämligen inte bara att det finns brister i svensk rätt. En sådan kritik kan ha relevans. **För visst finns det brister.** Jag ägnade själv sju kolumner i rad i Dagens Nyheter nyligen åt att framhålla sådana brister. I denna diskussion, liksom de flesta samtal om rättsstatens principer, var Samuelson frånvarande. Måhända är det principiella engagemanget begränsat till den enskilda klientens intresse. [???

Samuelson går i vart fall längre än att framhålla problem i rättsstaten Sverige. Han menar i stället, i likhet med **sina anonyma meningsfränder på Flashback [???**, att Sverige över huvud taget inte är en rättsstat. Enligt advokaten lever vi svenskar i en juridisk bananrepublik.

De påstådda brister för systemet i stort som Samuelson fokuserar på i sin artikel, hur svensk rätt använder häktningssystemet, har i sak bemötts av Thomas Ahlstrand. När det gäller det enskilda fallet framstår dock kritiken som skäligen ointressant. Assange har ännu inte varit föremål för något långt frihetsberövande i Sverige. Han har ju inte varit här. Det är ett märkligt fokus Samuelson anlägger och det har i vart fall ingen direkt kontakt med den artikel som jag skrivit och som han ger intryck av att vilja bemöta.

De myter och fördomar om det svenska rättsväsendet som jag tog upp i min artikel rörde innebörden i den svenska sexualstraffrätten, den påstådda politiseringen och den ofta framförda tanken på att rättsordningen är en marionett styrd av USA [*framford av vem? --A.B.*]. Foliehattarnas och konspirationsteoretikernas argument alltså. Förutom dessa argument kan mer seriösa läggas, till exempel kritiken mot politiker som domare eller långa handläggningstider.

Samuelson säger att jag inte vet vad jag pratar om. Jag tror att jag gör det. Jag har ägnat mer än tio års tid åt att offentligt försöka nysta upp den svenska rättsordningens brister

och förtjänster, i rättssystemets alla kanter och vrår. Den sammantagna bilden är enligt mig helt självklar: **Den svenska rättsstaten har brister och producerar ibland direkt felaktiga resultat, men i det stora hela är den robust.**

Samuelson kommer till motsatt slutsats. Rättsordningen är i hans värld i grunden korrupt. [*Skrev han det? --A.B.*] Advokaten tecknar en deprimerande bild, men den är knappast rättvisande.

Det som skiljer konspirationsteorierna från seriös kritik av ett rättssystem är, förutom frekvensen av utropstecken, framför allt nyanserna. Hos Samuelson finns inga nyanser. Han har pekat på ett (1) problem, som saknar beröringspunkter med det inlägg han polemiserar emot, och utifrån detta enda problem skåpar han ut hela rättssystemet.

I uppdelningen mellan det konspiratoriska och det seriösa hamnar Samuelson knappast på den seriösa sidan. Men han blir säkert populär bland de anonyma kommentatorerna på Flashback.

MÅRTEN SCHULTZ, professor i civilrätt, Stockholms universitet

"Hörsägen som stödbevisning i sexualbrottmål accepteras inte i många andra rättssystem"

*Björn Hurtig och Johann Binninge (ordförande i Rättssäkerhetsorganisationen)
Dagens Juridik
2012-06-11*

Professorn och läraren i civilrätt, Mårten Schultz uttalade sig den 30 maj 2012 i en debattartikel på SvD Brännpunkt om hur juristkollegor i utlandet har fått en nidbild av det svenska rättssystemet på grund av hanteringen av Julian Assange. Han kan ha rätt. Vi vet ju inte vilka jurister Mårten Schultz har mött och vilka frågor som har ställts till honom.

Problemet är bara att, samtidigt som Mårten Schultz klagar över att en karikatyr av den svenska rättssäkerheten framträder, så missar han helt den berättigade kritik som då och då riktas från utlandet mot det svenska rättssystemets hantering av Julian Assange.

Mårten Schultz försvarar det svenska regelverket rörande sexualbrottmål och menar att det är liknande många andra länders. Må vara att det kan finnas liknelser i regelverken, men **det ändrar inte det faktum att i Sverige döms många män för sexualbrott trots en svag bevisning.**

Detta återspeglas i — att inte i några andra brottmål — tar Högsta Domstolen emot så många resningsansökningar som i sexualbrottmål. **Stödbevisningen, som åberopas och som kan leda till fällande dom, kan bestå av ett eller flera andrahandsvittnen. Denna sorts bevis är ofta inte annat än hörsägen och i många andra rättssystem accepteras inte sådan bevisning. De flesta vet dessutom numera att den förre justitiekanslern Göran Lambertz sammanställning "Felaktigt dömda" från 2006 redovisade elva resningsärenden där bristande rättssäkerhet lett till fällande domar.**

Av dessa elva fall var sju sexualbrottsrelaterade.

Vi som i vårt dagliga värv arbetar för den tilltalades rätt mot staten, ser förtvivlan hos många anklagade som undrar hur de ska kunna bevisa sin oskuld i sexualbrottmålen. Givetvis ska det inte åläggas den tilltalade att göra detta. Det är åklagarens uppgift att bevisa skuld; detta är själva grundbulten i begreppet rättssäkerhet. **Att vi har ett rättssäkerhetsbekymmer i sexualbrottmålen har länge varit vida känt i våra kretsar. Detta bekymmer kallar Mårten Schultz för en myt.**

Mårten Schultz uppfattning är att omvärldens intryck av svensk rätt präglas av de uppgifter som Assanges sympatisörer velat förmedla. Mårten Schultz påtalar att det är en självklarhet att det är olagligt att förgripa sig på en sovande eller medvetslös person. Ett sådant påpekande är att slå in öppna dörrar, eftersom alla vet att det stämmer.

Men ingenting här i världen är svart eller vitt. Det mesta är grått. Så tänk om det som påstås om Julian Assange är fel. Har det svenska rättssystemet fungerat då? Har Julian Assange då gjort fel som tagit strid mot att utlämnas till Sverige? Eller har han bara utnyttjat sin mänskliga rättighet att försvara sig fullt ut mot de anklagelser som han bestrider? **Med vilken rätt sätter sig vissa människor till doms över Julian Assange för att han tillvaratar sin rätt att försvara sig?**

Denna syn som förmedlas av Julian Assanges sympatisörer är inte heller helt gripen ur luften. Om Mårten Schultz och andra tar sig tiden att studera vad som framkommer om fallet i utländsk media, liksom på internet, kan de se att **fallet vilar på en ytterst bräcklig grund.**

Mårten Schultz säger sig vara säker på att Julian Assange kan vara lugn över den utlämning som nu är förestående— vi har inget rättssäkerhetsproblem; Julian Assange bör ge målsägandena rätt att få sin sak prövad; Sverige kommer inte att utlämna honom till USA. Däremot verkar Julian Assanges egen rätt mot staten Sverige vara helt ointressant i Mårtens Schultz resonemang.

Det är korrekt att Storbritannien svårligen kan stå emot en utlämning av Julian Assange. Denna lär med all säkerhet utföras enligt den överenskommelse som EU:s medlemsstater har slutit med varandra. Men den europeiska arresteringsordern används normalt sparsamt och vanligen inte i fall som detta; betänk att Julian Assange är häktad på sannolika skäl misstänkt för våldtäkt av den lindrigaste graden samt ofredande. Betänk vidare att Julian Assange begärdes häktad främst för att man ville hålla ett förhör med honom, vilket borde ha kunnat genomföras under den långa tid som processen har pågått.

Och hur ofta tror Mårten Schultz att man brukar utfärda en Europeisk arresteringsorder för denna typ av påstådd brottslighet? Vidare— hur tror Mårten Schultz att man utfärdar en så kallad Red Alert vid dylika brottspåståenden? Det kanske kan vara värt att tänka på när man uttalar sig om hur det svenska rättssystemet framstår utomlands.

<http://www.dagensjuridik.se/2012/06/horsagen-som-stodbevisning-i-sexualbrottmal-accepteras-inte-i-manga-andra-rattssystem>

”Allt annat hade varit fruktansvärt”

Wikileaks grundare Julian Assange kommer sannolikt att överlämnas till Sverige, meddelade brittiska Högsta domstolen på onsdagen. Kvinnornas advokat Claes Borgström är positiv till beskedet, men tycker det är under all kritik att det dröjt så länge.

Brittiska Supreme Court beslutade på onsdagen— dock i oenighet— att Julian Assange ska överlämnas till Sverige. Bakgrunden är misstanke om en våldtäkt, två fall av sexuellt ofredande och ett fall av olaga tvång av två kvinnor.

Kvinnornas advokat Claes Borgström tycker att beskedet var väntat:

– Jag har haft som utgångspunkt att Assange ska överlämnas. Det regelverk det handlar om är ganska enkelt; Europeiska arresteringsorden är inte så väldigt komplicerad. Och han var häktad på sannolika skäl.

Claes Borgström uttrycker dock kritik över att brittiska Högsta domstolen, samt tidigare instanser, tagit så lång tid på sig. Nära ett och ett halvt år gått sedan svenska åklagaren Marianne Ny utfärdade en europeisk arresteringsorder för att få Assange överlämnad från Storbritannien till Sverige.

– Jag har svårt att förstå att man dröjt så länge, man fick det på sitt bord hösten 2010. Det har i och för sig gått genom alla instanser, men det har tagit tid ändå.

– Jag känner mig starkt kritiskt till det, det har haft en fullständigt onödig påverkan på mina klienter.

Då beslutet granskats och det stod klart att fallet kan komma att öppnas igen inom två veckor, konstaterade Borgström för TT att han befarar att det kommer att bli ytterligare fördröjningar. Detta eftersom Assanges advokat Dinah Rose lyckades få igenom en invändning om en punkt i domen som hon inte hade haft möjlighet att bestrida under förhandlingen.

Claes Borgström säger att han inte vågar tro på ett åtalsbeslut före midsommar, men menar att det är viktigt att Julian Assange får en rättslig prövning i Sverige.

– Nu kommer han att överföras hit. Därefter väntar häktningsförhandling i Stockholms tingsrätt. Polis och åklagare ska hålla förhör.

Claes Borgström har inte hunnit tala med de två kvinnor han företräder, men han tror att de är lättade.

– Även om det är en stark påfrestan med en rättegång så har de en önskan om att **han ska ställas till svars för det han gjort**. Allt annat hade varit fruktansvärt.

Webb-tv: Se intervju med Borgström

Assanges supportrar nonchalerar kvinnors rätt till frihet

Gudrun Schyman
Newsmill
2012-05-30

Brittiska HD har beslutat att Wikileaksgrundaren Assange ska överlämnas till Sverige. Han ska förhöras om sina sexuella aktiviteter vid ett besök i Sverige under augusti 2010. Han har anmälts för olaga tvång, sexuellt ofredande och våldtäkt. Orimligt lång tid har förflutit sedan anmälan gjordes, vilket naturligtvis kommer att försvåra utredningen, men beslutet om överlämning är glädjande. Inte för att detta i sig säger något om utgången men för att misstanke om lagöverträdelse alltid ska motivera en utredning.

I det här fallet har inte bara meningar om en utredning överhuvudtaget är motiverad gått isär. Det har också funnits de som från början varit fast och fullt övertygade om att handlingarna inte är olagliga, som menar att detta är en komplott där de anmälade kvinnorna utnyttjats i ett makabert politiskt spel på hög nivå, allt för att stoppa den viktiga verksamhet som Assange byggt upp.

Jag skriver gärna under på att Julian Assange, tillsammans med sina medhjälpare, har gjort ett fantastiskt pionjärbete med konstruktionen av Wikileaks. Men nu handlar det om något annat. Föreställningen om att ett ja aldrig kan övergå i ett nej, "har man gett sig in i leken får man leken tåla", föreställningar om mannens sexualitet som en naturkraft omöjlig att reglera samtidigt som kvinnans egen sexualitet ses som obefintlig. Hon är mottagare. Män är "på" och kvinnor är passiva. Idén om att ett Nej i själva verket betyder Ja. [*Visst. Men allt dett är ovidkommande i detta sammanhang. --A.B.*]

Frågan gäller sex och det faktum att sex utan samtycke är inte sex, enligt svensk lagstiftning. Det är övergrepp. Det är en majoritetsuppfattning i Sveriges riksdag och därför har vi en lag som kriminaliserar övergrepp. Att den västerländska, till stora delar manliga, intellektuella eliten har patriarkala föreställningar på området sexualitet borde kanske inte förvåna. Inte heller är det förvånande att det i kommentarsfältet här på Newsmill går att läsa att "Tre kvinnliga åklagare har varit inblandade, först jouråklagaren (agerade själv utan att de två kvinnorna begärt det), sedan (över?) åklagaren (lade ned) för att slutligen återupptagas av det feministiska utvecklingsträsket i Göteborg".

Fler än jag kommer kanske ihåg den tumult som uppstod i och med anklagelserna kring den fransman som går under benämningen DSK? Också där haglade de politiska och konspiratoriska förklaringarna länge. Det är väl egentligen först sedan ett antal nya "sexskandaler" på hemmaplan uppdragats som flera börjat dra öronen åt sig.

Själv menar DSK att han inte förstått att det handlade om prostituerade. Eller var det Berlusconi som sa det? Män i tunga maktpositioner som inte förstår att tolka sin mest omedelbara närhet verkar mer än lovligt riskfyllt. Nu hade inte Assange riktigt den makten, den som vilar på ett förtroende, dvs. att man blivit vald, men också i Assanges fall handlade det om makt. Mediamakt. Och förtroende, från lojala medarbetare och samarbetspartners. [*Hon glömde dra in Roman Polanski och Caligula. ---A.B.*]

Fortfarande finns det trogna supportrar. "Free Assange" kunde man se på bilder från rättegångstillfällena i England. Flera tillhör den progressiva, vanligtvis civilisationskritiska, eliten. Enligt konspirationsteorierna är yttrandefriheten hotad. När den

svenska åklagarmyndigheten agerar, må så vara att det begåtts klandrigheter i processen, gäller anklagelserna olaga tvång, sexuellt ofredande och våldtäkt. Det handlar inte om yttrandefrihet. Det handlar om kvinnors rätt till frihet från våld. [Både kvinnor har sagt att Assange aldrig varit våldsam. --A.B.]

Kommentarer (urval)

NU ÄR DU VERKLIGEN UTE OCH CYKLAR GUDRUN. 1. Ingen har påstått vad jag vet att denne har blivit utsatt för våld. Frågan gäller istället kondomvändning eller avsaknaden av densamma. Är det våld? 2. Assange ska till Sverige för förhör. Ingenting annat. Huruvida åtal kommer att väckas är en minst sagt en öppen fråga. De flesta tror nog att han får gå efter förhören. En del pessimister tror att han kan utlämnas till USA. De jämför med egyptierna för några år sedan. Men jag tror att det blir svårare att agera när världens ögon är riktade emot Sverige.

— *Arvid Andersson*

Gudrun; Vad hände med var människas rätt att anses vara oskyldig tills motsatsen är bevisad? Assange har än så länge inte fått säga sitt ändå behandlar alla honom som redan fälld. Det är allt annat än rättssäkert, han kommer aldrig att få rättvis rättegång och det är pga att åklagaren sett till så att de blivit en cirkus istället för en förundersökning. Det är inte kvinnors rätt till frihet som attackerats utan män och kvinnors grundläggande skydd emot rättsövergrepp och att vara oskyldiga tills motsatsen är bevisad.

— *Laban Andersson*

Anledningen till att utländska vänsterprofiler engagerat sig för Assange är nog inte att de anser att män har rätt att våldta utan att de ifrågasätter hur fallet har hanterats. Och det finns väl ingen som tycker att det har skötts bra oavsett hur man ställer sig i skuldfrågan?

— *Ulf Carlson*

Om människor ska vara fria måste de också ta ansvar över sig själva. Om man som Gudrun tycker att en kvinna har rätt att gå till polisen när hennes tillfälliga kontakt inte var den drömprins som hon ville, så blir också samhället en förälder och friheten försvinner. Det finns ett grundläggande problem för feministerna, och det är när de vill ta bort allt ansvar från kvinnan så blir de aldrig fria.

— *Per Nydahl*

Nu vet jag sedan tidigare hur Gudrun Schyman felaktigt och faktafritt vinklar sina artiklar, så inget förvånar mig i denna artikeln. Men det finns allt vissa krav på anständighet och sanningshalt även om man representerar en redan från början fantasibetonad politisk inriktning.

I detta fallet är artikelnförfattaren ute efter att stärka sin agenda i ärendet och just i det här fallet rimmor agendan väldigt dåligt med verkligheten. Enligt de uppgifter som läckt ut från utredningen, är det faktiskt flickornas berättelser än så länge, som visar att sanningshalten hos dem är tveksam och att deras anmälan har mer med hämndbegär än verklighet att göra (se A.A:s bloggkonversation samt tidigare uttalanden i sk dumpningar). Att ifrågavarande dam dessutom har en tillhörighet i Broderskapsrörelsen gör inte saken mindre pikant. Man förbluffas av dubbelmoralen, som åskådliggörs i just detta fall.... Våld har det överhuvudtaget inte handlat om.

— *Kristian Grönqvist*

Det är Assange som är offret. Han är oskyldig men det finns ingen person på jorden som har namnet sitt starkare knytet till ordet "rape" på google.

Inget fysiskvåld eller hot om våld har förekommit det är ALLA eniga om. Kvinnorna har inte sagt klart nej till samlag. Kvinnorna har inte gjort något för att förhindra samlag. Ligger man frivilligt naken i en säng med en man som man möt tidigare på kvällen så är det en indikation på att man är intresserad av samlag. Ingen av kvinnorna har sagt åt honom att lämna lägenheten genast.

Ingen av kvinnorna har haft dödsångest

Att ha sex utan kondom är ingen våldtäkt. Kvinnorna ville ju egentligen bara att han skulle HIV testa sig. Det var polisen och åklagare som valde att driva detta till sin spets då man vet att staten är livrädd för denna hjälte.

— PerKQ

Julian Assange är, förefaller det, en helt vanlig och typisk kille som entusiastiskt tar för sig när tillfälle bjuds. Likt en blivande häradsbetäckare spiller han glatt sin säd i minsta skrymsle och vrå. Om detta kan man tycka mycket. Men det är inte brottsligt. Ännu.

De olika turerna i det brittiska rättsväsendet har alla rört formalia på en mycket hög nivå. Sista ordet har ännu inte sagts, men det framstår likväl som sannolikt att Julian Assange åter trampar svensk mark innan sommaren är över. Det återstår att se om åklagaren väljer att väcka åtal, och— i sådant fall— vad rätten kommer fram till. Vad man kan förstå blir det dock inte lätt för åklagaren att i huvudförhandlingen styrka det eventuella åtalet. Bevisläget framstår som besvärande tunt.

Gudrun Schyman för en i och för sig angelägen kamp mot det manliga våld som riktas mot tjejer. Trots det har jag svårt för att ta henne riktigt på allvar. För hennes engagemang är selektivt. Gudrun har, av okända skäl, aldrig något att säga om alla de tjejer som lika regelbundet som svärförklarligt trillar ned från balkonger eller drabbas av akut stål- eller blyförgiftning. Hon är väl egentligen en fossil som man artigt kan lyssna till, och därefter fnissa lite diskret.

— Hedda Sandström

Utlämningen av Assange hotar rättssäkerheten i EU

Docent i praktisk filosofi: Sverige tycks vinna matchen om utlämning av Assange. Men oavsett vad man menar om Assange-fallet blir det en tvivelaktig seger ur de mänskliga och medborgerliga rättigheternas synvinkel.

Roger Fjellström

Newsmill

2012-05-30

Med fem röster mot två avvisar brittiska Högsta domstolen Julian Assanges begäran att den europeiska arresteringsorder (EAW) som svensk åklagare utfärdat inte skulle verkställas. Även de som tycker det är rätt åt Assange borde ändå ta sig en tankställare.

Till att börja med är saken ännu inte klar. I svenska media rapporteras utslaget som att Assange nu utlämnas. Det är en sanning med modifikation, för domstolen gav Assange advokat Dinah Rose två veckor att inkomma med synpunkter som skulle kunna

innebära att fallet omprövas. Domarnas majoritet hänvisar nämligen till en tolkning av Vienna Convention on the Interpretation of Treaties (i kraft 1980) gällande avtal mellan stater, vilken aldrig togs upp under förhandlingarna i februari och som försvaret därför inte har haft möjlighet att bemöta. En kommentator på rättsfrågor, Joshua Rozenberg, sa idag till BBC News att "it's not happened since this court was set up. It happened in the Pinochet case in the House of Lords. Very unusual, and means there's everything left to play for still."

Åtgärden kan bero på att kärnfrågan rymmer sprängstoff, vilket avspeglas redan i det faktum att HD satte in alla sina sju domare. Kärnfrågan är nämligen rättssäkerheten och därmed själva värdegrunden i det nya Europa, speglad i villkoren för att en EAW ska kunna utfärdas. **Dinah Rose, expert på mänskliga rättighetsfrågor, argumenterade utifrån närläsning av utlämningsakten 2003, vilken infogats i brittisk lag, samt 1957 års europeiska konvention om utlämning.** Utlämningsakten stadgar att en EAW ska vara proportionerlig och utfärdad av kompetent "rättsskipande myndighet" ["judicial authority"]. Rose poäng är att båda sakerna förutsätter en opartisk instans och det kravet uppfylls inte av åklagare i mål. Den svenska åklagarens ombud, Clare Montgomery, menade att det ändå stod klart vid skapandet av EAW att både domare och åklagare skulle kunna utfärda arresteringsorder.

Högsta domstolens domare är oeniga i kärnfrågan. Majoriteten menar att tolkningen av "judicial authority" torde inrymma att åklagare kan vara en sådan. Man hänvisar till att motsvarande franska uttryck, "autorité judiciaire", innefattar allmän åklagare. Man hänvisar också till praktiken, att åklagare i många länder tillåtits utfärda EAW. Och eftersom det finns behov av europeisk enhetlighet i tillämpning av regelverket för EAW måste Storbritannien anpassa sig till nämnda förhållanden, anser man. **Hur det då går för bedömningen av proportionalitet i åtgärden sägs inte.**

Minoriteten pekar på att det brittiska parlamentet när det antog utlämningsakten förstod "judicial authority" på ett snävare men gängse brittiskt sätt, vilket utesluter åklagare. Naturligt nog, för en vidare tolkning var inte explicit i utlämningsakten. Man tänkte därför inte att en uttrycklig inskränkning skulle behövas. **Från ministerhåll försäkrades också upprepade gånger att myndigheten ifråga fortsatt skulle vara domare.**

Bilden som framträder är alltså att det brittiska parlamentet antog reglementet om EAW på felaktig grund, till detta misslett av ansvariga ministrar; om parlamentet hade varit rätt informerat skulle det sannolikt aldrig ha antagits. **Högsta domstolens majoritet blundar för detta förhållande — i EU-anpassningens namn.**

Även EU-vänner borde finna detta upprörande. Men den stora frågan är om Högsta domstolens majoritet har rätt i sak, formalia och hittillsvarande praxis åsido, att en part i en rättssak, en åklagare, ska kunna utfärda en EAW. Sverige tycks vinna matchen om utlämning av Assange. Men oavsett vad man menar om Assange-fallet blir det en tvivelaktig seger ur de mänskliga och medborgerliga rättigheternas synvinkel.

Den oklarhet som hittills rätt har inte lösts auktoritativt. Brittiska Högsta domstolens ställningstagande kommer emellertid nära. Står det fast och blir vedertaget så prejudiceras att en person kan tvingas till ett annat land enbart för att förhöras, utan att åtal föreligger, på misstankar som en åklagare finner värda papperskorgen och en annan finner sannolika (trots att "föreliggande beslutsunderlag är otillräckligt")— förhör som

kunnat skötas per storbildsskärm. Lägg till detta att misstankarna kan gälla handlingar som arresterande men inte utlämnande land håller för brottsliga. **Det skulle betyda att vi hädanefter bara kommer att kunna titta på när åklagare från Sverige, Italien, Polen, Rumänien, Grekland, Ungern... fritt och på dolt politiska grunder jagar upp människor tvärs över Europa!**

- Roger Fjellström är författare och docent i praktisk filosofi.

<http://www.newsmill.se/artikel/2012/05/30/utl-mningen-av-assange-hotar-r-ttskerheten-i-eu>

“We are not interested in Assange”: US envoy

AFP/The Local (Stockholm)
31 May 2012

The US ambassador to Australia has dismissed suggestions Washington wants WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange extradited to America, as his mother on Thursday accused Canberra of failing to help her son.

Britain's Supreme Court ruled Wednesday that Assange, an Australian national, can be extradited to Sweden, although his deportation was put on hold to give his lawyers a final chance to reopen the case.

Assange is wanted by Stockholm over sex crime allegations but he fears being sent to Sweden could pave the way for extradition to the US on possible espionage or conspiracy charges.

But the US ambassador to Australia, Jeffrey Bleich, said there was no plan to seek his extradition from Sweden. "It's not something that the US cares about. It's not interested in it," he told state broadcaster ABC in comments aired Thursday.

"And frankly if he is in Sweden then there is a less robust extradition relationship than there is between the US and the UK. So I think it's one of those narratives that has been made up. There is nothing to it."

Close US ally Australia has come under pressure from Assange's supporters to provide him with more support after Prime Minister Julia Gillard previously slammed WikiLeaks as "grossly irresponsible".

His mother claimed Canberra had done the bare minimum. "(They have been) absolutely useless, in fact contrary to help, they've done everything they can to smear Julian and hand him up to the US," she told the ABC from London after jetting out this week for the court verdict.

Foreign Minister Bob Carr rejected the criticism, saying Assange was receiving regular visits from Australian consular staff. "He gets the full Australian consulate support

available to any Australian caught up in the legal processes of another country," he said, adding that Australia's hands were tied. "We can't interfere with the legal processes of another country," Carr said.

The former computer hacker has been fighting deportation since his arrest in London in December 2010 on the European arrest warrant issued by Sweden. The 40-year-old does not deny having sex with two WikiLeaks volunteers in Sweden while attending a seminar, but insists it was consensual and argues there are political motives behind the attempts to extradite him.

Britain's Supreme Court is his final avenue of appeal under British law, after two lower courts ruled he should be sent to Sweden for questioning. The court ruled on Wednesday that Assange can be extradited, but put his deportation on hold to give his lawyers a final 14 days to reopen the case.

[Note: Amb. Bleich is either very ignorant, very stupid or, most likely, confirms the wisdom of Claude Cockburn's dictum: "Never believe anything until it is officially denied." --A.B.]

WikiLeaks statement regarding Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Bob Carr.

Here is the full text:

"Bob Carr hopes to manipulate the Australian public. In the last 12 months the Australian government has provided no legal, financial or logistical assistance or advice to Mr. Assange, whatsoever. There is a reason that Bob Carr will not explain what he means by "consular assistance". In the last year it has meant sending DFAT minders to Assange's hearings the minders do not communicate their observations to Mr. Assange or his legal team. They do not even say hello. Their job is to provide the Minister of Foreign Affairs with a heads up, so he can better spin to the Australian public. Similarly, according to the SMH, when DFAT asked Washington for info on US extradition plans, it was only within the explicitly stated context of knowing prior to the media. Not knowing in time to assist Mr. Assange or with a view to assist Mr. Assange. But knowing with a view on how to manipulate the Australian public."

WikiLeaks Press

2012-05-31

<http://thisdayinwikileaks.blogspot.se>

Julian Assange and America's vendetta against WikiLeaks

As the contrast with the extradition case of Augusto Pinochet shows, it's one law for whistleblowers, another for war criminals

Amy Goodman

The Guardian

31 May 2012

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange's protracted effort to fight extradition to Sweden suffered a body blow this week. Britain's supreme court upheld the arrest warrant, issued in December 2010.

After the court announced its split 5-2 decision, the justices surprised many legal observers by granting Assange's lawyers an opportunity to challenge their decision—the first such reconsideration since the high-profile British extradition case from more than a decade ago against former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet. The decision came almost two years to the day after Private Bradley Manning was arrested in Iraq for allegedly leaking hundreds of thousands of classified US government documents to WikiLeaks.

The cases remind us that all too often whistleblowers suffer, while war criminals walk.

Assange has not been charged with any crime, yet he has been under house arrest in England for close to two years, ever since a European arrest warrant was issued by Sweden (importantly, by a prosecutor, not by a judge). Hoping to question Assange, the prosecutor issued the warrant for suspicion of rape, unlawful coercion and sexual molestation. Assange offered to meet the Swedish authorities in their embassy in London, or in Scotland Yard, but was refused.

Assange and his supporters allege that the warrant is part of an attempt by the US government to imprison him, or even execute him, and to shut down WikiLeaks. In April 2010, WikiLeaks released a US military video under the title *Collateral Murder*, with graphic images showing an Apache helicopter unit killing at least 12 Iraqi civilians, including a Reuters cameraman and his driver. In July 2010, WikiLeaks released the Afghan war diary, tens of thousands of secret US military communications that laid out the official record of the violent occupation of Afghanistan, the scale of civilian deaths and likely war crimes. The Swedish arrest warrant followed just weeks later.

So many public figures have called for Assange's assassination that a website was created to catalogue the threats. Former Arkansas governor, presidential candidate and Fox News commentator Mike Huckabee said that, for Assange, "anything less than execution is too kind a penalty". Prominent conservative Bill Kristol asked: "Why can't we use our various assets to harass, snatch or neutralize Julian Assange and his collaborators, wherever they are?"

Death threats from rightwing ideologues are one thing. The main concern with an extradition to Sweden is that Assange will then be extradited to the United States. In another prominent document released by WikiLeaks, called the Global Intelligence Files, a portion of up to 5 million emails were released from a private, global intelligence firm called Stratfor, based in Austin, Texas. The firm's vice president for intelligence, Fred Burton, wrote in a 26 January 2011 email: "Not for Pub— We have a sealed indictment on Assange. Pls protect."

If an indictment has been issued in secret, then Assange could find himself in US custody shortly after landing in Sweden. He could be charged with espionage (the Obama administration has already invoked the law more than all previous US administrations combined), and could be imprisoned for life or executed.

The United Kingdom carefully considers extradition requests, as famously demonstrated when crusading Spanish judge Baltasar Garzon hoped to prosecute former Chilean dictator Pinochet for torture committed under his rule from 1973 to 1990. Based on Garzon's indictment, Pinochet was arrested in 1998 while travelling in

London. After 16 months of hearings, the British courts finally decided that Pinochet could be extradited to Spain. The British government intervened, overruling the court, and allowed him to return to Chile.

Garzon is known for taking on global human rights cases under the doctrine of universal jurisdiction, indicting Osama bin Laden for the 9/11 attacks and probing the abuse of US prisoners at Guantánamo Bay. When he began investigating abuses under the fascist government of general Francisco Franco, who ruled Spain for 40 years, **Garzon became the target of the right in Spain and was disbarred in early 2012, effectively ending his legal career.**

Judge Garzon and Julian Assange have taken on entrenched power, whether government, military or corporate. Bradley Manning stands accused of the same. In differing degrees, their lives have forever changed; their careers, their freedoms and their reputations were threatened or destroyed.

This week, Hillary Clinton will be the first US official to visit Sweden in years. Why? What role is the US government playing in Assange's case? This week's developments bear crucially on the public's right to know, and why whistleblowers must be protected.

A reminder about WikiLeaks

As the risk intensifies that Assange may be prosecuted for his journalism, it is vital to remember what's at stake

Glenn Greenwald
Salon.com
May 31, 2012

“Just in time to spoil the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the publication of the *Pentagon Papers*, the Obama Justice Department is trying to do what Richard Nixon couldn't: indict a media organization. . . . Charging Julian Assange with ‘conspiracy to commit espionage’ would effectively be setting a precedent with a charge that more accurately could be characterized as ‘conspiracy to commit journalism’”

— James Goodale, General Counsel of The New York Times during its *Pentagon Papers* fight with the Nixon administration, writing in *The Daily Beast*, June 12, 2011.

* * * * *

When, many years ago, I first read about the Nixon administration's infamous break-in to the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist as a means to discredit the *Pentagon Papers* leak, I was baffled by the motivation. *The Pentagon Papers* revealed systematic lying on the part of the U.S. Government to the American public about the Vietnam War. Why, I wondered with a not insubstantial amount of naïveté, would public revelations about Ellsberg's personality and psyche have any impact on how those leaks were perceived?

But the answer to that is obvious, as **Nixon well knew: by demonizing Ellsberg personally, even those inclined to defend the leak would be reluctant to be associated with him.** If Ellsberg became associated in the public mind not with his

noble exposure of government lies but rather with “strange” psychological drives or bizarre sexual fantasies — the sort of thing one is supposed to reveal to one’s psychoanalyst — then he would become a figure of derision, an embarrassment, and nobody would want anything to do with him for fear of having his foibles reflect negatively on them. You smear the messenger, and the message is smeared along with him — or, just as good, the message is forgotten and the messenger is abandoned to whatever punishments are doled out.

This has been exactly the strategy used to ward off support for Julian Assange, WikiLeaks, and Bradley Manning, with one difference: leaving aside Joe Biden, who denounced Assange as a “high-tech terrorist,” this time the role of Nixonian henchmen is played by establishment-defending or Obama-loyal media figures rather than the administration itself. *The New York Times* — led by **John Burns and Bill Keller** — has continuously obsessed on Assange’s alleged personality flaws while all but ignoring the vital disclosures about the U.S. Government for which he is partially responsible (Keller, the son of a Chevron CEO, wrote an article infamously complaining that Assange’s socks were “filthy” and that he “smelled”).

The NYT and numerous other media outlets also aggressively promoted a new group, “Open Leaks,” started by former WikiLeaks volunteers offended by Assange’s “imperious behavior” — a group which, to date, has failed to produce a single leak. Meanwhile, people like [this former Obama campaign press aide](#) and current MSNBC contributor (a virtual redundancy) have continually demeaned Bradley Manning as “a guy seeking anarchy as a salve for his own personal, psychological torment” caused by his sexuality while ominously alluding to “plenty of other evidence that something wasn’t quite right with Manning.”

As Ellsberg himself has repeatedly pointed out, this is the same sleazy strategy employed by Nixon to personally smear whistleblowers and demonize their psyches in order to discredit the substance of their disclosures and make it uncomfortable for anyone to support them. **And it works.**

While WikiLeaks enjoyed widespread support just a couple of years ago, the personal attacks on Assange and Manning — along with the unproven and even uncharged sexual assault allegations in Sweden — have dried up much of that support. Who wants to be seen advocating for an unhygienic, abusive egomaniac or a psychologically crippled, gender-confused, vengeful freak: the caricatures of Assange and Manning that have been successfully implanted in the public mind by today’s Nixonian smear artists? The truth or falsity of these caricatures matters little for this tactic to work: once someone is rendered sufficiently radioactive in Decent Society, even many who are sympathetic to their cause will turn away, become unwilling to defend them, lest any of the slime relentlessly poured on the whistleblowers splatter onto their defenders.

But given what is at stake in the Manning case and especially the potential prosecution of WikiLeaks and Assange, this tactic must not be permitted to succeed. The judicial process in Sweden should and will be permitted to resolve the sexual allegations against Assange one way or the other — given that he’s not even charged, let alone convicted, he should enjoy the presumption of innocence — but whatever the outcome of that case, the personal attributes or failings of Assange or Manning have no bearing on the threat posed by the U.S. Government’s prosecution for the publishing WikiLeaks has done.

A coalition of leading journalists and media outlets in Australia have explained: WikiLeaks “is doing what the media have always done: bringing to light material that governments would prefer to keep secret” and prosecuting them “would be unprecedented in the US, breaching the First Amendment protecting a free press”; they added: “To aggressively attempt to shut WikiLeaks down, to threaten to prosecute those who publish official leaks . . . is a serious threat to democracy.”

The Committee to Protect Journalists sent a letter to Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder expressing “deep concern” over “reports about a potential WikiLeaks prosecution,” which “would threaten grave damage to the First Amendment’s protections of free speech and the press.” Although American journalists were reluctant at first to speak out, even they have come around to recognizing what a profound threat an Assange indictment would be to press freedoms, with *The Washington Post* Editorial Page denouncing any indictment on the ground that it “would criminalize the exchange of information and put at risk responsible media organizations,” and even editors of the *Guardian* and Keller himself — with whom Assange has feuded — are now vowing to defend Assange if he were to be prosecuted.

All of this merits particular emphasis now in light of yesterday’s ruling by Britain’s Supreme Court that Assange must be extradited to Sweden. For reasons I explained yesterday on [Democracy Now](#), there is a very well-grounded fear that this extradition is intended to be the first step in his inevitable rendering to the U.S. for prosecution. **Ample evidence, including my prior reporting, proves the Obama DOJ has an active Grand Jury investigation of WikiLeaks.** Some evidence, albeit not entirely reliable, has emerged stating that they have already obtained a sealed indictment.

That there is now a flurry of recent activity at exactly the time when it was known the British Supreme Court would issue its extradition ruling — suspected WikiLeaks supporters being aggressively accosted by the FBI while Hillary Clinton is now meeting with top officials in Sweden — adds to the reasonable suspicion that the U.S. is seeking to exploit Assange’s extradition to Sweden as a means of bringing him to the U.S. to face prosecution under espionage charges.

That this administration has an unprecedented fixation on secrecy and prosecuting whistleblowers — while key Democratic Senators such as Senate Intelligence Committee Chairwoman Dianne Feinstein have publicly called for Assange’s prosecution for espionage — makes this all the more likely.

It’s vital that this not be permitted to happen. Whatever one’s discomfort with Assange’s supposed personal flaws, that must not deter anyone from standing against what would truly be an odious indictment for the publication by WikiLeaks of critical information in the public interest. Last December in *The Guardian*, I argued that Bradley Manning deserves a medal, not imprisonment, if he actually did what he is alleged to have done. Here is a two-minute clip from my Democracy Now appearance where I made the case for why defending WikiLeaks is so crucial (this was not included in the segment I posted yesterday):

http://www.salon.com/2012/05/31/a_reminder_about_wikileaks/singleton/

DN: 2012-05-31

Ledare: Stärk rättvisan i Europa

Efter en orimligt lång process har Högsta domstolen i Storbritannien beslutat att Julian Assange ska skickas till Sverige. Samtidigt fick försvaret två veckors extra betänketid för att ta ställning till domen. Det lär inte hindra att överlämnandet till slut sker och att den svenska rättsprocessen därefter antligen kan återupptas.

Julian Assange borde för länge sedan ha kommit till Stockholm för att svara på de allvarliga anklagelserna om våldtäkt, sexuellt ofredande och olaga tvång. De konspirationsteorier som Assange presenterat för att förklara sin långa vägran har ingenting med verkligheten att göra.

Varken USA eller en manshatande svensk rättsordning ligger bakom de frågor som åklagaren vill ställa till Assange. Två kvinnor anser sig ha blivit utsatta för grova övergrepp. [*Bara efter polisen, Claes Borgström och Marianne Ny blev inblandade. --A.B.*] Att utreda om brott verkligen har skett hör till rättsstatens allra mest grundläggande uppgifter.

Ändå finns det skäl för kritik mot det europeiska system som ligger till grund för överlämnandet av Assange.

EU fattade beslut om att införa den europeiska arresteringsordern 2002. Förhoppningen var att länderna lättare och snabbare skulle få tag på brottsmisstänkta och så har det också blivit.

Att det tagit nästan två år innan beslut fattats om att överlämna Assange till Sverige hör till undantagen. I stort har utvecklingen gått åt motsatt håll.

Innan arresteringsordern började tillämpas tog en överlämning i genomsnitt ett år. Sedan den infördes behövs i genomsnitt bara mellan 14 och 17 dagar, men något längre— 48 dagar— om beslutet har överklagats.

Arresteringsordern har alltså fått den europeiska rättvisan att snurra fortare. Den används också allt oftare och för allt mindre allvarliga brott. Mellan 2005 och 2009 utfärdades hela 54 689 order om överlämnande i hela EU— och 11 630 verkställdes.

I huvudsak är det säkert bra att gränserna i EU tas bort också för brottsmisstänkta. Men systemet bygger på att det finns stort förtroende för hur rätt skipas i andra länder, och tillräcklig tillit finns ännu inte.

Att mot sin vilja tvingas inför rätta i ett annat land är ett stort ingrepp i enskildas liv. Och det är inte alls konstigt om många tvivlar på att de kommer att få rättvis behandling i ett land där de inte är medborgare. Om Julian Assange fruktar konsekvenserna av att det inte är hans modersmål som används i svensk domstol är det också begripligt.

Alla måste kunna lita på att rättssäkerheten fungerar. Misstänkta bör till exempel kunna få hjälp med försvar och översättning av dokument. Och här finns mycket att göra.

För ett år sedan varnade till och med ansvarig EU-kommissionär, Viviane Reding, för att arresteringsordern överutnyttjas. Hon presenterade också en "färdplan" som innehöll förslag som ska garantera att enskilda får tolkning, information och advokat.

Det är bedrövtligt att sådana regler inte redan finns. Att en förbättring till slut är på gång är förstås välkommet, men det går fortfarande för långsamt.

Förhandlingarna pågår och medlemsländerna har lyckats komma överens om att alla åtalade och misstänkta ska ha rätt till tolkning och information. Men det finns ännu ingen enighet om regler för advokathjälp eller möjlighet att ha kontakt med anhöriga.

Att Julian Assange äntligen kan ställas till svars i Sverige är en framgång. Men han och alla andra måste få bättre garantier för att rättvisan fungerar i Europa.

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DN: 2012-05-31

Assange i modernt Strindbergsdrama

Maria Schottenius

Den stora nyheten i går var att Julian Assange ska utlämnas till Sverige för att våldtäktsanklagelserna ska upp till juridisk prövning.

Mäktiga, radikala vänner från olika länder täcker upp. Bagatelliserar, skojar bort, fabricerar spektakulära orsaker till att man vill komma åt det manliga geniet.

Har vi sett den här pjäsen förut?

Ja, för hundra år sedan utspelades den live i Danmark. Huvudperson var August Strindberg, som tillsammans med sin familj 1888 vistades på slottet Skovlyst på Själland i Danmark. Det var där han hämtade uppslaget till "Fröken Julie".

Det är Strindbergsår, och det ser ut som om Julian Assange ofrivilligt spelar med i en modern Strindbergsdramatisering.

Olof Lagercrantz berättar i sin bok "August Strindberg" från 1979 om Strindberg på Skovlyst och förvaltarens "cirkussköna syster Martha" och hur det gick som det gick mellan författaren och barnflickan, men han har inga nya fakta i målet.

Det har däremot P O Enquist. I essän "Målet mot fröken Julie" ur "Kartritarna" (från 1992 och omtryckt i den nya Strindbergsboken) berättar han hur några vänner och de kulturradikala bröderna Edvard och Georg Brandes, vars "finaste fjäder var kvinnosaken", genom tidningen Politiken hjälpte August Strindberg ur en direkt anklagelse om våldtäkt.

I samband med att P O Enquist regisserade "Fröken Julie" i Köpenhamn i mitten av 80-talet kom han av en tillfällighet att se Martha Hansens utförliga anmälan att August Strindberg "mot min vilja och trots mina skrik våldtog mig".

Uppenbarligen skedde förhandlingar med den 17-åriga flickan. Saken tystades ned. Och som P O Enquist skriver: "Litteraturhistorien har alltid tagit själva sanningsproblemet i fallet Marta med en klackspark."

Men, Julian Assange, var inte för säker. Det har gått hundra år av kvinnokamp.

[Roman Polanski, Dominique Strauss-Kahn och nu Strindberg har Assange av fyndiga svenska journalister kopplats ihop med. --A.B.]

Så rådde jag Assange — och han gjorde precis tvärtom

*Paul Ronge
1 juni 2012*

Julian Assanges alla överklaganden och juridiska spetsfundigheter hjälper nog inte, nu tvingas han till Sverige för en rättsprocess kring misstänkt våldtäkt och sexuella ofredanden.

Under den långa tiden i engelsk exil har Assange marginaliserats och Wikileaks passiviserats. I november 2011 utbröt en märklig diskussion om huruvida det var rätt eller fel av Harald Ullman att ta uppdraget att agera PR-byrå åt Julian Assange. Pontus Nyström på Brand PR ansåg att det kunde hota rättssäkerheten att en PR-byrå hjälper den ena parten i en rättstvist.

Jag kan inte förstå det resonemanget. Jag har arbetat i PR-branschen i cirka 14 år. Jag har jobbat med stora läkemedelsföretag i mutskandaler, företag som blivit anmälda av sina fack till arbetsdomstolen, företag som rättsligt prövats angående olagliga kartellbildningar och mycket annat. Självklart använder företag och organisationer också PR-expertis när de hamnar i juridiska dilemman. Jag kan helt enkelt inte begripa hur Nyström tänkte, eller kunder som flyr.

Den viktiga frågan är snarare: Hur ser Assange PR-strategi ut? Ta till exempel [detta fullständigt crazy utspel](#).

I juni för precis ett år sedan satt jag på min veranda och åt strömmingslåda och drack öl med goda vänner. Plötsligt ringer min mobiltelefon. Det är Julian Assange som undrar hur jag ser på hans fall. Jag ber att få återkomma efter tid att göra research. Nästa gång vi hörs är någon vecka senare. Jag är då på väg att köra bil till Frankrike och blir stående vid en mack i Östergötland när han ringer upp. Vi talas vid i en hel timme. Då, när han ringer, har jag en klar linje:

– Du har inte en chans att få stöd och sympati i våldtäktsfrågan, säger jag. Ingen gillar det du har gjort, oavsett om det är brott eller ej. Men det bästa du kan göra är att frivilligt komma till Sverige och ta rättsprocessen. Du får sannolikt som mest böter. Låt en bra advokat, typ Peter Althin, tala för dig i våldtäktsfrågan och säg inte själv ett pip. Du kan nog däremot skapa kraftig opinion mot att du inte ska utlämnas till USA. Det är den viktiga frågan och där tror jag du kan få stort stöd av en svensk allmänhet. När dom fallit slutar våldtäktsfrågan att häkta fast vid dig och du kan återgå till Wikileaks.

“It will be over and done with”.

Assange lyssnar, ställer smarta följdfrågor till mig. Precis så lyhörd och intelligent som ryktet säger att han ska vara.

Väl i Frankrike skickar jag en offert. Det är oerhört viktigt för mig, kanske speciellt i detta fall, att ta marknadsmässigt betalt. Jag är inte en sympatisör till Wikileaks utan säljer min professionalism. Pro bono arbetar jag bara för en organisation som Läkare utan Gränser där jag känner att jag till 100 procent sympatiserar och vill bidra. Ett tungt inslag i min offert är att vi ska bygga en kommitté för att utverka ett tvingande löfte från regeringen Reinfeldt att inte utlämna Assange till USA.

Jag har senare förstått att Assange inte hade några pengar och det kan ha spelat in i beslutet att inte ta min offert.

För sedan gör Assange alltså precis tvärtom. Ungefär ett år efter att jag rådde honom att frivilligt komma hit, blir han mer eller mindre hitsläpad. Allt fokus ligger på våldtäktsfrågan och hans PR-man Harald Ullman har också kört fram som huvudbudskap att han kommit fram till att “Assange är oskyldig”.

Den 27 november förra året hade Ricki Neuman en mycket intressant och tankeväckande artikel i Svenska Dagbladets kulturdel om hur de mäktiga internationella kreditkortsföretagen med sin bojkott knäcker Wikileaks. I artikeln ställs den berättigade frågan varför ingen reagerar mot det odemokratiska i detta. Jag tror att sanningen är att Assange ända från början i denna process gjort precis allting fel. Anklagelserna mot honom har blandats ihop med Wikileaks varumärke såsom oberoende sanningssägare. Allt har blivit en grå smet som människor inte känner något engagemang för. Hans och organisationens farhågor att han skulle utlämnas till USA av Sverige har inte uppfattats som trovärdiga.

Tvärtom kritiserar Assange av professorn i civilrätt Mårten Schultz för att svartmåla det svenska rättsväsendet. Schultz försäkrar att Assange inte kommer att bli utlämnad och jag, som inte har någon juridisk kompetens, kan ur PR-synpunkt säga att det nog vore politiskt självmord av regeringen Reinfeldt om den skulle sätta Assange på ett plan till USA.

Assange har, i hög grad genom egna självmål, sänkt Wikileaks till en grad där organisationens själva existens är hotad.

/Paul Ronge

***Uppdatering:** Jag har just fått ett mejl av Al Burke, en journalist [*faktiskt inte --A.B.*] som skrivit utförligt om Assange-fallet, apropå min länk ovan om “detta fullständigt crazy utspel”. Han skriver:

“Det stämmer att utspelet i Aftonbladet som du hänvisar till (i din betraktelse “Så rådde jag Assange...”) är korkat, men i själva verket är det ett påhitt av Aftonbladet.”

Han bifogar [följande pressmeddelande](#) som ju visar att Aftonbladet fullständigt övervinklat denna historia. Min fundering är då: Om Assange och hans medhjälpare i själva verket anammat mitt ett år gamla råd om att bilda en seriös kommitté mot

utlämning och inte ge sig in i det juridiska träsket om våldtäktsanklagelserna— varför började då inte det arbetet för ett år sedan? Nu är det sannolikt för sent och opinionen har, efter alla juridiska turer och piruetter, tröttnat.

Tough Guy Leaking: Iran edition

A White House obsessed with secrecy and punishing whistleblowers loves classified disclosures that glorify Obama

Glenn Greenwald
Salon.com
June 1, 2012

The primary fear-mongering agenda item for the National Security and Surveillance State industry is now cyberwarfare. The Washington cadre of former military officials who seek to personally profit by exploiting national security issues — represented by Adm. Michael McConnell and Gen. Michael Hayden — has been running around for several years shrilly warning that cyberwarfare is the greatest threat posed by Terrorists and other of America's enemies (and, just coincidentally, they also argue that it's urgent that the U.S. Government purchase wildly expensive cyber-security technology from their private-sector clients as well as seize greater control over the Internet to protect against the threat).

But — as is usually true when it comes to Washington warnings about the evils of Others — this is pure projection. **The U.S. is the leading developer and perpetrator of cyberwarfare, not the leading target.** The New York Times this morning has a long excerpt from a new book by its hawkish national security reporter David Sanger — the book is entitled “Confront and Conceal: Obama's Secret Wars and Surprising Use of American Power” — which reveals that President Obama personally oversaw the development, and ordered the deployment, of the world's most sophisticated computer virus, unleashed (in cooperation with Israel) on Iran's nuclear enrichment facility.

Like many of President Obama's defining policies — the Wall Street bailout, the Detroit bailout, the withdrawal of troops from Iraq, military commissions, indefinite detention, etc. — this virus (code-named “Olympic Games”) was begun by President Bush. In fact: “Meeting with Mr. Obama in the White House days before his inauguration, Mr. Bush urged him to preserve two classified programs, Olympic Games and the drone program in Pakistan. Mr. Obama took Mr. Bush's advice.”

Rather than just “preserve” them, he has rapidly accelerated both. As Sanger writes, Obama's order for “increasingly sophisticated attacks on the computer systems that run Iran's main nuclear enrichment facilities” will go down in history as “America's first sustained use of cyberweapons.” **But it's not merely the U.S.'s first use; it marks the world's first-ever deployment for military purposes of a whole new category of highly destructive weapons:**

Mr. Obama, according to participants in the many Situation Room meetings on Olympic Games, was acutely aware that with every attack he was pushing the

United States into new territory, much as his predecessors had with the first use of atomic weapons in the 1940s, of intercontinental missiles in the 1950s and of drones in the past decade. **He repeatedly expressed concerns that any American acknowledgment that it was using cyberweapons — even under the most careful and limited circumstances — could enable other countries, terrorists or hackers to justify their own attacks.**

Isn't it amazing how the U.S. is constantly the world's first nation to use new, highly destructive weapons — at the same time that it bombs, invades, and kills more than any other country by far — and **yet it still somehow gets its media to tell its citizenry that it is America's Enemies who are the aggressors and the U.S. is simply a nation of peace seeking to defend itself.**

Needless to say, if any cyber-attack is directed at the U.S. — rather than by the U.S. — it will be instantly depicted as an act of unparalleled aggression and evil: Terrorism. Just last year, the Pentagon decreed that any cyberattack on the U.S. would be deemed “an act of war.” As Rudy Giuliani said about whether waterboarding is torture: “It depends on who does it.”

Administration defenders will undoubtedly insist that unleashing cyber warfare was all necessary to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons and impeding an Israeli attack — even though the U.S. Government acknowledges there is no evidence that Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons; Iran has the absolute right to enrich uranium for civilian purposes, and it is far from clear that this virus meaningfully impeded Iran's nuclear program. But no matter: once a Manichean storyline is implanted (Evil Iran v. Virtuous America), all acts of aggression by the super-hero against the villain are inherently justified.

Beyond the substance of this revelation, there is something quite notable going on here. This morning's story by Sanger is but the latest in a long line of leaks about classified programs that have two attributes in common: (1) they come from senior Obama administration officials; and (2) they are designed to depict President Obama, in an Election Year, as a super-tough, hands-on, no-nonsense Warrior. Put another way, **the administration that is pathologically fixated on secrecy and harshly punishing whistleblowers routinely leaks national security secrets when doing so can politically benefit the President.**

Last year, top-level Obama officials shuffled sensitive information about the bin Laden raid to Hollywood filmmakers working on a pre-election hagiographic film, followed by TV interviews with a grateful, reverent Brian Williams in the Situation Room Where it All Happened, at the very same time they were insisting in court that the bin Laden raid was too secret to permit any disclosures. Earlier this week, The New York Times published extensive details about how President Obama has personally taken charge of deciding who will die in drone attacks — disclosures that came from “three dozen of his current and former advisers” — even as the administration has been continuously insisting that no courts can review the legality of their actions or compel any form of disclosure on the ground that even acknowledging the existence of this program would endanger national security.

And now we have the spectacle of Obama's “senior administration officials” boasting to David Sanger about the details of this highly classified program and Obama's heroic

seizing of the mantle (“From his first days in office, he was deep into every step in slowing the Iranian program — the diplomacy, the sanctions, every major decision,” a senior administration official said. “And it’s safe to say that whatever other activity might have been under way was no exception to that rule”). **In other words: Dear Vital Jewish Voters in Crucial Swing States: behold what this great leader did in secret to pummel Iran.**

Does anyone doubt that if a government official had leaked information about this cyber virus that reflected poorly on rather than glorifying the Commander-in-Chief — disclosing, say, ineptitude, corruption or illegality — that they would be harshly prosecuted? If anyone does doubt that, just consider the Obama administration’s ongoing efforts to prosecute former CIA agent Jeffrey Sterling under espionage statutes for allegedly telling The New York Times’ James Risen — almost ten years ago — about dangerous mistakes the CIA made in trying to infiltrate Iran’s nuclear program (mistakes which actually resulted in helping the Iranian program).

So, exposing classified national security information is an act of criminal evil when done by a whistleblower to expose high-level error or abuse, or to a court trying to assess the legality of the President’s actions. But it is an act of great nobility when done to venerate the President as a strong and tough warrior. That’s the manipulative, propagandistic game-playing this administration exploits with its secrecy powers and whistleblower prosecutions.

There’s one last point meriting consideration. Note how eager Obama officials are to use leaks to tout his militaristic aggression. He ended bin Laden and Awlaki’s lives. He personally picks the drone targets and aggressively piles up Terrorist corpses. He himself commanded the unleashing of the world’s first military attack using cyber-weapons.

The revelations this week about the President’s “kill list” sparked more widespread condemnation among at least some progressive writers than any other single episode in quite some time (I’ve cited several examples over the past week, but make certain to read [Ta-Nehisi Coates’ scathing denunciation](#)— in which he compares the mentality behind Obama’s drone program to that which reportedly drove George Zimmerman and the NYPD’s racist policing actions — and also see Stephen Colbert’s two-minute commentary and [his monologue](#) on this last night). Why would the administration want to leak information that causes such widespread revulsion among some of the President’s normally steadfast supporters?

It’s because, aside from the tried-and-true strategy of Democratic politicians benefiting politically from provoking criticism from the “Left,” Obama officials (and their apparatchiks) are eager to depict him as a violence-wielding aggressor. As Digby put it this week, “the [Obama] campaign is happy about all this condemnation” aimed at the drone program as it “proves [his] macho bona fides.” Obama officials will undoubtedly be just as pleased with any objections to waging undeclared, unauthorized cyber-warfare on Iran’s perfectly legal nuclear program, thus bringing the world yet another new means of destructive warfare.

That’s because huge numbers of America’s independents, “moderates” and Good Progressives are extremely aroused by these sort of displays of manly presidential “toughness”: witness the stiffened spines and puffed-out chests as they hail their

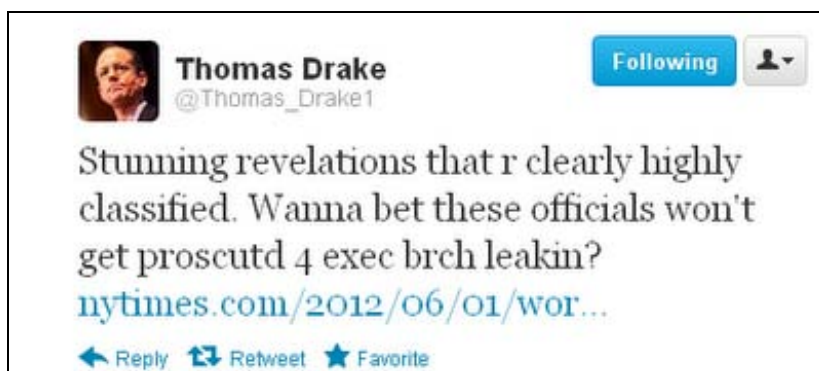
leader for dumping bin Laden's bullet-riddled body into the ocean or creating piles of other corpses throughout the Muslim world. The more objections from liberals and others, the better.

That's all repellent enough. But that they use national security leaks to accomplish these political goals — at the very same time they exploit secrecy claims to persecute whistleblowers and shield themselves from judicial review — makes it just grotesque.

* * *

UPDATE: To be fair, President Obama has found some important and impressive allies to defend his kill list.

UPDATE II: Thomas Drake, the former NSA official prosecuted (unsuccessfully) by the Obama DOJ for "espionage" because he disclosed to reporters evidence of serious waste, corruption and potential illegality in the NSA's domestic surveillance programs, today said this about the Iran story in the NYT:



Could you imagine what it's like to have been threatened with life imprisonment by the Obama administration for blowing the whistle on serious government wrongdoing — as Drake was — only to watch the very same administration leak national security secrets at will in order to glorify the President for political gain?

Along those lines, AP reporter Matt Apuzzo, who just won the Pulitzer Prize for his superb investigative work uncovering the NYPD spying program aimed at American Muslim communities, wrote this today:

That's the lesson the Obama administration is sending to America's media and political class: if you publish secrets that we feed you and which make us look good, you will be rewarded; if you publish secrets which make us look bad, we will punish you.

http://www.salon.com/2012/06/01/tough_guy_leaking/singleton/

Ministers cagey over Assange

*Philip Dorling
Sydney Morning Herald
June 2, 2012*

PRIME Minister Julia Gillard, Attorney-General Nicola Roxon and Foreign Minister Bob Carr all sang from the same hymn sheet this week on the continuing legal saga of WikiLeaks publisher Julian Assange. But they chose their words very carefully.

The issue was whether the United States intends to charge and extradite Assange—the Australian journalist labelled by US Vice-President Joe Biden as "a high-tech terrorist"—with criminal offences for WikiLeaks' publication of hundreds of thousands of secret US military and diplomatic reports.

On Wednesday, the British Supreme Court rejected Assange's latest appeal against extradition to Sweden to be questioned about sexual assault allegations.

Assange, who rejects the Swedish allegations and has not been charged, fears extradition to Stockholm will make possible his extradition to the US to face espionage and conspiracy charges related to US private Bradley Manning's alleged leaking of a vast trove of classified information to the whistleblower site.

Well aware of successive polls that show a high level of support for WikiLeaks and Assange across the Australian political spectrum, the Australian government has been insistent this week that it has no knowledge whatsoever of any intention by the US to prosecute and extradite the WikiLeaks publisher.

Attorney-General Roxon took the lead on Tuesday, making the unequivocal claim in a letter to one of Assange's legal representatives that the government has "no information from the United States to indicate that it has laid, or is about to lay, any charges against Mr Assange".

Asked in a Senate estimates committee hearing on Wednesday whether the government had any knowledge of a secret US indictment, reported in a leaked email from the private US intelligence company Stratfor, Foreign Minister Carr similarly asserted: "We have seen no evidence such a sealed indictment exists." Foreign Affairs and Trade Secretary Dennis Richardson dismissed the report as unconfirmed speculation.

Prime Minister Gillard followed the script in question time on Thursday, telling Parliament: "At this stage we do not have any advice from the United States that there is an indictment against Mr Assange or that the United States has decided to seek his extradition."

US ambassador Jeff Bleich also chimed in, saying the US had "no interest whatsoever" in Assange's extradition to Sweden, which was "simply a matter for the UK and Sweden".

For good measure the ambassador rejected as "an invention" claims that the US had issued a "secret warrant" for the arrest of Mr Assange. "There is no such thing as a secret warrant. Period. They don't exist," Bleich said.

The choice of words was in many instances revealing. Ms Gillard was careful to include the words "at this stage", and it appears from Wednesday's estimates hearing that Australian diplomats have studiously avoided asking whether charges have or are about to be laid.

A highly qualified lawyer, ambassador Bleich also knows a warrant is not the same thing as an indictment, which is the formal accusation of a crime issued by a US grand jury. Grand jury hearings are held in secret and an indictment may be sealed, that is kept secret, until an arrest warrant has been issued and the defendant taken into custody. **To say that secret warrants don't exist is true— but that isn't the point.**

Carr implied the Swedish sexual assault investigation was the only matter Assange had to worry about, observing that the current extradition process was "the only action he faces".

All this is disingenuous to say the least.

Over the course of the past 18 months, Fairfax Media has pursued a series of freedom-of-information applications aimed at establishing the Australian government's knowledge of US investigations directed against WikiLeaks and Assange.

The Australian government has liaised closely with the US from the beginning of the US WikiLeaks investigation, which rapidly gathered steam following Bradley Manning's arrest in Iraq in March 2010. Last December, Fairfax obtained the release of cables from the Australian embassy in Washington, dated December 2010, that reported that WikiLeaks was the target of an "unprecedented" US criminal probe and that media reports that a secret grand jury had been convened in Alexandria, Virginia, were "likely true".

Despite extensive redactions, the released cables showed that the Australian embassy had confirmed through US officials that the US Justice Department was conducting an "active and vigorous inquiry into whether Julian Assange can be charged under US law, most likely the 1917 Espionage Act". The investigation was described by US officials as "unprecedented both in its scale and nature".

Australian diplomats also called on then US assistant attorney-general for national security David Kris to request "advance warning of any public announcement of the results of US investigations or proposed actions". Kris replied that he would take that "reasonable" request for advance warning "up the line", though he "warned that advance notice sometimes caused problems later, when it became public that the government had been provided with advance warning". The Australian diplomats said they would still appreciate advance notice "so that ministers could respond appropriately".

A more recent instalment of released cables shows the US and Australian governments continued high-level exchanges on WikiLeaks through last year. The Washington embassy provided Canberra with updates including reporting on the issuing of subpoenas to compel WikiLeaks associates to appear before a grand jury in Virginia.

In December last year, the Washington embassy sent a representative to attend all seven days of private Manning's pre-court hearing. **The embassy's report of the open**

court proceedings focused heavily on the prosecution's assertions that Manning had leaked to WikiLeaks "and, specifically, to Julian Assange".

These allegations, included that Manning "indiscriminately and systematically" data-mined classified US databases using WikiLeaks' "Most Wanted List" as a guide, that there was direct contact between Manning and Assange, and that WikiLeaks, and specifically Assange, assisted Manning's efforts to extract data without detection.

These US government allegations would presumably form the core of any potential espionage and conspiracy case against Assange.

At first glance, the First Amendment free speech provisions of the US constitution would appear to protect Assange as a journalist engaged in publication. However, the legal position is not clear-cut and there appears to be a widely held view among experts that a prosecution case could at least be constructed and pressed forward in spite of strong First Amendment arguments.

In an analysis published in December 2010, the US Congressional Research Service noted that the US Espionage Act applies to the "receipt and unauthorised dissemination" of classified US national defence information and that the law "has been interpreted to cover the activities of foreign nationals overseas, at least when they take an active part in seeking out information".

Any prosecution of Assange probably would focus not on WikiLeaks' publication but rather the circumstances of WikiLeaks' receipt of classified information and any advice or assistance Assange allegedly may have provided to Manning. **Such legal proceedings would probably run for years and end up before the US Supreme Court.**

The scale of the WikiLeaks disclosures has been enormous, involving hundreds of thousands of US classified documents. No one should really doubt the desire of the US government to, **as the Australian embassy in Washington put it, "bring Assange to justice"**.

Sealed indictment or not, the US will probably let Assange's Swedish legal issues play themselves out, before taking a final decision on whether to seek his extradition. Manning's court martial is scheduled to proceed in June— proceedings that presumably will reveal more of a potential prosecution case against Assange.

Meanwhile, ever anxious to demonstrate its loyalty to the US alliance, the Australian government has not uttered any objection to the prospect that Assange may be prosecuted for espionage.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/ministers-cagey-over-assange-20120601-1zn8o.html>

Senator Ludlam confronts DFAT over plans to extradite Julian Assange to the US

*Submitted by issylvia
WL Central
2012-06-02*

On the 30th May 2012, Australian Greens Senator Scott Ludlam raised concerns over Julian Assange's looming extradition to the US before Australia's **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**. The response he obtained regarding the protection of Julian Assange's rights as an Australian citizen (fully transcribed here) was quite vague and evasive.

In particular, DFAT made efforts to avoid stating clearly whether it has sought evidence pertaining to the existence of a sealed indictment against Julian Assange, issued by a US Grand Jury that has been investigating WikiLeaks for over 600 days. This indictment was mentioned by US intelligence firm Stratfor in private email exchanges, which were published by WikiLeaks in February as part of its Global Intelligence Files release and where members of the private contractor discuss the intent to undermine WikiLeaks' publishing activities by cutting off its donations and keeping its editor-in-chief Julian Assange involved in legal processes of indefinite duration ("Move him from country to country to face various charges for the next 25 years", one of the emails read.)

Although DFAT minders have attended Julian Assange's extradition court hearings for a year, no advice, information or consular assistance has been provided to him to this day. In fact, the DFAT has refrained from communicating with Julian Assange during these occasions.

A statement released by WikiLeaks through its twitter account points out that any DFAT requests for information on plans to extradite Julian Assange to the US were done with the explicit purpose of obtaining information ahead of the media, and with the intent to manipulate public opinion.

Through documents obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request in Australia we know that the Australian Government keeps regular contact with the US concerning the investigation on WikiLeaks and plans to charge Julian Assange for conspiracy and espionage.

Other documentation on the subject was requested by Senator Ludlam and has been on hold for months as it is pending approval from the United States before eventual public release, Mr Rowe reveals in the following exchanges.

The discussion took place shortly before the UK Supreme Court dismissed Julian Assange's extradition appeal, allowing nevertheless for his legal team to submit an application to have the case reopened. Mr Assange's legal counsel Dinah Rose QC must do so before June 13.

* * *

Senator LUDLAM: Okay, you did cover that. Minister, my question was whether you had been briefed, so I think we can take that as a yes—you have got relevant material right in front of you there. What can you tell us about the existence or otherwise of a sealed indictment issued by the United States Department of Justice, which would presumably come with an extradition order back to the United States?

Senator BOB CARR: We have seen no evidence that such a sealed indictment exists.

Senator LUDLAM: Have you sought such evidence?

Senator BOB CARR: We have not sought evidence, but we have seen no evidence that it exists.

Senator LUDLAM: Well, of course you haven't.

Mr Richardson: And we have talked to the US. The US is aware of our expectations in respect of due process, but when we say we have seen no evidence that such a sealed indictment exists we are not using neat bureaucratic words to avoid an answer. I know there are claims out there, but we are simply not aware of the existence of such an indictment. We have talked to the US about these matters, and we are simply not aware of the existence of such a sealed indictment.

Senator LUDLAM: Have you asked whether such a document exists, of your colleagues either in the DOJ or the state department?

Mr Richardson: We have had discussions, of which I cannot go into the detail, but none of the discussions we have had—

Senator LUDLAM: It is a pretty simple question: have you asked? You have seen rumours, you have seen speculation, you have seen reports. But did you ask?

Mr Richardson: As I said, we do not know of any evidence of the existence of such. We have obviously asked the US; we have talked about it. But we are not aware of any evidence that such a sealed indictment exists.

Senator LUDLAM: You are making it sound a bit forensic. I am just putting to you whether you have asked your colleagues whether such a document exists.

Mr Richardson: We have made inquiries about all of that.

Senator LUDLAM: What were the responses to those inquiries?

Mr Richardson: I am not prepared to go into the detail of the discussions we have had.

Senator LUDLAM: Why is that?

Mr Richardson: They were confidential. I can simply say that we are not aware of any sealed indictment and we are not aware of any evidence of the existence of a sealed indictment.

Senator LUDLAM: Mr Richardson— or Minister; if I stray into politics I will trust you to answer the question— were you aware of the release of quite an abundance of material from the US private security firm Stratfor, some months ago now, which contained explicit reference to such a document?

Mr Richardson: I am certainly aware of that. That was released, I think, out of Texas, from memory.

Senator LUDLAM: On the WikiLeaks website.

Mr Richardson: Yes.

Senator LUDLAM: Indeed. So did that release— you would not call it evidence, but it is certainly a release of material indicating that such a document exists— cause you to go back to your US colleagues and make inquiries?

Mr Richardson: It is release of material claiming the existence of it. We have talked to the United States since then, and I refer back to my earlier answers.

(...)

Senator LUDLAM: This is our great and powerful ally, the United States. Has your department done its due diligence so that we know what to expect tonight, depending on the outcome of the Supreme Court findings? Are you satisfied that the government has made itself aware of the facts?

Senator BOB CARR: I can answer that. We have no advice that the US has an intention to extradite Mr Assange.

Senator LUDLAM: Have you sought such advice?

Senator Bob Carr: We have discussed the case with the US, and nothing we have been told suggests that the US has such an intention. The US is aware of our expectation of due process, if they do decide to take legal action. And we understand that the United Kingdom's agreement to extradite would also be required. That probably answers your question.

Senator LUDLAM: While we are on the subject of due process, one of the other matters that came forward in the Stratfor releases was the intention by this private security firm that contracts to the United States government to shop Mr Assange and his colleagues through serial legal jurisdictions and tie him up in legal processes until the end of time, effectively. Whether he ends up in prison or not is kind of beside the point. Are you confident that due process is being followed in this case?

Senator BOB CARR: I do not think the US can be sheeted with the responsibility for the process underway in Sweden.

Senator LUDLAM: That was not actually the question I put to you.

Senator BOB CARR: You did talk about an intention of the US, as alleged by one source, to tie Mr Assange up in legal process.

Senator LUDLAM: It is a fairly informed source.

(...)

Senator LUDLAM: ... I will be the one asking the questions, if that is all right. Minister, are you aware of the freedom of information request that I put to the department— and I acknowledge that it would have been before you took your place in here— on this matter? I think it was in November or December, or thereabouts, last year.

Senator BOB CARR: I am aware in broad terms, yes, that there is an FOI request.

Senator LUDLAM: Have you availed yourself of any information on that request, which has been delayed over a series of months?

Senator BOB CARR: I think I have signed a piece of paper related to that request. I will get advice.

Senator LUDLAM: Okay. **Perhaps you could get advice on the nature of the piece of paper you have signed, and whether or not any documents will be forthcoming.** I know it is extremely labour intensive blacking out page after page after page, but I would have thought that after six months it would be an appropriate time to put some of this material onto the public record.

Senator BOB CARR: We will check the record and answer the question to your satisfaction.

Mr Rowe: As you mentioned, Senator, we have your request under the FOI provisions to provide information in relation to a number of matters— including, of course, the Assange issue. As you would be aware, this is a very complex and very large request. As with previous requests in relation to other matters we have been in contact with you about the scope and the time lines for that request. We are actually engaged in processing it as expeditiously as we can. But these are very large requests in terms of the documentation, the complexities and the need to consult, under the FOI regime, third parties where necessary. Not surprisingly, it is taking some time just to work through all the documentation and get the request finalised so that we can provide it to you.

Senator LUDLAM: Thank you. And the matters that I am seeking to have released under this government's new regime of transparency do relate to foreign policy matters, particularly our diplomatic relationship with the United States. Is it normal practice that you would seek advice from your US colleagues before releasing that material into the public domain? Is the US government clearing this material for release as well as your own department?

Mr Rowe: Under the Freedom of Information Act, as you are aware, there are provisions that we are obliged to take account of, particularly that relating to any material that relates, as I said, to a third party. In that regard it is normal practice to consult the third party about the content and the sensitivity or releasability of particular information. We are applying the act in that regard.

Senator LUDLAM: Is that kind of a yes?

Mr Rowe: Yes. We need to do that and we have the statutory obligation to take that consultation process fully into account.

Senator LUDLAM: Would the material that you are subsequently, I hope, going to release to me, to the parliament and to the public, all have been cleared by the United States government as well as the Australian government?

Mr Rowe: Not all cleared. It is where there is material such as particular communications between the Australian government and a third party, for example. Where that third party is involved in the material or it relates to that third party, we have the obligation to consult that party.

<http://w1central.org/node/2640>

New book confirms US-Australia plans for war on China

James Cogan
World Socialist Web Site
4 June 2012

A newly published book by journalist David Uren has revealed that the Australian government's 2009 Defence White Paper contained a "secret chapter" that assessed "Australia's ability to fight an air-sea battle alongside the United States against China."

The chapter was omitted from the public version as it contained references to Australian forces assisting the US military to impose a naval blockade of China's trade routes, and likely Chinese retaliation against targets on Australian soil. The existence of the confidential chapter was prominently reported on the front page of the Australian newspaper [*which one?*] on Saturday under the headline "Secret 'war' with China uncovered." Labor's Defence Minister Stephen Smith was questioned about the revelation on Sunday. While he attempted to dismiss as "nonsense" the report that Australia had plans for war with China, he confirmed that there were both public and secret versions of the White Paper.

Uren, the economics editor of the Australian newspaper, provides no source for his revelation. His book, however, *The Kingdom and the Quarry: China, Australia, Fear and Greed*, has clearly been written in close consultation with figures in the Australian political, military and diplomatic establishment. It is primarily a discussion of the immense dilemma that confronts the Australian ruling elites as the United States—their key strategic and military ally—pursues an ever more aggressive stance toward **China, Australia's largest trading partner.**

Uren wrote that the White Paper envisaged "a very different world, in which Australian naval operations alongside the United States in, say the South China Sea, could lead to direct Chinese attack on Australia with missiles, mining of ports and cyber-attacks. The capability of China to reach out 5,000 kilometres and touch Australia was a new element of the strategic environment."

The missing chapter, Uren wrote, “assumed that there would be blockades distant from China designed to control its sea routes and stop the flow of natural resources on which its industrial engine depends... **Part of the defence thinking is that in the event of a conflict with the United States, China would attempt to destroy Pine Gap, the US-Australia signals facility near Alice Springs, which is crucial for guiding US military operations in Asia.**”

The war preparations motivated the White Paper’s recommendation that more than \$100 billion be spent over the next decade or so to equip the Australian military with new submarines, destroyers, jet fighters and other advanced hardware.

Significantly, Uren notes that while then Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd had aggressively supported the White Paper— against opposition from his military intelligence advisors— the Obama administration did not support his diplomatic initiatives in the Asian region. **Uren cites the diplomatic cables published by WikiLeaks that revealed Washington opposed Rudd’s advocacy of a so-called “Asia-Pacific Community” which would seek to mediate tensions between the US and China.**

Uren, however, does not comment on the US role in the inner-party coup that ousted Rudd on June 23-24, 2010 and installed Julia Gillard as prime minister. He does not reference other diplomatic cables published by WikiLeaks in which Gillard was named by US officials as a potential pro-US alternative to Rudd, and which identified the key Labor conspirators, such as Senator Mark Arbib, as “protected sources” of the US embassy.

In mid-2009, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton provocatively told a summit of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN): “I am here to confirm that we [the US] are back and we are here to stay [in Asia].” Her speech at ASEAN was a categorical rejection of calls by figures like Rudd for a US accommodation to China’s ambitions for greater regional influence.

Uren observes that the agreements signed last November between the Obama administration and the Gillard government for a greater US military presence in Australia flow from expectations of future conflict with Beijing. He cites the establishment of a “working group” between the US and Australian militaries in late 2010, “to explore greater military cooperation.”

While Uren does not refer to it, the US Naval War College published a study in January 2011 which detailed Australia’s “numerous advantages” as a base from which the US military could control the vital sea lanes between the Indian and Pacific Oceans in the event of conflict with China. The study’s authors, James Holmes and Toshi Yoshihara, commented that “the Australian government— Washington’s most dependable ally in Asia, alongside Tokyo— would likely prove agreeable to such an arrangement.”

Under Prime Minister Julia Gillard, the Labor government has unconditionally aligned Australia with the Obama administration’s so-called pivot to the Asia-Pacific. **Australian ports and airbases are to be upgraded for use by the American military and the Cocos Islands in the Indian Ocean made available as an airbase for US surveillance drones and, potentially, warplanes.**

Uren comments that the small scale of the initial US deployments to Australia—just several hundred marines training for six months near the northern city of Darwin—was intended as “a way of mollifying regional reaction.” The announcement over the weekend by US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta **that the US Navy will base 60 percent of its fleet in the Asia-Pacific** underscores the strategic importance of access to Australian naval bases. Ports in Perth, Darwin and Brisbane will service the US aircraft carrier battle groups and nuclear submarines that threaten China’s access to crucial maritime trading routes.

Whatever the motives behind Uren’s revelation, it confirms the detailed analysis and warnings made by the World Socialist Web Site and Socialist Equality Party over the past three years that the Labor Party government, on behalf of the Australian capitalist class, had aligned with US imperialism in preparations for war with China. The suppression of the “secret chapter” in the 2009 White Paper underscores the fact that Washington and Canberra are pursuing their militarist agenda behind the backs of the population.

Swedish Prosecution Authority: The Assange Matter

2 June 2012

UK Supreme Court decision

The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom has today [May 30, 2012] decided to uphold and grant the request to surrender Julian Assange to Sweden.

Two lower instances had previously decided that Julian Assange should be surrendered to Sweden in accordance with the European Arrest Warrant Act. These were appealed by Assange and on 1-2 February 2012 hearings were held in the Supreme Court, which has now issued its decision.

The counsel for Mr Assange, Ms Rose, has indicated that she may make an application to re-open the Supreme Court's decision. The Supreme Court has granted Ms Rose 14 days to make such an application. In accordance with the regulatory framework on European arrest warrants, Julian Assange will be surrendered to Sweden within 10 days after a legally binding judgement.

Since November 2010, Mr. Assange has been detained in his absence, on probable cause suspected of rape (less severe crime), sexual molestation and unlawful coercion.

Concerning requests for interviews

The Director of Public Prosecution, Marianne Ny, cannot supply any information regarding the case at the moment, but will give interviews in connection with a detention hearing in Sweden.

Contact: Director of Communication Karin Rosander +46 10 562 50 10
Press Service +46 72 204 56 29

Facts about extradition and surrender

Different rules apply within the EU (surrender) and outside the EU (extradition).

Due to general agreements in the European Arrest Warrant Act, Sweden cannot extradite a person who has been surrendered to Sweden from another country without certain considerations.

Concerning surrender to another country within the European Union, the Act states that the executing country under certain circumstances must approve a further surrender.

On the other hand, if the extradition concerns a country outside the European Union the authorities in the executing country (the country that surrendered the person) must consent such extradition. Sweden cannot, without such consent, extradite a person, for example to the USA.

What happens in Sweden when a person is surrendered from another EU country?

The authority, in this case the Swedish Prosecution Authority, that issued the arrest warrant is responsible for transporting the suspect to Sweden within a stated time frame, once the other member state has taken a decision to surrender the suspect. The Swedish Prosecution Authority may request assistance from the National Police Board, or a police authority specified by the National Police Board, which is what generally occurs.

An order of detention has previously been issued, which is a precondition for the issuing of an arrest warrant. When the individual lands in Sweden, all regulations concerning the arrest warrant as concerns deprivation of liberty are voided and the Swedish Code of Judicial Procedure applies, as in any national case where an order for the arrest of the individual has been issued in his absence.

The Principle of Speciality applies here, i.e. the person surrendered to Sweden may not be tried for any crimes other than those stated in the arrest warrant and may not be surrendered to another state, unless the original surrendering country grants its permission. In addition, the conditions imposed by the surrendering country also apply.

As soon as the obstacle to the presence of the detainee has ceased to apply, i.e. the detainee is on site in Sweden, a "report shall be made to the Court" (Swedish Code of Judicial Procedure, Chapter 24, Section 17). After this the Court will, without delay, hold a hearing concerning the detention issue, not later than 4 days (96 hours) after the time when the obstacle to the presence of the detainee ceased to apply.

Consequently, this is a new detention hearing in the presence of the suspect, where he is able to exercise his rights in a better manner than during the hearing he did not attend, but was represented by his legal representative only. When the detention hearing has been concluded, the Court will immediately issue its decision concerning detention. Either the detention will be cancelled or a new detention decision will be taken. A date by which prosecution must be initiated is also issued. The Court's decision may be appealed.

<http://www.aklagare.se/In-English/About-us/International-prosecution-operations/Facts-about-extradition-of-a-person-who-has-been-surrendered/>

<http://www.aklagare.se/PageFiles/346/Chapter%206.pdf>

Extract from the Swedish Penal Code Chapter 6:1, 6:10, 4:4

Chapter 6 Section 1

A person who by assault or otherwise by violence or by threat of a criminal act forces another person to have sexual intercourse or to undertake or endure another sexual act that, having regard to the nature of the violation and the circumstances in general, is comparable to sexual intercourse, shall be sentenced for rape to imprisonment for at least two and at most six years.

This shall also apply if a person engages with another person in sexual intercourse or in a sexual act which under the first paragraph is comparable to sexual intercourse by improperly exploiting that the person, due to unconsciousness, sleep, intoxication or other drug influence, illness, physical injury or mental disturbance, or otherwise in view of the circumstances in general, is in a helpless state.

If, in view of the circumstances associated with the crime, a crime provided for in the first or second paragraph is considered less aggravated, a sentence to imprisonment for at most four years shall be imposed for rape.

If a crime provided for in the first or second paragraph is considered gross, a sentence to imprisonment for at least four and at most ten years shall be imposed for gross rape. In assessing whether the crime is gross, special consideration shall be given to whether the violence or threat was of a particularly serious nature or whether more than one person assaulted the victim or in any other way took part in the assault or whether the perpetrator having regard to the method used or otherwise exhibited particular ruthlessness or brutality.

Section 10

A person who, otherwise than as previously provided in this Chapter, sexually touches a child under fifteen years of age or induces the child to undertake or participate in an act with sexual implications, shall be sentenced for sexual molestation to a fine or imprisonment for at most two years.

This also applies to a person who exposes himself or herself to another person in a manner that is likely to cause discomfort, or who otherwise by word or deed molests a person in a way that is likely to violate that person's sexual integrity.

Chapter 4

Section 4

A person who, by assault or otherwise by force or by threat of a criminal act, compels another to do, submit to or omit to do something, shall be sentenced for unlawful coercion to a fine or imprisonment for at most two years. Anyone who to such effect exercises coercion by threatening to prosecute or report another for a crime or give detrimental information about another, shall also be sentenced for unlawful coercion, provided that the coercion is wrongful. If the crime referred to in the first paragraph is gross, imprisonment for at least six months and at most six years shall be imposed. In assessing whether the crime is gross special consideration shall be given to whether the act included the infliction of pain to force a confession, or other torture.

<http://www.aklagare.se/In-English/The-role-of-the-prosecutor/Decision-to-prosecute/Retrial/>

Review

It is possible to request a review of a prosecutor's ruling concerning, for example, a discontinued preliminary investigation or a decision not to bring charges. Requests for review are made by one of the Prosecution Authority's prosecution development centres.

If a request for a review is received by a public prosecution office, first of all the prosecutor who made the ruling shall decide whether or not any new circumstances have come to light in the matter.

If new circumstances are cited, the prosecutor reconsiders his/her decision. If this reconsideration fails to result in any change to the original ruling, the matter is referred to the prosecution development centre. The same applies if there are no new circumstances to be considered in the case.

At the prosecution development centre, the case will be reviewed by the Director of Public Prosecution, who will then make a decision on, for instance, the resumption of a discontinued investigation or that certain investigation measures should be taken. The case is then referred back to the original public prosecution office, but to a different prosecutor.

Decisions made by a prosecution development centre can also be reviewed, and the matter will in this case be handled by the Office of the Prosecutor-General.

Few rulings are changed

During 2008, over 2 000 rulings by prosecutors were reviewed at the four prosecution development centres. This is less than 1 per cent of all the prosecutor rulings that were made during the course of the year. Prosecutor rulings were revised in 220 cases (approximately 11 per cent of the reviews conducted and some 0.04 per cent of all prosecutor rulings).

<http://www.aklagare.se/In-English/Media/The-Assange-Matter/The-Assange-Matter/>

Chronology

Events concerning Julian Assange in chronological order

Swedish proceedings

20 August 2010

The duty prosecutor orders the arrest of Julian Assange, suspected of rape and sexual molestation.

21 August 2010

The case is transferred to a prosecutor at City Public Prosecution Office in Stockholm.

25 August 2010

The prosecutor takes a decision to terminate the preliminary investigation concerning suspected rape.

27 August 2010

Lawyer Claes Borgström, legal representative of the women who reported Julian Assange, requests a review of the prosecutor's decision to terminate the preliminary investigation concerning rape. The review request is sent to the Prosecution Development Centre in Gothenburg.

1 September 2010

Marianne Ny, Director of Public Prosecution, takes a decision to resume the preliminary investigation concerning the suspected rape. The preliminary investigation on sexual molestation is expanded to cover all the events in the crime reports.

September 2010

The investigation is underway.

September 2010

The arrest of Julian Assange is ordered.

18 November 2010

Marianne Ny orders the arrest of Julian Assange, with probable cause, suspected of rape, three cases of sexual molestation and illegal coercion. This measure is taken as it has been impossible to interview him during the investigation.

Stockholm District Court takes a decision to order the arrest of Julian Assange in accordance with the Prosecutor's request.

In order to execute this decision, the Prosecutor takes a decision to issue an international warrant for the arrest of Julian Assange, a European Arrest Warrant.

22 November 2010

Julian Assange appeals the issue of the District Court arrest warrant to Svea Court of Appeal.

24 November 2010

Svea Court of Appeal refuses the appeal and takes a decision that the arrest warrant is to remain in place, with probable cause, on suspicion of rape (less serious crime), unlawful coercion and two cases of sexual molestation.

The international request and the European Arrest Warrant are confirmed in accordance with the decision of the District Court.

30 November 2010

Julian Assange appeals the arrest warrant issued by Svea Court of Appeal to the Supreme Court.

2 December 2010

The Supreme Court takes a decision not to grant Julian Assange leave to appeal. The decision of the Svea Court of Appeal stands.

On the request of the British police, additional information is added to the European Arrest Warrant concerning the maximum penalty in Sweden for the crimes of sexual molestation and unlawful coercion.

British proceedings

7 december 2010

Julian Assange is arrested by British police [*after voluntarily surrendering --A.B.*].

16 December 2010

At a hearing on detention at Westminster Magistrates Court in London, the Court decides that Julian Assange should be granted bail.

7-8 February 2011

Hearing in London concerning surrender according to the European Arrest Warrant.

24 February 2011

The City of Westminster Magistrates' Court makes a decision to grant the request for surrender of Mr. Julian Assange to Sweden.

March 2011

Mr Assange appeals the court's decision.

12-13 July 2011

Hearing in High Court in London concerning surrender according to the European Arrest Warrant.

2 November 2011

The High Court dismisses the appeal by Mr. Julian Assange against his extradition to Sweden.

5 December 2011

The Court grants Mr. Assange the right, within 2 weeks, to request leave to appeal to the UK Supreme Court.

16 December 2011

The Supreme Court grants Mr. Assange leave to appeal. The Court will sit on 1 and 2 February 2012.

1-2 February 2012

Hearing in the Supreme Court of Great Britain concerning whether a prosecutor can be considered to have the legal authority to issue a European Arrest Warrant.

<http://www.aklagare.se/In-English/Media/News-in-English1/>

Julian guilty of sexing up case for martyrdom

If Assange had not persuaded so many intelligent people to his cause, it would be laughable.

Claire Harvey
Sunday Telegraph
June 3, 2012

There's a strange notion afoot that Julian Assange, the Australian founder of website Wikileaks, is an oppressed freedom fighter and Australia has failed to protect him from his persecutor, the Great Satan America.

If Assange had not persuaded so many intelligent people to his cause, it would be laughable.

Assange is a privileged and spoilt polemicist not a journalist who is ready to fling himself on the flames of sacred martyrdom, as long as it doesn't involve any actual suffering.

For two years he has fought, with all the expense and pomposity a team of English barristers can provide, extradition on Swedish sexual misconduct charges.

But he, and his supporters, don't want you to focus on those charges, which relate to two women with whom Assange had allegedly part-consensual sexual encounters while visiting Sweden in 2010. The women allege sexual encounters with Assange turned nasty when he either refused to wear — or tampered with — condoms.

Assange denies it all, with the most unsophisticated of arguments.

The girls were up for it. They were groupies. They wanted the undivided sexual attention of this pasty web god and then they cooked up their jealous lies. No, wait. They were CIA plants.

Those are the claims of Assange and his lawyers [*according to Ms. Harvey—A.B.*]. "The honeytrap has been sprung ... After what we've seen so far you can reasonably conclude this is part of a greater plan," said lawyer Mark Stephens in 2010.

Barrister Geoffrey Robertson this week called them "these unpleasant charges" before alleging— with no proof— a US grand jury had a sealed indictment to trap Assange. Robertson seems to fear they'll feed him feet-first into the flaming maw of radio host Rush Limbaugh.

That's the tactic: forget the 'rape', this is an evil global conspiracy.

Back in 2010 Swedish police initially decided no case could be made, but the women appealed to Sweden's prosecutor, which reopened the preliminary investigation.

Assange appointed lawyers and fled Sweden, and in November 2010 prosecutors got a domestic detention order in absentia from the Stockholm District Court. Assange's lawyers appealed that order but prosecutor Marianne Ny issued a European Arrest Warrant for his extradition to Sweden.

Assange's lawyers are arguing Ms Ny is not a "judicial authority"— she is just a prosecutor. But, as the UK Supreme Court president Lord Nicholas Phillips pointed out in his judgment this week, the Swedes did go through a judicial process to issue the warrant: the Stockholm District Court's original detention order, which demonstrated a judge's belief there was a case to answer.

Now, Assange's lawyers are appealing again, this time because they say they didn't get a fair chance to make submissions on the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which the Supreme Court judges relied upon in their reasoning. The lawyers have 14 days to make those submissions— and if they lose, Assange and his lawyers will doubtless appeal straight to the European Court of Justice in Strasbourg.

Assange's mother Christine is now accusing the Australian government of abandoning her son. She wants our Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to demand Sweden give Assange bail if he is extradited, or guarantee him "safe passage" home to Australia if the extradition bid fails. "When the plane refuels in Singapore, can someone from the Australian government be there to prevent US marshals from pulling him off the plane and whisking him off to the US? They (DFAT) refused that," Mrs Assange said.

Of course they refused it. Why should Assange get more help than every other Australian who gets in trouble overseas? DFAT provides advice and succour, but not diplomatic pressure to bail out unwary Aussies, whether they allegedly punched a cop in Bali or stole some secret American military files.

Assange's martyr routine, complete with posing and fist-pumping, would cause real political prisoners— like Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi— to blush at his shameless carry-on.

His ego is propped by a global fan-club of gullible teenagers and leftover Trots from the Occupy 'movement'.

(It's odd, by the way, to hear the supposed 'left'— the cradle of women's rights— dismissing alleged sexual assault victims as spymasters' sluts.)

The only person so far suffering for the sake of Wikileaks' work is former United States military officer Bradley Manning, who is in prison awaiting court-martial for his part in allegedly stealing US cables for Assange. Both of them knew publishing the cables was prohibited by American law and they did it anyway.

Was Wikileaks a brave act of publishing heroism? Well, only if Assange is prepared to stand up. It's not brave to take bold action if you run away and hide behind your mum while someone else takes the rap.

If Assange really wanted to stand up for his beliefs, wouldn't he go to the United States and ask to be imprisoned in Manning's place? Wouldn't he fly to Stockholm and denounce his accusers from the dock? Wouldn't he dare this US Grand Jury to just try it?

What better triumph— what greater chance at immortality— than to truly be unjustly punished for one's cause, to be sent down by a crooked judge for daring to challenge the corrupt regime?

Assange just doesn't want to face up to what he has done. He is happy to be the avenging hero of Wikileaks, just as long as he doesn't face any actual consequences for his actions.

He wants to conflate an embarrassing sex charge with a global conspiracy.

And he angrily denies reports that Wikileaks' publication of confidential US cables has endangered America's informants— many of whom are really oppressed— in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan. So far, Assange makes an unconvincing martyr.

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/opinion/julian-guilty-of-sexing-up-case-for-martyrdom/story-e6frezz0-1226381369377>

[Note: This hatchet job contains so many errors and distortions that it is pointless to attempt to correct it. For the facts, see: <http://www.nm.se/nordic/assange.htm> -- A.B.]

Open letter to the Australian people from Christine Assange, mother of Julian Assange

WL Central
2012-06-03

The following is an open letter to the Australian people from Christine Assange, mother of Julian Assange.

There have been numerous public statements made about WikiLeaks and its editor-in-chief Julian Assange that are factually inaccurate.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard said about WikiLeaks, "It's illegal." Attorney General Nicola Roxon said my son "fled Sweden." The media repeatedly states, "Assange is charged or facing charges" in relation to Swedish sex allegations.

Some of these inaccurate statements are due to misinformation, but others are designed to smear Julian, to erode his public support, and to discredit WikiLeaks in order to prevent the further publishing of uncomfortable truths.

Many Australians, including leading lawyers, academics, and journalists believe WikiLeaks is a legitimate, ethical, and courageous media organisation, and that Julian is an innocent man, a political prisoner, persecuted for exposing the complicity of the U.S. Government and its large corporations in war crimes, fraud, corruption, the exploitation of the third world, bullying, and diplomatic manipulation, that is lying to the public and other shady dealings.

Many of us were appalled watching the Australian Government stand by in silence as furious US politicians and commentators called for the brutal murder of my son.

Many of us were appalled watching the Australian Government stand silent when Julian's personal bank accounts were frozen, and when the US Government cut off 95 per cent of WikiLeaks funding by pressuring credit card companies to refuse to process

voluntary donations. This was done despite the US Treasury stating there was no reason to blacklist WikiLeaks.

Many of us are deeply concerned that the Australian Government refuses to protest against the many documented abuses of Julian's legal and human rights in the Swedish extradition case, or his right to a fair legal process in an imminent US extradition application.

Moreover, many feel his treatment signifies wider concerns that the Australian Government has become an echo chamber of the US Government and its big business, which increasingly dictated Australian policy, including newer legislation that is against the interests of Australian security, the privacy and civil rights of Australian citizens, Australian businesses, and Australian democracy.

I implore you as a mother and urge you as an Australian citizen to look at the facts I have listed below and to make up your own mind.

Included below are even more links to factual information.

*Thanking you,
Christine Assange*

FACTS

PLEASE NOTE: Julian has not been charged by Sweden regarding the sex allegations, or by any other country in the world in relation to his work at WikiLeaks.

WikiLeaks

WikiLeaks is a not-for-profit legally-constituted online news publisher which is funded by voluntary donations and has been recognised for quality investigative journalism, with many prestigious international journalism and human rights awards (Wikipedia).

Sam Adams Award 2010 was unanimously awarded to Julian Assange for "integrity and intelligence" for the release of the Afghan War Diaries and Iraq war logs by a panel of senior US military and intelligence officers (ret.). Awards ceremony: "It has been said that: 'You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.' WikiLeaks is helping make that possible by publishing documents that do not lie."

2011 Walkley Award for Excellence in Journalism "Today journalists and editors around the world are concerned about the attacks on WikiLeaks. This is an issue of the freedom of the press, people have a right to information through the opportunities provided by the web, journalists remain ready to fight for the principle of exposure journalism. His organisation has done nothing more than hold Governments to account and we should stand by him and his right to do so".

WikiLeaks acts in accordance with traditional journalism. It publishes information given by various sources but protects its sources with a secure anonymous dropbox.

WikiLeaks redacts its documents, so to date not one person has been physically harmed by its publications.

WikiLeaks has a perfect record with information reliability. **No Government has denied authenticity of any documents.**

Swedish Sex Allegations and the Swedish Extradition Case

After the Afghan War Diary release 25/7/10 Julian visited Sweden to obtain residency and base WikiLeaks there because of the good whistle-blowing laws. The US was aware of more WikiLeaks releases to come and wrote threatening letters. Julian was warned of entrapment plans.

Woman A.A. invited Julian to speak in Sweden at a seminar about Afghanistan in mid-August 2010. Woman S.W. stated she went to the seminar to meet Julian. Both women have stated to the police and media that sex was consensual and non-violent. Exculpatory evidence (texts to friends) show women had no complaints regarding sex until finding out about each other and 100+ texts between A.A. and S.W. speak of revenge, making money and ruining Julian's reputation by going to the press.

Woman S.W. was so upset police were going to allege rape she does not finish her interview or sign her witness statement, which was then altered again without her consent. She stated she felt railroaded into making a complaint.

In Sweden, consensual non-violent sex can be legally defined as rape.

Contrary to Swedish police procedure the women's interviews were not video or audio taped and the first prosecutor, Maria Häljebö-Kjellstrand, unlawfully told the press Julian was wanted for rape. Julian was not interviewed or informed— he found out in the tabloid newspaper Expressen that he was "being hunted down for double rape". Within hours, there were millions of website hits for Assange plus rape, causing irreparable harm to Julian's reputation.

The next day after reviewing the file, Stockholm's chief prosecutor Eva Finné threw out the rape allegation. "I consider there are no grounds for suspecting he has committed rape," she said.

For the last three years, the political advisor to the Swedish Prime Minister has been Karl Rove, a notorious, disgraced former Bush administration advisor who orchestrated vicious smear campaigns against political opponents. Karl Rove is a personal friend of the Swedish Prime Minister Fredrick Reinfeldt and of the Swedish foreign minister Carl Bildt.

Sweden has close ties to the US and was the major arms supplier to the US-Iraq War.

Around a week after the dropping of the rape allegation by the chief prosecutor, a politician/lawyer named Claes Borgström appealed the decision. Claes Borgström and his business partner Thomas Bodström run a thriving legal practice based on representing claimants in sex cases.

Woman A.A., Irmeli Krans (interrogating police officer of woman SW) and both Borgström and Bodström are members of the Swedish Social Democrat Party. They all stood together for elections at the same time, one month after the sex allegations were made against Julian, with one of the platforms being widening the definition of rape within consensual sex.

Woman A.A. produced new evidence for the appeal. She submitted a condom which she states Julian tore deliberately. Forensic tests showed there was no DNA evidence in the condom from either Julian or herself.

Julian was not informed of the appeal and had no chance to make a submission. The appeal was successful.

Julian Did Not Flee Sweden

He remained in Sweden for five weeks seeking an interview with the new prosecutor Marianne Ny. She made excuses not to interview him and gave him permission to leave Sweden for business on September 15th (meeting with Cablegate media partners). He offered to fly back into Sweden for interview on October 9 or 10. Ny refused because it was a weekend. He offered to fly back on October 11th. Ny refused because it was too far away.

During October and November Julian stayed at the journalist's club in the UK preparing for the release of the US diplomatic cables (Cablegate). During this period, he offered to be interviewed by Marianne Ny via the normal protocol for this situation called Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) (via Skype, phone or videolink). Marianne Ny refused all offers.

Around the time of the release of Cablegate in late November, Marianne Ny issued a European Arrest Warrant (EAW) for questioning, stating that Julian had fled the country, and a public Interpol Red Notice for his arrest.

For the entire 16 months that Julian has been under house arrest in the UK, Marianne Ny has refused all his offers to be interviewed at the Swedish Embassy or in Scotland Yard.

Marianne Ny has misled the Swedish and UK public by stating that she was legally not allowed to interview Julian by mutual legal assistance or in the UK. Sweden is a signatory to MLA.

Many legal people investigating the case are of the opinion that the Swedish extradition case is not bona fide but merely a holding case awaiting a US extradition.

The European Arrest Warrant

The European arrest warrant is only supposed to be issued for prosecution, not for questioning. Under the terms of the European Arrest Warrant, no allegations can be tested (including the sex allegations against Julian).

The European Arrest Warrant was initially meant for the fast-track extradition of bona

fide terrorists but has been misused. It has been subject to much criticism since its inception as it results in the abuse of many citizens' legal and human rights (1000 people per month extradited from the UK).

The Supreme Court Appeal

Julian is appealing the UK High Court's decision to extradite him in the only way he can, not on the evidence of the allegations but on a point of law of public importance. This point of law refers to the fact that a public prosecutor is not a judicial authority and that there is a conflict of interest in a prosecutor having the final say in the issuing of an European Arrest Warrant. Marianne Ny acted as both prosecutor and judicial authority on the issue of the European Arrest Warrant for Julian.

If Julian loses the Supreme Court appeal he will be sent to Sweden in ten days.

If Julian wins the appeal he is free to return home to Australia, unless the US immediately applies for a US extradition from the UK before he has a chance to leave.

What Happens If Julian Goes To Sweden

There is no bail in Sweden for foreigners and he will be held in indefinite detention in a Swedish remand prison incommunicado except to Swedish lawyers and in solitary confinement.

If and when the case proceeds to trial he will be tried in secret (no media or observers) by four judges. Three of the four judges will be "lay" judges, that is, they have no legal training and are appointed by political parties.

The other alternative is that the US will immediately unseal its Grand Jury indictment against Julian and from any point that he arrives in Sweden he could be extradited to the US. Many people falsely believe that the UK would have to sign off on an onward extradition to the US. This is true, if it is by way of a normal European extradition. However, under a separate US/Swedish Bilateral Treaty, Julian can be legally rendered to the US via a component of that treaty called the Temporary Surrender Regime. This is a secret, fast-track, no-test rendition.

What Happens If the US Applies for an Extradition From the UK

The extradition hearing will be public and take longer, but the UK/US treaty is unbalanced, that while a prima facie case (evidence) is required to extradite a person from the US to the UK, no prima facie (evidence) is required to extradite a person from the UK to the US. So any allegations that the US is making about Julian cannot be tested prior to extradition.

The US Grand Jury Indictment

The US Grand Jury has been sitting for 16 months and it is believed to have reached a verdict to indict Julian and has a sealed subpoena ready to unseal at the most beneficial time to the US. The Grand Jury is a flawed, unjust legal process, consisting of

four prosecutors but no defense evidence is allowed. There is no judge and the jury pool is drawn from Alexandria, Virginia which has the highest percentage of military contractor families in the US.

The Trial of Bradley Manning

Private Bradley Manning, the whistleblower, who is alleged to have provided the US documents to the WikiLeaks dropbox, has been held in a US military prison for the last two years without trial. The last straw for Bradley Manning was when he was asked to arrest 15 Iraqi civilian protesters and to send them to the Iraqi police for torture. Their "crime" was to hand out flyers upon which was written "Where has the money gone?" referring to corruption by contractors involving post-war construction. When he expressed his concern that this was unethical behaviour for a US soldier he was told to "shut up and go and get 15 more".

Bradley Manning has been subjected to ongoing no-touch torture in an attempt to break him so that he will falsely incriminate Julian in criminal conspiracy. This is because under the First Amendment to the American Constitution Julian, as a journalist, is protected— even when publishing classified government documents.

<http://wlcentral.org/node/2632>

Julian Assange on 2UE Radio; Supreme Court verdict, lack of support from Australian Government

*Transcript: Julian Assange interviewed on 2UE Radio, 4 June 2012.
Full audio is available via the 2UE website.*

*Submitted by m_cetera
WL Central
2012-06-05*

Tim Shaw: Well, I'm really pleased to say, as promised, joining me live on the line from London is founder of WikiLeaks, Julian Assange. Good morning from here, good afternoon/evening to you, Julian.

Julian Assange: Good morning.

Tim Shaw: I want to thank you very much for your time. Before we get started I just wanted to say what a remarkable woman your mother is, Julian.

Julian Assange: She's great. She's a real fighter, isn't she? I think we're all lucky to be in a position like I am, to have family rally around like that.

Tim Shaw: You know family's really important. I spoke to Senator Bob Carr, the Foreign Minister of Australia, and said to him, 'Bob Carr, if a member of your family or my family was under house arrest in a foreign country as an Australian citizen, I know I'd be doing everything I could to get to the bottom of this.' Can we go right back to Sweden. My friend, I've read documents that your mother has sent me, I've read

reports from all over the world, but just remind my listeners: you were invited to Sweden to attend a conference and to speak at a conference, is that right?

Julian Assange: That's correct. But I suppose if you're wanting this big background picture, you have to look at the context. **The context was:** I was trying to play a very precarious game with the United States and had 251,000 U.S. diplomatic cables in my back pocket, and was doing things like trying to get out of Australia at that stage because we had intelligence that the Australian Labor Government was hostile, and that proved eventually to be correct. Went into the European Parliament to give a talk about censorship; made sure I flew through Hong Kong, so I was less likely to be seized by the United States. Eventually wound up in England preparing our big releases about Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Cablegate release. And we discovered that—in fact, it was in The Daily Mail—that FBI agents had arrived in the United Kingdom and had raided Bradley Manning's mother's house. Bradley Manning is a young soldier, young intelligence officer, who the U.S. Government accused of being one of our sources, who they put in prison—who they have kept in prison to date. And they raided him. **So I was in London, FBI officers were in Wales cooperating with the British police, and under that circumstance I needed to get out again. So we arranged an invite to speak at a political gathering about Afghanistan and Sweden, thinking that would afford me safe passage out of the country.**

Tim Shaw: So when you arrived in Sweden there was an offer, I think, to stay at the home of a Swedish national and you chose to do so.

Julian Assange: The political organization that invited me there, which was part of the Christian section of the Social Democrats in Sweden, arranged for a place for me to stay; yes, that's correct.

Tim Shaw: Okay. In your own words, Julian, just tell my listeners—and we're going right around the country—just tell us what happened.

Julian Assange: Well I can't go into the details of the case for obvious reasons, because it's before the courts. But you can look online and see what the Swedish police say what the allegations at their strongest against me. And I think anyone reading that will think the case is completely and utterly absurd. As for what my version of events is, that's something that we'll leave for the court, for strategic reasons. But also for another reason, which is this concerns my private life and it's not something that I should be forced to talk about, unless I am charged and put before a court.

Tim Shaw: And the important thing about that very clear point: there are no charges. These are assertions that are being made by authorities from Sweden, but am I correct in understanding that neither woman has signed any form of document asserting or alleging that you raped them?

Julian Assange: That's correct. We know, in fact, that what is said, what is admitted by the Swedish prosecution in its filing to the UK Supreme Court is that both women went into the police station to ask for advice, they say, about getting STD tests. And then, within a few hours, that had gotten to the Swedish Prime Minister's residence, and was picked up by a reporter, they say—the reporter said at that residence—and then was

splashed all over the world. But the younger girl refused to even... aborted the sort-of conversation with the police once she had heard that they were intending to arrest me and refused to even sign her statement. And later on, in even the police documents, she says that she was railroaded by police.

Tim Shaw: Julian, you've spent over 500 days under house arrest in the United Kingdom. Senator Bob Carr, repeating the Ambassador to Australia from the United States Jeffrey Bleich— I've spoken to Jeffrey Bleich on my program specifically about you and about WikiLeaks. Jeffrey Bleich said last week, the U.S. Ambassador to Australia, there is no 26th of January of 2011 sealed file of indictment, that there is no grand jury, and that there is no interest in extraditing you to the United States. What do you want to say to my listeners about that statement?

Julian Assange: I don't know what he said to you precisely, but I have noticed a delicate game that Jeffrey has been playing. Jeffrey Bleich is a lawyer [Shaw: Yes] and so he says things like, "There is no such thing as a secret warrant." Well, he may be correct about that. But we're not talking about a secret warrant, we're talking about a sealed indictment issued by the grand jury. They're playing this word game to try and suggest there is no grand jury. In the past three weeks, two people flying out of the United States have been detained by the FBI and interrogated about me. The evidence of the grand jury is all over. People have stood on— **witnesses who have been dragged into that grand jury have stood on the steps in Washington and described what they've been interrogated about.** Subpoenas that have been issued by that grand jury. There are multiple court cases currently before the U.S. courts fighting those very subpoenas that have been issued by the grand jury. There are nine— at least at the time witnesses were reporting on it— nine prosecutors involved from the U.S. Department of Justice prosecuting that grand jury.

Tim Shaw: Let me also get clear this point: did you wait for a number of weeks, in Sweden, waiting, ready, and willing to be questioned by Swedish authorities, and did the Swedish authorities make any effort to question you in that time whilst you are in Sweden.

Julian Assange: They did not. I was there for 4 or 5 weeks. I was only intending to be in Sweden for less than one week, but because this came up I thought it would look bad if I left the country. So I stayed there and demanded to give my side of the story. The entire case was dropped within 12 hours, when the chief prosecutor of Stockholm came onto it, reviewed it, and said, 'there is nothing to show, nothing to suggest that a crime of rape has been committed.' And the whole case was dropped. And then there was the involvement of a Swedish politician, Claes Borgström, who was running for the federal election, which was just one month down the track. And he went to a friend of his, a prosecutor in Gothenburg— which is kind of like Ballarat, in Sweden—and got her to take this case back up. And we demanded that she interview me so I could get my side of the story, so I could leave the country, because I had many, many things to do, with preparing enormous revelations about Iraq, Afghanistan, U.S. diplomatic cables. She refused to give me a date to be interviewed, and eventually she admitted to my lawyer I was free to leave Sweden. And I did.

Tim Shaw: When you left Sweden and arrived in England, how quickly after your departure from Sweden was the International Arrest Warrant issued.

Julian Assange: Let's see... They issued it in very, very late November; I think it was two days before Cablegate. And this was an extraordinary thing for there to be an Interpol Red Notice when someone hadn't even been charged, let alone for the type of allegations these were. As an example: another Swedish prosecutor from Stockholm was investigating a case last year where a Swedish man had been beaten by two Irish musicians nearly to the point of death. It was all caught on CCTV camera. **The Irish musicians confessed to doing it and then they went back to Ireland. And the Swedish prosecutor dropped the case and was questioned, 'Why on earth did you drop the case?' and he said, 'Well, we can't just be issuing European Arrest Warrants all the time. We only do that for really serious offenses like murder.'**

Tim Shaw: Australians are listening to this, Julian, and it belies belief, you know. The fair-minded Australian believes that if there are charges to be answered, let's answer them. But there are no charges and as Christine spoke to me earlier— your mother— just reaffirmed that if you were willing, which you are, to be questioned by the Swedish authorities at the Swedish Embassy in London, you're prepared to answer any questions of those, and if charged, they would be required to provide the evidence as part of that charge, and that's where it seems the evidence is lacking. Would you agree with that?

Julian Assange: Right. So it seems this is what's been happening. I have been demanding, in Sweden, to be able to give my side of the story. When I got to the UK, have been demanding to give my side of the story in the UK. For over 540 days, I've had an electronic manacle around my leg, being under house arrest, being forced to be in this country because of one reason: The Swedish Government will not come to this country and interview me. They will not interview me on the phone. It is perfectly within their legal entitlements— there are standing treaties to do this, called the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty— and it is done, in other cases in Sweden. So the case has not progressed because I am suspicious of what is happening in Sweden and the Swedes will not provide us sure answers. The obvious thing to do— the Swedish Government was criticized in the high court— is simply to pick up the telephone and call me. Or if they want to do it in person, to meet me. Or if they want to do it on Swedish soil it can be at the Embassy. Or they can use standard treaty techniques like the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty. It makes you wonder what the hell is going on? And is this how a Government operates, is operating in good faith?

Tim Shaw: I am looking at a letter written on the letterhead of the honorable Nicola Roxon MP Attorney-General and Minister for Emergency Management, it's addressed to Jennifer Robinson, one of the legal team. You've got a copy of the letter, so have I. She met with the Attorney-General on the 2nd of May, some 30 days ago. Just take us through what that meeting was like for Jennifer Robinson and what Jennifer was seeking on your behalf.

Julian Assange: Well, look, what Jen tells me, my lawyer, is that she met on the 2nd of May with the Attorney-General for about 40 minutes; the Attorney-General with two other people— on her left her national security political adviser, on her right the departmental national security adviser— and the Attorney-General is responsible for the Australian intelligence services. Why are these two guys there? What have they got to do with the Swedish sex allegation? Why are they there? And now we look, now we

have the response from Nicola Roxon about that meeting. My lawyer made various demands such as if the Australian Government demands that if I went to Sweden that I would not be incarcerated without charge. And the response back is it refused to do so. And if Robinson demanded to the Australian Government of the Swedes that they use a standard European mechanism and come to England to interview me or drop the case. The Australian Government refused to do so. Similarly, **the language here in this letter can only be described as a declaration of abandonment.** This is not even the usual mealy-mouthed weasel words that bureaucracies use. For example, it says, "Australia would not expect to be a part of any extradition discussions that may take place between the United States and United Kingdom, or the United States and Sweden." So it's simply aggregating any sort of involvement whatsoever. "In the event that Mr Assange were to stand trial for an offence in the United States, he would be subject to the usual procedures and due process in the United States constitution and United States law," i.e. nothing. "Should Mr Assange be convicted of an offence in the United States and be sentenced to imprisonment, he may apply for international prisoner transfer to Australia. His application would be considered on its merits and in accordance with the relevant legislation."

Tim Shaw: I can't help but thinking, Julian, that if a citizen of the United States or a citizen of Sweden was under house arrest in our country for more than 500 days, Australia, the democracy that we live in, that there would be representations at a diplomatic level and I would suggest also at a political level saying to the Australian authorities, if the situation were reversed, 'Put up or shut up.' Charge our citizen or release our citizen. This is what the Australian people just can't seem to get to the basis of. I put to the Federal Foreign Minister Bob Carr, what your mother Christine told me in the interview was that consular support has been provided at the highest and fullest level. Julian, you're the target. Tell us exactly what Bob Carr's, the Foreign Minister's, consular support has or has not been.

Julian Assange: Well, **Bob Carr's trying to redefine consular support as a cheese sandwich.** I mean, these are just empty words. The last time U.S. consular officials met with my lawyers was back in the past December and they didn't provide anything at all. We were just handing over these demands to them. They have provided us with no legal advice ever. Whatsoever. The last time that I met with any persons from the Australian Embassy, any person claiming to be related to consular support, was when I was in prison in 2010. December 2010, locked in solitary confinement and they gave me a notepad. **So when Bob Carr says "consular support," what he means is the Foreign Minister's office coming to court and observing what's going on so that he can write a brief to the minister in order to best prepare the minister's press lines. None of that information comes back to us. And when we've tried to get hold of it, for example through the Freedom of Information Act or when the Sydney Morning Herald has tried to get hold of it, 95% of it is entirely blacked out, with FOIs being withheld in some cases for 18 months. Even though legally they should only be held for 40 days.**

Tim Shaw: Julian Assange, what do you think is going to happen in the next 8 to 10 days in relation to quite a fair argument your lawyer made in the court of appeal, that specifically that the reference of the judgment was not related to the case that was argued? What do you actually think is going to happen in the next 8, 10, 12 days, since last Wednesday's decision.

Julian Assange: Look, it's a matter of politics. When a case becomes this political and this prominent, it ceases to sort-of fall under the normal procedural standards or just the wheel of the justice system grinding and in a way it becomes intimately political. In the current matter before the Supreme Court, four of the judges based their decision on a point that wasn't even made in court and that breaches sort-of the basic right that you are able to argue the case. Two of the judges, by the way, found in my favour, two of the Supreme Court judges. So we'll be trying to shift some of those remaining four onto our side. Another point that maybe Australian listeners don't realize is that the head of the Supreme Court said in reading his judgment summary, falsely, that I had been charged. It was a mistake, everyone ignored it, it was a mistake. But how can one have confidence in the Supreme Court under the situation where it can't even get basic elements like that in the case correct.

Tim Shaw: Julian, you had your critics. There are listeners to my program that have no interest in a website called WikiLeaks, but what Australians believe, fair-minded Australians want, is a due process, a fair process, but arguably some 500 days later we are no further ahead in really getting an outcome from the assertions being made by those in Sweden. Just tell my listeners, just finally, how do you feel, as an Australian citizen under lock-and-key house arrest, if you were not under house arrest in Britain, where would you like to be? Back in Australia?

Julian Assange: Well, right now I'd come back to Australia immediately. But back in December 2007, Australia was a dangerous place for me. The Labor Government in Australia, under Gillard, started up a whole Government task force against me and my organisation, publicly declared involving the A-G's office, the Australian Federal Police, the Department of Defence, both internal and external intelligence agencies, publicly declared the A-G threatened to cancel my passport. You have to understand, this particular government and people who surround Gillard are deeply — perhaps "in bed" is not the right way to put it — but **they are deeply involved in getting patronage and friends within the United States.** And as far as I can see, what the Australian Labor Government is doing now, it understands that ship is sinking. So it's just going to use the rest of its time in office to make as many pals with powerful people as it possibly can, so when the whole thing goes down, they'll have another ship to jump to.

Tim Shaw: Julian Assange, just finally in your heart of hearts, and, I'll take you at your word, do you believe any of the actions caused by yourself as the publisher of WikiLeaks, the broader publishing in some of the biggest newspapers in the world, from Der Spiegel to American, British, and even Australian newspapers, that anything published from documents that were provided and published on WikiLeaks has led to the risk of or the causing of death of any American or Australian servicemen?

Julian Assange: Not even the U.S. Government is alleging that. It doesn't even allege that a single person has been physically harmed anywhere in the world as a result of our publishing activities. Now, we're doing something big at a grand scale, and just like someone who makes cars or introduces a new invention into the world, there's always a potential for harm. But thus far, there hasn't been any, and neither is anyone formally alleging.

Tim Shaw: Are you a technology terrorist or a titan of transparency, Julian Assange?

Julian Assange: [laughs] Yeah. So, Joseph Biden, the U.S. vice president, back in the heat of things in early 2011, said that I was akin to a high-tech terrorist and it's just crazy. The only people being terrorized by our publications are politicians that have got something to hide.

Tim Shaw: I want to thank you very much for joining me on the program, and I particularly through you want to thank your mother, Christine Assange. She's been a guest on my program twice. She's a fearless fighter, not just for her own son, Julian, but in my view, just what I believe fair-minded Australians want, which is truth, some honesty, and for those that believe that something's gone wrong or being done wrong, put up or shut up. And just from my point of view, whether I agree or disagree with the conduct of WikiLeaks and its publishing organisation as you run it and founded, I can't help but think that what you've been telling my listeners now, what your mother's been telling us, and certainly those journalists—Dorling particularly from the Sydney Morning Herald—have been telling us is that you are not getting the kind of support from the Department of Foreign Affairs, from the Foreign Affairs Minister, or from this Government led by Gillard.

Julian Assange: Look, I don't even have the rights of the defendant, because I haven't been charged. I don't have a right to see any evidence against me, see the detailed allegations against me, to counter these matters in a legal way, because I am not even a defendant. We have a basic motion in Australia that you are free to go about your life as an adult until the Government charges you with an offence. And then you must have your day in court, and it's the Government's responsibility to show, beyond a reasonable doubt, that you have done something wrong. But until at least being charged, let alone convicted, you are free to go about your life as a free citizen. For the last 540 days, I have been detained without charge.

Tim Shaw: Final word to Foreign Affairs Minister Bob Carr, please, Julian.

Julian Assange: Well, I guess to Mr Carr, you are a new Foreign Minister and therefore we are watching very closely to see what you do with this case. I think everyone deserves a fair go in a new job and there's lots of misinformation flowing around about this case. But what we've just heard in this interview is suggestive that Mr Carr is not going to be any different than his predecessor, in fact far likely to be worse.

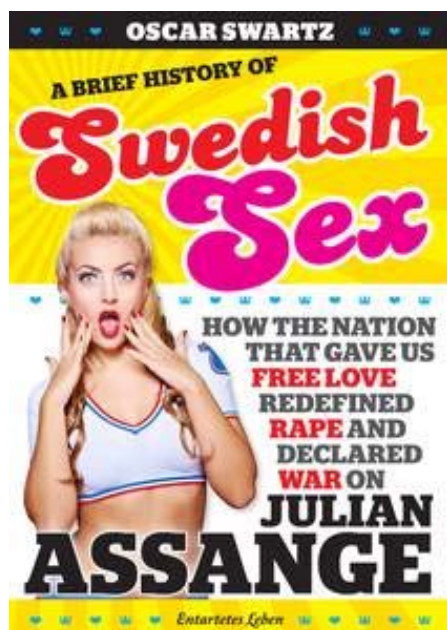
Tim Shaw: Julian, thank you...

Julian Assange: He's unelected.

Tim Shaw: It's true, it's true, it's a political appointment. Julian Assange, thank you for your time and I'm sorry, your mother sounds very similar to my mother so give her a big hug from me, will you?

Julian Assange: [laughs] Will do. Thanks, bye.'

Tim Shaw: Thank you. Julian Assange, live from London. We spoke with Christine Assange on my Legal Matters program. Bob Carr, the Foreign Minister of Australia, made it perfectly clear that as far as he was concerned that there was the highest level of consular support for Julian Assange. You read Mr Assange as you will. And that was live and un-interrupted, I'm taking your calls now on this. Tell me what you think.



AB: 2012-06-05

Strider för Assange — och sexassistenter

Timbrodebattör tar strid för "hjälten" i ny bok

Wikileaks [och Amazon m.fl. --A.B.] gör just nu reklam för boken A brief history of Swedish sex. Den handlar om "hur nationen som gav oss fri kärlek startade krig mot Julian Assange".

– Mycket av hur man reagerar på sex sitter i huvudet, säger författaren Oscar Swartz, debattör hos tankesmedjan Timbro [*knappat det; se nedan -- A.B.*].

På Wikileaks twitter görs reklam för den nya boken, vars omslag liknar en gladporrfilm: "Swedish Sex" i 70-talstypografi, en blond lättklädd kvinna med förvånad uppsyn och vidöppen mun.

Utlovat innehåll: "Hur nationen som gav oss fri kärlek omdefinierade våldtäkt och startade krig mot Julian Assange".

Assange beskrivs som hjälte

På bokens hemsida beskrivs den ta upp hur en åklagare plötsligt efterlyste "hjälten" för våldtäkt.

"De som läser de läckta förhörprotokollen skakade sina huvuden av misstro. Hur kunde så små incidenter bli toppprioritet? Var inte Sverige känt för sin fria sexuella kultur? Är Sverige 'feminismens Saudiarabien' som Julian Assange påstått", frågar sig författaren Oscar Swartz.

Swartz har författat flera rapporter för högertankesmedjan Timbro, bland annat "Alternativ till Bodströmsamhället" om internetövervakningen i Sverige 2008.

Advokat Claes Borgström företräder de två kvinnor som anmält Assange för våldtäkt 2010.

– Jag har sett omslaget på nätet, men har inte läst den. Jag måste avstå från att kommentera, säger han till Aftonbladet.

Aftonbladet når Oscar Swartz, som förklarar varför han skrivit boken:

– Iden kom på grund av Assangefallet och de reaktioner som kom. Ute i världen var det många som var förvånade, **speciellt när förundersökningsprotokollen började spridas**, säger han och fortsätter:

– Många hade bilden att Sverige var som på 60-talet och jag menar att det inte är så konstigt det som hände, med tanke på den sexualpolitik som drivits. **På 60-talet talade man mycket om handikappade och statliga bordeller. Man såg det nästan som en samhällslig plikt att alla skulle ha rätt till ett sexliv.**

– I dag finns sexuella assistenter i Tyskland, Holland och Danmark, Schweiz, Österrike och Japan. Men i Sverige är ståndpunkten att en sexuell assistent som hjälper någon utsetts för ett övergrepp. Den svenska sidan av saken är rätt märklig och det är det jag tänkte berätta.

Vad har detta med Assangefallet att göra?

– Jag tror att för att folk ska förstå den sexualpolitiska utvecklingen måste man förstå varför Sverige tar till kraftfulla metoder mot något som de flesta uppfattar som dålig sex eller kanske gå över gränsen. Det behöver nödvändigtvis inte bestå i internationella CIA-konspirationer.

Du låter kritisk mot utvecklingen.

– **Ja, boken är skriven ur ett sexliberalt perspektiv, och då innebär det att man är kritisk mot utvecklingen i Sverige från 60- och 70-talet.**

Vad konkret är du kritisk mot?

– Det finns en officiell syn på sexualitet som är uppseendeväckande: sexköpslagen är en sak. I de motiv och resonemang som förs framstår Sverige som ett exterimistiskt land. Man har uppgraderat brott till att dömas hårdare och hårdare. **Det är mer och mer som räknas som våldtäkt. Det är uppseendeväckande också att sexuella beröringar anses värre än grovt våld i många fall.**

– Sedan finns det en stor debatt kring pornografi. Jag har exempel på hur staten, försvarsmakten och tunga opinionspolitiker vill begränsa och i vissa fall förbjuda porr.

Tror du att om vi var mer öppna gentemot porr, prostitution och sexuella assistenter att vi skulle se annorlunda på Assangefallet?

– Ja, jag vet inte exakt vad han gjort men jag vet ju vad kvinnorna har berättat. Jag skulle säga att en syn på sex som man hade på 60- och 70-talet var väldigt annorlunda än nu. Mycket av det hur man reagerar på sex sitter ju i huvudet. Man såg på sexuella beröringar på ett annat sätt då.

Handlar inte det om att det blivit ett förstärkt skydd för kvinnor i lagstiftningen och opinionen?

– Det är klart att vi ska ha en stark lagstiftning mot sexualbrott, och man får dra sin slutsats själv. Jag är inte polemisk på något vis. **Det är ingen debattbok, utan jag presenterar en faktisk utveckling.**

Men på hemsidan om boken beskrivs Assange som en "hjälte".

– **Jag använder nog inte ordet hjälte i boken. Omvärlden såg ju honom som en hjälte.**

Har du haft kontakt med Assange och Wikileaks?

– De visste inte att boken skulle komma. Men jag har träffat Assange på konferenser tidigare.

Chefredaktören för nättidningen Feministiskt Perspektiv Anna-Klara Bratt uppger att hon delvis kan hålla med Swartz i resonemanget om att samhället blivit mer sexuellt moraliserande sedan 1960-talet.

– Men å andra sidan finns det en större sexism och man sexualiserar barn. Och det är en stor vanföreställning att det skulle vara lätt att fällas för våldtäkt inom det svenska rättssystemet. Det är tvärtom väldigt svårt i Sverige att bli fälld för våldtäkt. Vi har mycket färre fällande domar sett till antalet åtal, jämfört med exempelvis Frankrike. De flesta feminister tycker att svensk sexualbrottslagstiftning är otillräcklig och då har vi inte kommit till tillämpningen ännu, säger hon och fortsätter:

– Att blanda ihop det här med Assange och försvara honom med att förorda sexassistenter är märkligt. Jag menar att man måste separera de olika delarna. Försvarandet av yttrandefriheten, krig och fred och Wikileaks, är en helt annan fråga. Många inom Wikileaks vill ju bli av med Julian Assange på grund av hans undermåliga sätt att hantera detta.

Anna-Klara Bratt anser också att kvinnorna som anmält Assange får utstå hets från hela världen.

– Det går inte att vifta bort de här kvinnornas talan. Det är en enorm smutskastningskampanj som liknar rena häxprocesser. Man säger att ingen ska bli dömd innan man bevisat någon skyldig. De här kvinnorna är dömda hundra gånger om i hela världen.

• *Lisa Röstellund*

Svensk sex och venuspassagen på nationaldagen

Oscar Swartz
2012-06-06

Aftonbladet har upptäckt att jag skrivit en bok om svensk sexualpolitisk utveckling från 1950 fram till idag. Den som följt min blogg kan inte vara förvånad men en del har blivit paffa. Att de kallar mig "debattör hos tankesmedjan Timbro" är illvilligt förstås, eftersom Timbro är ett rött skynke för många AB-läsare.

Som fri skribent är jag tacksam att ha fått ett par rapporter publicerade av Timbro. Den svenska FRA- och integritetsdebatten hade varit fattigare utan mina rapporter om det övervakningsbesatta Bodströmssamhället. Men denna bok har absolut ingenting att göra med Timbro.

Cred till Aftonbladet som är smart nog att uppfatta omslaget på rätt sätt i motsats till en del jag sett kräkas över framsidan: "den nya boken, vars omslag liknar en gladporrfilm: "Swedish Sex" i 70-talstypografi, en blond lättklädd kvinna med förvånad uppsyn och vidöppen mun."

Just det! Men jag inser att det kan finnas många läsare som aldrig upplevt 1970-talet då gladporrfilmer var ett folknöje. De var mest danska. Vi var systerländer vad gäller sexliberalism men har utvecklats olika sedan.

Själv lyckades jag vid 14 års ålder på ett sommarlov slinka in på en då ny dansk gladporrfilm vars handling utspelade sig just under Venuspassagen, det astronomiska fenomen som inträffade i natt. Man skulle förstås vara 15 men biljettrivaren hade 70-talistisk förståelse för nyfikna pubertetskillar och släppte in mig. Filmen heter I Jungfruns tecken och uppskattas av många. Under Venuspassagen förväntades kvinnor födda i Jungfruns tecken bli okontrollerat upphetsade. Men skulle därför dela ut piller som dämpade sexlusten i staden. I stället förväxlades de med piller som ökade lusten. Resultatet kan man tänka sig.

Gladporren var en hyllning till levnadsglad, lössläppt och klacksparksmässig sexualitet. **Idag ses sex mer som ett problem än en möjlighet där man på #prataomdet-manér ska älta och ångra gammal fyllesex.**

Idén om boken kom när jag såg alla konspirationsteorier om Assange och Wikileaks, där CIA och honungsfällor diskuterades och där Sverige fortfarande tycktes ha ett rykte om sig som ett sexuellt accepterande land som inte tar sex på så blodigt allvar utan som en rolig aktivitet. Detta är ju uppåt väggarna fel.

Jag citerar Professor Don Kulick i boken: "From being admired and envied by many as beacons of sexual enlightenment in the 1960s and '70s, the Scandinavian countries today have some of the most repressive sex laws in the Western world. Sweden is the most draconian."

Så för att förstå Assangefallet behöver man inte nödvändigtvis blanda in CIA. Man behöver förstå svensk sexualpolitisk utveckling.

Jag har hört flera som fullkomligt baxnar över de resonemang runt sex som politiker och etablissemang uppvisar. Lagstiftning används för att styra män in i mer relationsorienterad sexualitet (vilket de anser är det kvinnliga väsendets natur). Den **minister som ansvarade för sexköpslagen, Ulrika Messing (s), säger så här om sexköpslagen:**

"I don't believe that prostitution has anything to do with sex— at least not as I see sex, as something that belongs in a love relationship. Those who visit prostitutes obviously have a need for sex— but not for the kind of sex they would have with their wife or partner. It is slightly forbidden— and now it actually becomes totally forbidden."

Så där håller det på.

Boken värderar knappt utvecklingen. Den presenterar. **Fakta talar för sig själv** och Sverige framstår för många som ett galet land och våra politiker som fullkomligt rubbade. Är de det? En del tycker nog att de är hjältar och på fullkomligt rätt spår, ett avantgarde. **Läsarna får värdera själva och se om de vill vara stolta eller skämmas för Sverige så här på nationaldagen.**

Jag har hört folk som vill vittna, få andra att läsa, få dem att se. Japp, jag tycker den är stark!...

<http://swartz.typepad.com/texplorer/2012/06/svensk-sex-och-venuspassagen-p%C3%A5-nationaldagen.html>

Q&A: Oscar Swartz

WL Central
2012-06-12

Oscar Swartz is a Swedish writer, entrepreneur, and Internet veteran. He founded Sweden's first independent ISP in 1994, has a degree from the Stockholm School of Economics, and was a Fulbright Fellow as a PhD student at Columbia University in New York. He divides his time between Stockholm and Berlin.

On 1 June 2012 Oscar released his book *Swedish Sex* to critical acclaim. The full title of the book is: *A Brief History of Swedish Sex: How the Nation that Gave Us Free Love Redefined Rape and Declared War on Julian Assange.*

Oscar researched the history of Swedish sex from the early 1950s and through to the arrest of Julian Assange in 2010. Written as a timeline, the book shows clearly how Sweden descended from one of the western world's most sexually liberated nations to its most repressive.

The full reality of what is going on in the 'duckpond' has been already reported to bring on Orwellian shivers. And when one finally gets to August 2010, it is hardly a shock to see what difficulties Julian Assange encountered and is still dealing with to this day.

Oscar's book cannot be too highly recommended. WL Central caught up with Oscar to get answers to a few key questions.

WLC: What prompted you to write the book?

Oscar Swartz: Sex is being increasingly used to control communications— and as a political weapon. A couple of high-profile cases took place in Sweden just before the Assange case broke. They are in the book.

I have long been a critic of Sweden's ever increasing fight against sexual activity which does not occur in a context that is regarded as romantically correct. **Sex has**

come to be seen by the establishment as dichotomous: either it is connected with deeper feelings and then it is wonderful— or it is abuse and criminal and awful.

Sweden's use of legal means is commonly seen as overreaching in the Assange case. Why don't they just interview him at the Embassy or something similar, is a common question. It may however be logical given Sweden's official position on sexuality. Sweden is extremist. But internationally we still have a reputation from the 1960s and 70s as a sexually liberal nation. I want to add knowledge about the state of affairs in Sweden and add one perspective to other theories in the Assange case. People who read the book seem to be stunned. They should be!

WLC: What do you think precipitated the change in sexual politics in Sweden?

Oscar Swartz: It is clear, and here I have the great anthropology professor Don Kulick with me, that it is connected to 'feminism' in some sense. But there are wildly different forms of feminism. **A dear friend and a feminist of my own kind, scholar and author Petra Östergren, is mentioned in my book. She went from celebrated to shunned feminist in Sweden when she questioned the radical feminist view that women must hate all porn and prostitution.** Radical feminism is an extremist branch but in Sweden its supporters have filled the highest positions in society and **have managed to control the discourse.** Claes Borgström is one of them. People may be shocked internationally when they read all these mind-boggling quotes from speeches and writings by top politicians and legislators in my book.

WLC: Do you think the politics in Sweden now are anti-male... or anti-sex in general... or both?

Oscar Swartz: First: Do we believe there are average differences between males and females when it comes to sexuality. I do. It seems probable that males are less discriminating and have a higher capacity to separate deeper feelings from sexual expression. There is a political war on such sex. Therefore it affects males disproportionately.

WLC: Do you see the same kinds of attacks on homosexual sex as on heterosexual sex?

Oscar Swartz: The homosexual world is a culture filled with porn, escorts, quick sex without deeper emotions— all the 'bad' things according to official doctrine. But there are very few rapes or sex crimes. This is a phenomenon that radical feminism never addresses. Instead they regulate homosexual sex in the same way as they do heterosexual, despite their analyses being based on male dominance of women. Even those who believe in the radical feminist worldview should be honest enough to admit their intellectual failure. In the book we find e.g. the case of the Sex Purchase Act (unilateral criminalization of a person who pays for casual sex, while allowing anyone to charge for such sex) which was simply applied to homosexual sex **although two governmental inquiries, preparing the legislation, concluded that homosexual prostitution works in an entirely different way.**

WLC: What do you think it would take to change the direction that sexual politics is taking in Sweden... e.g. can Sweden be restored to the level of freedom that it experienced in the 1960s? What would it take to make that happen?

Oscar Swartz: I see no such signs. Sweden claims that males have power over females. Only. **It lacks an understanding that females also have power over men, sexual power. Camille Paglia should be required reading.** We cannot achieve a less hostile sexual culture until we acknowledge and discuss both men's and women's roles when it comes to sexual interplay. *[But an essential element of radical feminist dogma is that there are no significant differences between men and women -- except that women are superior, of course. --A.B.]* I think there are solutions based on knowledge about sexuality. But sex is strictly ideology and politics in Sweden today. I'd like to go into this in another book, a cultural critique of our view of sexuality.

WLC: *Do you think that the change in attitude towards sex is a grassroots movement or a top-down directive from the government?*

Oscar Swartz: There is radical ideology from the top. But not only. I show how the Penal Code is now used to enforce pure and simple morals. I am not talking about rape here (although we are in for the fourth redefinition of rape in 20 years now). Let me give a quote from the book to show what I mean. Ulrika Messing, the cabinet minister who formally presented the Sex Purchase Act that criminalizes anyone who 'obtains a casual sexual relation in return for payment'. Her private comment was: 'I don't believe that prostitution has anything to do with sex— at least not as I see sex, as something that belongs in a love relationship. Those who visit prostitutes obviously have a need for sex— but not for the kind of sex they would have with their wife or partner. It is slightly forbidden— and now it actually becomes totally forbidden'.

Visit [the official website](#) of 'Swedish Sex' for information on how you get your copy. Currently priced at £5/\$7, the book is available as an electronic download, may be read on Kindle or the software equivalent.

You'll be scared!

<http://wlcentral.org/node/2652>

Transcript: Julian Assange on LNL Radio (Australia)

Submitted by m_cetera

WL Central

2012-06-06

Phillip Adams: Good day, beloved listeners. Last night on this little wireless program, I was talking to Shapiro about the Obama kill-list. It's pretty dangerous being deemed an enemy of the American people these days, because at any moment a drone will come in and take you out. And of course tonight we've learned that another member of Bin Laden Proprietary Limited has been killed by one of those precision attacks. I think if I was Julian Assange, I'd be more concerned with a drone attack than with mere extradition, but let's see how Julian is feeling at this time of, well, endless strife. Julian, who's talking to us from his hideout in the English countryside where he's under house arrest, joins us on the program. How are you coping with this incredible stress level?

Julian Assange: Good day, Phillip. Well, over the last few years we've gotten used to it. I've gotten used to it. It's not necessarily a good thing, I suppose. Y'know, people in quite adverse conditions get used to those conditions and they start to normalize.

Phillip Adams: Of course, it's not only your physical and mental health that's been under attack; your financial health has taken a bit of a dive, hasn't it?

Julian Assange: Yes. That's been one of the most interesting aspects of all we've done. So we released a lot of information about how the US empire works. And I don't want to use that word 'empire' in a sort-of classic 1960's Latin American radical way, because people close their minds. But if you read the State Department cables, for example, you see that that is the brain of the US empire's relationships with its foreign counterparts. **And that's got everything from how it conducts its business relationships to arms sales and various procedures to get young leaders from around the world embedded into Washington think tanks and then send them back out.** Now, it's not just information that we've released that's interesting, but the back reaction to that. So everything we've released is some degrees in the past, but the reaction to our publishing is happening right now. And that defines certain contours of power relationships in the United States and between the United States and the UK and England which were unexpected to a lot of people.

Phillip Adams: Julian, I'm talking about your personal bank account which was shut down. I understand that you're now technically bankrupt. Your bank accounts have been closed, many people associated with you have lost their jobs, even some who were quite indirectly connected. You've been... You're under the hammer, aren't you?

Julian Assange: Yes. I've been declared a PEP, a politically exposed person, and that means in practice that I can't open any bank accounts. So they have to go through extra steps to do that. There's a worldwide financial blockade completely outside the law by Visa, MasterCard, PayPal, American Express, Moneybookers, Western Union, Bank of America— **all US organizations.** They closed my Swiss accounts that we were using publicly to raise legal defence money and my personal ability to move money—even as far back as September 2010— from Australia into Sweden, was also blocked on the network. The Vienna to Australian blacklist, a US watch-list, at that time, back in 2010.

Phillip Adams: I wonder whether you weren't prepared for the verdict the other day; you must have thought it was on the cards.

Julian Assange: Yeah, we did, and we planned as best we could. But y'know, if you believe strongly in something then there comes a time where you have to choose to take the risks and go with your ideals or be a hypocrite. And we took the risk, and I'm proud of taking the risk. And now we suffer a bit from it, but I think in the medium to long term we'll be alright and I think we'll be seen to have been the right thing to do.

Phillip Adams: Julian, what chance do you have of the appeal being successful.

Julian Assange: The situation in the British Supreme Court is really interesting. So the case itself concerns... It doesn't sort of concern any of the trivial allegations. It concerns

a really central tenet of the relationship between European states and the use of coercive force. So if you say that a state is defined by an area of land— well maybe not land, even, these days— where there is some governing body that has monopoly use on coercive force, then who can use coercive force defines the powers in the state. And the UK has got itself wrapped into post-9/11 agreements, an inter-extradition agreement with other European states, that is wasn't really aware of. And even the Supreme Court justices who ruled against us, for technical reasons, and the Supreme Court said explicitly the parliament was misled about what they were buying into, and that it was quote, "disturbing", unquote, what had happened. **So the current situation, if their current interpretation is allowed to stand, is that any individual in the United Kingdom can be extradited by any bureaucrat anywhere in Europe without going through a court, without any evidence, and without any charge, from any 27 EU countries.**

Phillip Adams: I was talking to our mutual friend Pilger the other night about you and he felt the need to remind the listener that you haven't been charged with anything, that you made yourself available for interviews in Sweden, and that in fact you were also more than happy to be interrogated, y'know, in the UK via Skype or some of the new technologies which are now so common. And yet, many people, many of your erstwhile supporters, see you as in some way avoiding confrontation with your accusers.

Julian Assange: Well, I'm not sure 'more than happy' is the correct word, Phillip, I think 'mightily pissed off', but I'm understanding it might be necessary to resolve the situation. Yeah, so I was given... **I only visited Sweden because the FBI came to the UK and raided one of my alleged source's mother's house, Bradley Manning, in Wales. So the FBI was here in the UK, stomping around the UK, and we thought I'd better get out.** And I managed to get some people to write an invite to a talk on the first casualty of... Sorry, the first casualty of the war is the truth, in Sweden, and use that invite as sort-of a safe passage to get out through UK customs to Sweden. And then everything blew up while I was there for a week. And I didn't leave, rather I deliberately stayed in order to try and clear things up. They dropped everything, and then the prosecutor— the new prosecutor, that went through a whole bunch after some political involvement by someone who's a bit equivalent to the shadow Attorney-General, in Sweden— said that I could leave. And so I left, went about my business preparing the Iraq War Logs release and the US diplomatic cables release.

And then they said, 'Oh, actually we want you back here', and we said, 'OK, we'll prepare to do that'. And then other things started happening and they put out an Interpol Red Notice for me. They didn't even do that for Gaddafi until a very, very late stage. Then a European Arrest Warrant.

And so I said, 'This is absurd. I'm not even charged, I'm perfectly willing to speak', but **what is happening in Sweden makes us suspicious of how impartial this process is.** 'So you can come to the Swedish Embassy in London to interview me or use the standard European procedure', which is the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, 'if you want to talk to me, or you can speak to me on a video-phone', etc etc. And they had refused this entire time to do that, and, **more importantly, they had refused to even explain to the British courts why they refused,** saying that they do not have to explain why they refuse to follow standard, basic EU procedure. And as a result, I've been detained, without charge, for over 540 days now, under house arrest.

Phillip Adams: Pilger tells us that you've been demonized to a great extent in the Swedish media, and I take... I haven't actually read the British attacks on you of late, but apparently you're not exactly a poster boy in London these days.

Julian Assange: There was a Reuters survey of 24 countries back in March last year—18,000 people, the error margin 3%—about support for WikiLeaks and support for me. **The number one supportive countries were South Africa, Germany, India, Australia, and Russia, and Argentina. And at the other end of the spectrum, the least supportive was the United States, but we still had 40% support in the United States, despite all the vitriol from people like Joseph Biden, saying I was a hi-tech terrorist.**

Within the United Kingdom, we had a legal dispute with The Guardian newspaper. Now, that would be normally in a position ideologically, in terms of its audience, to go in to bat for us, because it often takes stands against the US. But The Guardian, as a result of a legal dispute, completely flipped sides at its senior management level and came out relentlessly, day after day, attacking us. So that poisoned the UK environment.

Within Sweden, something else is happening. The British executive—wisely, I think—made no comment on my legal case. They did make one comment early on saying they deplored leaks, but otherwise they have made no comment to date at all on my legal case. In contrast, the Swedish executive, although it is unlawful to do so under Swedish law [???], the Prime Minister, the Justice Minister, and the Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, including up into 2012, have come out and attacked me.

There have been front page fabricated stories in Sweden about how we were spying on Swedish journalists' homes with private detectives, collecting classified Swedish documents, we're going to surround all the Swedish Embassies, we're going to release information to show that Carl Bildt was a US spy, etc etc.

So the environment there is as toxic. A new book has come out about this by a Swede called "A Brief History of Swedish Sex", looking at how Sweden used to be perceived to be a libertine environment back in the 1960s 1970s, and that it has swung the other way, to be the most sort-of sexually conservative and erotic environment in all of the Western world now. And there's a whole bunch of crazy cases that are permitted, and these are very political because the sort of sex politics in Sweden is real political currency, such political currency that it involves— and **not just women— that involves the careers and political destinies of senior men in cabinet.**

Phillip Adams: Whilst you are now a pariah to the likes of The New York Times and The Guardian, it's interesting that you've collected some new fans and supporters. I'm a great admirer of Dan Ellsberg, and I know he's been helping out.

Julian Assange: Dan's been great. I mean, through this process it's brought out the worst in some people, but it's also brought out the best in others, and Dan is one of those. Y'know, whenever you're in a particular niche of society— and let's say my niche is sort of aggressive journalism, exposing the state, and in some kind of battle—there's competition within that niche, and sometimes people react on competitive tendencies. For example, The Guardian newspaper is competitive with us for that social / political niche. But Dan Ellsberg, John Pilger, Amy Goodman: all these people have completely risen above any sort-of competitive instinct.

Phillip Adams: Well, Pilger, I think, Pilger's performance has been particularly commendable because **you haven't always been kind to John in the past.** Another recruit that was of all people Ron Paul, who did make a quite impassioned and rational speech, didn't he?

Julian Assange: Ron Paul, a right-wing Libertarian from the US— part of this great tradition, actually, of strong, right-wing Libertarians in the US— made an impassioned speech from the floor of the Congress, back in the heat of the moment, when it was almost aa sort-of Neo-McCarthyesque feeling about attacking us, when it was almost every man and his dog was coming out and saying that I should be assassinated and hung up, hunted down like Osama bin Laden. Ron Paul, in the middle of that, stood up and said, 'Look, what we need is the truth. Look, right here is a cable about the meeting that took place with representatives of Saddam Hussein right before the Gulf War. And it shows that the US gave tacit permission for it to go ahead'.

Phillip Adams: I'm talking to Julian Assange on a pretty bad line from the UK and this is LNL on RN. The pseudo-left, as you might describe them, haven't been so good, have they? In fact many, many, if not most, seem to have run a mile.

Julian Assange: Yeah, it's this interesting tendency, and I was just speaking to my mother the other night and, y'know, there's this classic grid where you draw the vertical axis as authoritarian to libertarian, and the horizontal axis left to right. And so you have the libertarian-right, the libertarian-left, and the authoritarian-right, and authoritarian-left. But if we look at the strong libertarian-right and the strong libertarian-left, and even the strong libertarian-centre, [Adams laughs] this group has been overwhelmingly supportive on all sides of politics. But the sort-of soft liberal-left, well I've come to develop a great disrespect for these people, because they have certain values which they espouse, but then when push comes to shove, when they actually have to risk something, when they have to risk alliances, when they have to risk reputation, where they have to risk being swept up in a financial blockade, or something like this, they turn in exactly the opposite direction.

Phillip Adams: I think Salman Rushdie had much the same experience as you did, you must be extremely elated that you aren't on the kill list of the President because we heard from his US Ambassador here that the United States isn't vaguely interested in extraditing you. Do you take comfort from that at all, or are you deeply suspicious?

Julian Assange: [laughs] Well, deeply suspicious. Jeffrey Bleich is a lawyer, so what he was saying is, 'We have no interest in the Swedish extradition', so that was the context of his statement, not 'That we have... and that there is no action against him'. But in fact the US, for the past nearly 18 months— oh yeah, nearly 18 months— has been running a grand jury against me in Virginia, meets every month for several days, nine prosecutors involved, Department of Justice spilling out subpoenas to Google, Twitter, Facebook, to any one of my friends or associates, or rumoured friends or associates who entered into the United States.

There were, just in the past three weeks, Jérémie Zimmermann, the free speech activist who visited me a month or so ago, was detained on his way out of the US by the FBI, interrogated about me, asked to become an informant; Smári McCarthy from Iceland, just two weeks ago, going to the US— in fact the same thing happened— followed around Washington DC, approached at 1:30AM in the morning by three people who said they were FBI officers, asked him to become an informant.

So, y'know, it's not that the Australian Government doesn't know this; it knows it perfectly well, in fact the Sydney Morning Herald has gotten hold of a bunch of FOIs through the good work of one of their journalists, Phillip Dorling, and... I need to find

that... [shuffling through papers] So yeah, they speak about Bleich. So this is from the SMH, about five days ago: "A highly qualified lawyer, Ambassador Bleich... So, Bleich has denied that there even exists such thing as a secret warrant". But that wasn't the question; the question was about a sealed indictment. "A highly qualified lawyer, Ambassador Bleich, knows that a warrant is not the same thing as an indictment. If a formal accusation or crime is issued by a US grand jury; a grand jury hearing is held in secret and an indictment may also be sealed, that is kept secret until the arrest warrant has been issued and the defendant is taken into custody. To say that secret warrants don't exist is true, but that is not the point".

Phillip Adams: Julian, your mother has... Well, many of us would believe that the Australian Government has done precious little to help you. How do you rate their performance currently? There are loud protestations that they're on our side.

Julian Assange: They're absolutely abysmal, absolutely abysmal. **I haven't met with a representative of the Australian Government in any kind since late 2010.** Now, what they do, they pen little emails across saying, 'Oh, we might want to know if you have any concerns', dadadadada. And in every single one of these SMSs that they send to my lawyer, looking to make an appointment to get more intelligence back from us that they can use to prepare their media lines, they then say that's a consular communication, or a consular visit.

The last thing that happened is that one of my lawyers, Jennifer Robinson, met with Nicola Roxon, the Australian Attorney-General, just about three weeks ago, and presented to her a list of extremely reasonable (by international standards) request, that is, for example, that the Australian Government request that the Swedish Government not extradite me to the United States for anything to do with WikiLeaks publishing matter, or that I be... If I did end up in Sweden, that I not be placed in custody without charge. [Adams: Yeah.] I've been 540 days here under house arrest, I've kept to my house arrest— without charge— but the Swedish prosecutor refuses to agree to that.

So our lawyers have asked, they've refused. They will apply to hold me in custody without charge while this so-called investigation continues. The Australian Government refused to do that. If I wind up in the United States, or wind up in Sweden, can I serve my sentence in Australia. And they refused to ask them to do that. The attacks by the executive in Sweden... It seems to me that if you have the Foreign Minister of Sweden, Carl Bildt, repeatedly attacking me... By the way, Hillary Clinton just spent the weekend with Carl Bildt and the Swedish executive, this, y'know, two days ago; the first visit since 1976 of the Secretary of State. So Carl Bildt and the Prime Minister, Reinfeldt, have been attacking me in 2012 publicly against Swedish procedure. So it seems to me, that if an Australian citizen is attacked by a Foreign Minister of another country when they're in judicial process, that the Foreign Minister of Australia or the Attorney-General of Australia should say, make representations to please do not do that, because it's impossible to have a sort of fair process while that is occurring.

They have refused to do that. In fact, the only way that you can describe this recent letter of refusal to do anything at all, whatsoever, in any area, by the Attorney-General, Nicola Roxon, is a declaration of abandonment.

Phillip Adams: Julian, people forget that you've been in jail. You had 10 days in solitary, and I remember you suggesting that everyone should have 10 days in solitary, especially politicians. [Assange: Especially politicians.] And you have a lot of sympathy with Bradley Manning as a result. Now worst-case scenario: you're in prison in

Sweden. You've done some research on it and apparently Swedish prisons are—surprise, surprise—regarded by many as the worst in Europe.

Julian Assange: Well, not by me. Fair Trials International, just a week ago, released their description of what Swedish remand prisons were like. And yes, they are some of the worst in Europe. The immediately former-head of the International Prisons Chaplains Association, the guys who visit more prisons in the world than any other people, themselves Swedish, said that Swedish remand prisons are the worst in Europe. And **the reason is because they hold people without charge, in incommunicado detention; they're allowed to speak to their lawyers and no one else. The prosecutor, who is partisan, has total control over the conditions.** So they, y'know, they use this as part of sort of an interrogation process: 'Well, you want to see your mother, well sorry, y'know, you haven't been cooperative this week'.

Phillip Adams: Have you found a media outlet that's allowed you to discuss the allegations about your sexual molestation charges— I'm sorry, allegations? Have you have a good chance to put your case?

Julian Assange: No, I mean, this is the really sort-of pernicious situation that we've fallen into where, because I haven't been charged, I do not have even the rights of a defendant. So I have no rights to any of the full accusations against me, any of the evidence against me, I have no rights to protest any of that. Under the basis that I haven't been charged... Y'know, if we look at this from sort of legal philosophy that we've become accustomed to in Australia— and actually as all common law systems have become mostly accustomed to, and even continental systems— which is, as an adult, you are a free individual, free to go about your business in life, without being deprived of your liberty by the state, unless a formal accusation has been made against you, unless you're formally charged, unless you're indicted. And at that point you are still innocent until proven guilty, but you are forced to go into a process to establish that, and that might require going up to court hearings, maybe it will require being on bail, but until that point— until the point of being charged— you are a free man. But I haven't been charged. And so, until I am charged, I don't think that my private affairs— my completely legitimate private affairs— are of any business to the state. It is not my responsibility to prove the innocence of my private affairs. It is the state's responsibility to take an accusation, turn it into a charge, charge me if necessary, and at that point prove its accusations.

Phillip Adams: Julian, in the few moments we have left, let's move to the Bradley Manning hearing, which I understand was attended by US Justice Department representatives specifically to see how it might impact on their investigation into WikiLeaks.

Julian Assange: That's right, it was— the next hearing by the way is tomorrow— but the ones in December were attended by three people— at least three sort of figures who would not identify themselves, who were not part of the military prosecution—we know at least one of them is from the Department of Justice, the others might be from CIA or other interests who have some equity— remember, there is a publicly declared CIA task force into WikiLeaks, the WikiLeaks Task Force— and yeah, so the overlap between these two hearings— between the grand jury process and Bradley Manning's ongoing procedures— is there. And Bradley Manning's lawyer has found 250,000

pages of material that exists— that is part of the grand jury proceedings or various other investigations into WikiLeaks— that are not part of the case against his client, and he is trying to get hold of those in order to see if they help with the case against his client, and that has been refused. He says, Bradley Manning's lawyer, back in December, that the terrible conditions that Bradley Manning was placed under, that the UN declared as cruel punishment akin to torture— that was the finding of the UN special Rapporteur into Torture— that he was put through that in order to coerce him into testifying against me. Similarly, that he was given a death penalty charge of aiding the enemy— which is absurd, because they say that the aiding of the enemy, the military's allegation is that he aided the enemy by conveying information to the public— that death penalty charge is absurd and cannot survive, but it's there to put pressure on him to rat on us.

Phillip Adams: Oh what a tangled web. Look, Julian, thanks for your time, and I know it's been...

Julian Assange: Just one more thing, Phil. We just got this letter from the Attorney-General's office: "The Government has stated that the debate about the WikiLeaks matter, not about censoring free speech or preventing the media from reporting news, the Government's concern relates to the reckless disregard of the potential damage that could be caused by unauthorized disclosure of classified materials". OK, well that's their standard suck-up to the US party line. But now let's look at who it came from: Anna Harmer, Assistant Secretary, International Crime Cooperation Central Authorities.

Phillip Adams: We've got to wrap it, I'm afraid, Julian, and thanks for your time, and you have of course my best wishes. WikiLeaks founder, the besieged and beleaguered Julian Assange, on LNL on RN.

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/julian-assange---what-next3f/4055974>

Letter to Prime Minister Gillard on Julian Assange from the Newcastle Trades Hall Council

WL Central
2012-06-06

Regrettably we feel compelled to write to you about the plight of Mr Assange.

You will know that many Australians are angry, disappointed and even confused about your government's response to Mr Assange's situation. They feel that way because they care: they care about civil liberties, they care about freedom of speech, they care about truth and they care about democracy.

Many people fear that Mr Assange's greatest enemy may not be the United States or Sweden but rather the indifference demonstrated by his own Government, our Government.

Many are wondering why your only contribution to the debate has been initial accusations of illegal conduct followed by muted silence. Why?

As you know, there is currently a 14 day stay on the UK Supreme Court judgment but it is very likely that Mr Assange, an online publisher and journalist, will be extradited to Sweden. We think that the letter from Mr Assange's lawyer, Gareth Peirce, to the then Foreign Affairs Minister Kevin Rudd dated 25 October 2011; the detailed brief provided to several members of the Australian Parliament by Finers Stephens Innocent in March 2011; the recent article by the Australian Centre of Independent Journalism; and the Fair Trials International note which explains what will happen to Mr Assange once he is taken to Sweden, highlight the reasons for our Government to be concerned.

The Government has said that it has and will continue to provide the same consular assistance offered to any Australian caught up in a legal matter overseas. That ignores the facts (raised by Mr Tony Kevin, now retired from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) that not only is this not a standard consular issue, but that "David Hicks and Mamdouh Habib received similarly worthless consular access from Howard and Ruddock at the times they were rendered with Australian Government consent to years of torture in Guantanamo. Both men were being abusively treated in Pakistan and Egypt while on their way to Guantanamo, as Australian consular officers looked on impotently."

Foreign Affairs Minister Carr asserts that no Australian has received more consular support in a comparable period than Mr Assange. You need only refer the Government to assistance provided to one Mr Thompson (just one week after he was detained in Baghdad, in May 2006, with a cache of arms) to see that the assertion is wrong. It is perhaps also worth mentioning the assistance provided to those caught up in drug cases in Bali.

We understand that Mr Assange asked for assistance from the Ambassador while in Sweden, which wasn't forthcoming, and that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade later denied that any request had been made. In any case, no consular assistance was offered while he was in Sweden.

The Senate Official Committee Hansard report of February 24, 2011 shows that Mr Assange was provided with a copy of the Consular Services Charter on December 7, 2010. Of how much use was that?

In November 2011 Mr Assange's lawyer, Jennifer Robinson, confirmed that the Australian Ambassador in Sweden had agreed to convey questions from Mr Assange's defence team to the Swedish prosecutor's office, but said they offered little more. She pointed out that "correspondence was limited to requests to arrange seating in court and requests for briefings on case progress. There was little contact."

It was only after The Age newspaper approached the Foreign Affairs Department on 25 October 2011 that a response was sent to Mr Assange's British lawyer, Gareth Peirce, in response to a letter of concern Mr Turnbull had hand delivered to Mr Rudd's office on 22 September 2011.

We understand that up until November 2011 the High Commission's help in the United Kingdom was confined to calls to Mr Assange's lawyers requesting 'tickets' to

the court hearings. No real and practical help was ever offered. That same month the Consul-General in the United Kingdom, Mr Pascoe, finally requested a briefing on the case.

We are unable to ascertain whether or not a letter from prominent expatriates handed to the High Commission in December 2011 was responded to. Perhaps you would kindly confirm that it was?

Despite the fact that the Government asserts that it has no information from the United States to indicate that it has laid, or is about to lay, any charges against Mr Assange, or evidence that a sealed indictment already exists, we are kept in the dark about exactly what questions our Government has asked, what assurances have been sought and what information our officials have received.

Various Freedom of Information requests have revealed:

that the Australian embassy in Washington knew of an "active and vigorous inquiry into whether Julian Assange can be charged under US law, most likely the 1917 Espionage Act" and that the "WikiLeaks case was unprecedented both in its scale and nature";

that Australian diplomats have requested "advanced warning of any public announcement of the results of US investigations or proposed actions", but have raised no concerns about the Australian journalist being pursued by US prosecutors on charges of espionage and conspiracy;

that Washington provided Canberra with regular updates, including reporting on the issuing of subpoenas to compel WikiLeaks associates to appear before a grand jury in Virginia, and US State Department efforts to access Twitter and other internet accounts; and

that the Australian embassy has obtained "confidential or legal commentary" from private law firms "on aspects surrounding WikiLeaks and/or the positions of Julian Assange and Bradley Manning."

Washington embassy cables sent to Canberra between 1 November 2010 and 31 January 2012 do not contain any references to representations made by Australian diplomats to US officials concerning proper extradition processes, even though we were assured by Attorney-General Nicola Roxon in April this year that they had. We note the timing of Ms Roxon's representations to Ambassador Jeffrey Bleich, US Homeland Security Janet Napolitano and US Deputy Attorney-General James Cole.

We understand that the Australian Government has made representations to the Swedish Government about due process being applied to Mr Assange, and that assurances to that effect have been given by the Swedish Government. **But again, we are kept in the dark about exactly what questions were asked and the terms of the assurances received.**

We don't even know whether the Government has expressed any concerns— and there should be deep concerns – about the way in which charges were laid, investigated and dropped, only to be picked up again by a different prosecutor; about how Mr Assange's

police interview turned up in the tabloid Expressen the day after he was interviewed on 30 August 2010; why the Swedish Prosecutor, Ms Marianne Ny refused to accept Mr Assange's offer to return to Sweden for interview on 9th and 10th of October 2010 and his offer to be interviewed at the Swedish Embassy in accordance with the Mutual Legal Assistance scheme between Sweden and the United Kingdom; about a contentious Swedish action having an Australian citizen electronically tagged and under house arrest without charge for 545 days, or about a Swedish prosecutor authorising an Interpol Red Notice for Mr Assange when he was required merely for questioning.

We find it disturbing that Mr Assange's mother, Christine, felt compelled to respond on Twitter to recent government assurances about consular support provided to Mr Assange, as follows:

Julian asked Aust Govt 2 ask US not 2 put him under "Special Administrative Measures" in prison (no touch torture). Request denied.

Julian asked Aust Govt 2 ask US 2 ask those who had publicly incited murder against him 2 retract statements. Request denied.

Julian asked Aust Govt 2 ask Sweden under Prisoner Transfer Program that any sentence B served in Australia. Request denied.

Julian asked Aust Govt 2 grant him safe passage home from the UK & Sweden at end of proceedings. Request denied.

Julian asked Aust Govt 2 ask Sweden 2 grant bail (unquestioned, uncharged, didn't breach UK bail conditions). Request denied.

Julian asked Aust Gov 2 ask Swedish PM, AG, FM 2 stop misleading public re: case FACTS, & smearing him in public. Request denied.

It is very difficult to accept that, and we fail to see how, the Government's actions to date in relation to Mr Assange's plight or the level of consular support he allegedly has received are "something to be proud of".

Mr Assange's case obviously is politically charged. Governments may not be able to interfere in the legal processes of other countries, but there are plenty of precedents where governments have acted diplomatically to prevent legal processes from being invoked or continued. The Australian Government clearly has that capacity and should exercise it.

Mr Assange and WikiLeaks have given people all over the world, including the Australian people, a glimpse of the truth behind the spin, of the grubby guile behind the veneer of smooth diplomacy, and of the appalling disdain that people in power have for human life, let alone human rights. We have a right and a need to know these truths, and all Mr Assange and WikiLeaks have done is give us some scope to exercise those rights.

We call on the Australian Government to take all steps it can to assist Mr Assange, both by providing direct real assistance to him, including any necessary financial support

for his legal representation and family support, and by exploring and utilising all diplomatic channels that may be available to obviate his further persecution through formal legal channels.

Yours faithfully

Gary Kennedy
Secretary
Newcastle Trades Hall Council

cc The Hon Sharon Grierson MP, 427 Hunter St, Newcastle, NSW, 2300

Är Sverige en rättsstat?

Sveriges Radio

Är Sverige en rättsstat eller inte? Wikileaks grundare Julian Assanges advokater menar att han har all anledning till att vara orolig vid ett eventuellt utlämnande till Sverige. Enligt Assanges svenska advokat Per E Samuelsson är Sverige ingen rättsstat att lita på. Anledningen är att Sverige överanvänder häktning med restriktioner vilket är både onödigt, förnedrande och hindrar försvaret från att förbereda sig, säger han. Hör Per E Samuelsson, Julia Assange svenska advokat och Krister Thelin, hovrättslagman.

<https://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=1637&artikel=5143720>

Assange appeals against UK extradition decision

Reuters
June 12, 2012

LONDON — WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has appealed against Britain's Supreme Court's decision to back his extradition to Sweden over alleged sex crimes.

Two weeks ago, judges at Britain's top court rejected his argument by a 5-2 majority that a European arrest warrant for his extradition was invalid, seemingly putting an end to an 18-month legal battle.

However, his lawyers argued that some of the judges had reached their decision based on a legal point that had not been argued in court, preventing the defense team from making a counter-submission.

The court agreed to give Assange 14 days to challenge the decision and a spokeswoman said on Tuesday that an appeal had been submitted. "**No time has been set to look at the evidence,**" the spokeswoman said. "We are hoping it will be done promptly...."

Even if he loses the appeal in Britain, the Australian could take his case to the European Court of Human Rights, potentially holding up the extradition process for months.

AB: 12 juni 2012

Nya juridiska turer i Assange-fallet

Cirkus Assange snurrar vidare. Nu har grundaren av Wikileaks lämnat in en mycket ovanlig begäran, att Storbritanniens Högsta Domstol öppnar hans ärende igen. Domstolen fattade, efter att ha funderat obegripligt länge, det självklara [???] beslutet att lämna ut Assange till Sverige i enlighet med den europeiska arresteringsordern.

Försvarsadvokaterna protesterade inte helt överraskande vilt, varpå domstolen gav dem två veckor på sig att författa en protest. Det är ett mycket ovanligt beslut— och i dag lämnades invändningarna in.

Vad händer nu? En talesman för HD förklarar att domarna kan avfärda klagomålen, begära att de kompletteras eller besluta om en ny förhandling. Han tillade olycksbådande att det inte går att säga när beslut kommer. Ett ärende som redan har traggats i över två år fortsätter alltså att förhalas.

Assange har kritiserats för att förhala och obstruera. Det är en orättvis kritik. Grundaren av Wikileaks måste ha samma möjlighet att överklaga och utnyttja sina legala rättigheter som alla andra. Att det smartaste hade varit att för länge sätta sig på ett plan till Stockholm och låtit sig förhöras om anklagelserna om sexbrott är strängt taget en helt annan fråga.

Att Högsta Domstolen i London fortsätter att traggla denna juridiskt sett banala historia imponerar dock inte.

[Cantwells grepp på den egentliga juridiska frågan är inte heller särskilt imponerande. --A.B.]

<http://bloggar.aftonbladet.se/brottochstraff/2012/06/12/nya-juridiska-turer-i-assange-fallet>

Julian Assange's application to reopen extradition case turned down

Supreme court responds to request to reopen case of extradition to Sweden with terse statement declaring it 'without merit'

*Owen Bowcott, legal affairs correspondent
The Guardian
14 June 2012*

The supreme court has reaffirmed its rejection of Julian Assange's appeal against his extradition to Sweden, turning down an unusual, last-minute request to reopen the case.

In a short statement, issued only two days after Dinah Rose QC submitted a written plea for the case to be reheard, the court declared that her application "is without merit and it is dismissed".

The terse phrasing suggests a degree of judicial disapproval of the extended process *[for which the British courts are primarily responsible --A.B.]* and leaves Assange's lawyers with the choice of appealing the decision to the European court of human rights in Strasbourg or agreeing to the extradition requests.

Assange is wanted in connection with accusations of sexual assault and rape in Sweden. He disputes the allegations. He is being sought under a European arrest warrant (EAW).

The supreme court case revolved around the question of whether a prosecutor, in this case in Sweden, constituted a "judicial authority" as the EAW specifies. The supreme court found by a majority of five to two against Assange, saying that the warrant was valid.

In its statement refusing to reopen the case, the supreme court said it had agreed unanimously that extradition proceedings should not begin for another two weeks. It added: "Had Ms Rose been minded to challenge the applicability of [the Vienna convention on the law of treaties] or the applicability of state practice [on interpreting treaties] ... she had the opportunity to do so. She made no such challenge. *[The issue was not raised, which was the point of the appeal. --A.B.]*

"Her submissions were to the effect that caution should be exercised when considering the effect of state practice. For these reasons the court considers that this application is without merit and it is dismissed."

Julian Assange v Swedish Prosecution Authority

14 June 2012

The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom has dismissed the application made by Ms Dinah Rose QC, counsel for Mr Julian Assange, seeking to re-open their appeal.

The seven Justices who heard the appeal on 1-2 February 2012 and gave judgment on 30 May 2012 have considered the appellant's written application, and the reasons for their decision are set out below. These reasons have been agreed unanimously by the seven Justices.

In addition, the Court has ordered that, with the agreement of the respondent and pursuant to section 36(3)(b) of the Extradition Act 2003, the required period for extradition shall not commence until the 14th day after today.

Mr Assange applies to set aside the judgment that has been given against him and to re-open the appeal. The grounds of the application are that the majority of the Court decided the appeal on a ground that Ms Rose QC, Mr Assange's counsel, had not been

given a fair opportunity to address. That ground was that article 31(3)(b) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (“the Convention”) and the principle of public international law expressed in that article rendered admissible State practice as an aid to the interpretation of the Framework Decision.

At the outset of her address to the Court Ms Rose gave five headings for the submissions that she proposed to make. The third of these was the relevance of subsequent events, other EU Instruments and the practice of EU States. A considerable volume of documentary material that had been placed before the Court related to these matters.

In the course of her submissions under her third heading, as she has accepted, Lord Brown expressly put to her that the Convention applied to the interpretation of the Framework Decision. That Convention, as Ms Rose has recognised, sets out rules of customary international law. Had Ms Rose been minded to challenge the applicability of the Convention, or the applicability of State practice as an aid to the construction of the Framework Decision, or the relevance and admissibility of the material relating to State practice, she had the opportunity to do so. She made no such challenge. Her submissions were to the effect that caution should be exercised when considering the effect of State practice.

For these reasons the Court considers that this application is without merit and it is dismissed.

Ms Rose has raised a further point which has validity. Para 83 of the judgment refers to offences of which Mr Assange “stands charged”. This is not accurate as charges have not yet been brought against Mr Assange. The judgment will be corrected to read “offences in respect of which his extradition is sought”.

<http://www.supremecourt.gov.uk/news/julian-assange-v-swedish-prosecution-authority.html>

Assange ska överlämnas till Sverige

Åklagarmyndigheten
2012-06-14

Storbritanniens högsta domstol, the Supreme Court, har beslutat att inte ta upp Assanges ärende på nytt. Det betyder att beslutet att han ska överlämnas till Sverige står fast.

Domstolen har också beslutat att överlämnandeperioden inte ska börja gälla förrän 14 dagar från i dag. Enligt regelverket om en europeisk arresteringsorder ska Assange därefter inom tio dagar föras till Sverige.

Det är kriminalvården som ansvarar för transporten till Sverige samt för hans förvar i Sverige. Kriminalvården ger ingen information om transporter eller i vilket häkte som intagna personer finns.

Under hans vistelse på häktet kommer han att ha möjlighet att ha kontakter med omvärlden, under de förutsättningar som häktets säkerhets- och ordningsregler ger. Han är häktad på grund av flykttfara och kommer därför inte att ha några restriktioner som begränsar hans rätt att exempelvis att se TV, läsa tidningar eller umgås med andra intagna.

När Assange kommer till Sverige kommer Stockholms tingsrätt att hålla en häktningsförhandling. Förhandlingen ska, enligt svensk lag, hållas inom fyra dygn från det att Assange anlänt hit. Vid förhandlingen ska domstolen pröva om han ska vara fortsatt häktad. Domstolens beslut kan överklagas.

Förhör kommer att hållas med Assange när han kommer till Sverige. Åklagaren kan inte lämna några upplysningar om planeringen för förhöret eller om eventuella andra utredningsåtgärder. Skälet är att det kan störa utredningen eller skada de personer som berörs av den.

Sedan i december 2010 har Julian Assange varit häktad i sin frånvaro, på sannolika skäl misstänkt för olaga tvång, två fall av sexuellt ofredande samt våldtäkt, mindre grovt brott.

Efter häktningsförhandlingen kommer den ansvariga åklagaren, överåklagare Marianne Ny, att hålla en presskonferens. Information om tid och plats kommer senare.

<http://www.aklagare.se/Media/Nyheter/Assange-ska-overlamnas-till-Sverige1/>

SvD: 14 juni 2012

Nej i brittiska HD för Assange

Brittiska Högsta domstolen tar inte upp Assangefallet på nytt. Därmed ska han överlämnas till Sverige. Enligt HD:s enhälliga beslut får Assange inte lämnas ut från Storbritannien förrän efter 14 dagar.

Den 30 maj beslutade brittiska HD om en överlämning av Julian Assange till Sverige. Beslutet överklagades den 12 juni av Julian Assanges advokater. Under torsdagen beslutade domstolen i Storbritannien att inte ta upp fallet på nytt.

Julians Assanges svenska försvarsadvokat, Per E Samuelsson, säger till SvD.se att "nu är det över".

– Som advokat får man rätta sig efter hur det går. Vi har hela tiden förberett oss på att försvara honom i Sverige mot de brottsmisstankar som riktas mot honom här, vi ligger i startgroparna och **brinner av iver att få visa omvärlden att han inte har gjort sig skyldig till något brott, säger Per E Samuelsson.**

Vad säger din klient?

– Han är upprörd, kränkt, och kan inte begripa hur falska beskyllningar kan få förstöra hans liv och position som har skett under nästan två år. Han tycker att det är förskräckligt att det har fått gå så här långt, säger Per E Samuelsson.

Advokat Claes Borgström säger att han utgår från att åklagaren Marianne Ny väcker åtal.

– Min förhoppning är att de kvinnor jag företräder kommer att få upprättelse, och det sker via rättegång och en fällande dom. Hur sannolikt det är svårt att uttala sig om, men **det är övervägande sannolikt, säger Claes Borgström till SvD.se.**

Assanges enda återstående utväg är att överklaga till Europadomstolen för mänskliga rättigheter i Strasbourg, som kommer att besvara hans yrkanden inom 14 dagar, skriver brittiska åklagarmyndigheten på sin hemsida.

Om däremot Europadomstolen vill pröva fallet kan den ålägga brittiska myndigheter att inte överlämna honom medan frågan avgörs. Det är den brittiska regeringen som ska föra talan i fallet där, varken den brittiska eller svenska åklagarmyndigheten. Om hans sak prövas kommer han att vara kvar i husarrest i Storbritannien tills man fattat ett beslut i Strasbourg.

Om han får avslag där är saken slutligt avgjord. Storbritannien får då tio dagar på sig att överlämna Julian Assange till Sverige. Eftersom Assange är häktad i sin frånvaro, kommer han att gripas så fort han landar på svensk mark och föras vidare till ett häkte.

Enligt åklagarmyndighetens hemsida kommer Julian Assange få titta på tv och läsa tidningar under tiden han är häktad. Därefter har åklagaren fyra dagar på sig att inleda en häkningsförhandling. **Om Stockholms tingsrätt bedömer att Julian Assange ska vara fortsatt häktad, har åklagaren Marianne Ny ytterligare två veckor på sig att åtala Julian Assange,** enligt Karin Rosander, informationsdirektör på Åklagarmyndigheten. Marianne Ny vill inte ge några intervjuer förrän åtal har väckts.

– Så har det varit i ett och ett halvt år, och så kommer det att vara under den fortsatta perioden, säger Karin Rosander.

Under hela den utdragna rättsprocessen har Assange suttit i husarrest. **Glansen kring hans person har gradvis falnat.** Flera av de redaktioner han tidigare samarbetat med har tagit avstånd från honom. Wikileaks har sargats av inre konflikter och flera stora betalningsförmedlare har blockerat donationer till verksamheten.

Assange har motiverat sitt motstånd mot överlämning med att han tror att Sverige skulle kunna lämna honom vidare till USA, något som experter betecknar som uteslutet.

Per E Samuelsson menar att Julian Assange löper en större risk att utlämnas till USA från Sverige än från Storbritannien.

– Enligt de informationer jag har fått. Jag kan inte gå in på det, jag väljer att inte föra den debatten i offentlighetens ljus, säger Per E Samuelsson.

Men den risken bedöms som närmast obefintlig av flera experter.

- Sverige är bundet av något som heter specialitetsprincipen och kan inte lämna honom vidare till USA utan tillstånd från Storbritannien, har Karin Påle-Bartes, rådmann i Södertörns tingsrätt tidigare sagt till TT. Hon doktorerade på en avhandling om utlämning för brott.

- Den är så sträng så att åklagaren inte ens får ändra moment i gärningsbeskrivningen utan att fråga avsändarlandet om lov, säger Påle Bartes. *[Det må vara juridiskt korrekt. Men regeringen kan alltid fatta ett politiskt beslut. --A.B.]*

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AB: 2012-06-14

Nej för Assange i Högsta domstolen

London. Englands högsta domstol avslår Julian Assanges begäran om att återuppta utlämningsförhandlingarna.

– **Det är det enda rimliga beslutet, säger Claes Borgström**, advokat för de två kvinnorna som har polisanmält Assange.

Domstolens beslut var enhälligt och Wikileaks-grundaren kan nu utlämnas till Sverige. Utlämningen kan ske tidigast om två veckor— om inte Europadomstolen sätter stopp.

Den 30 maj meddelade Supreme Court att man beslutat att Julian Assange kan utlämnas till Sverige. Bedömningen hade inget med sakfrågan eller de sexbrott Assange anklagas för att göra, beslutet byggde helt på att den högsta rättsinstansen i England anser att den europeiska arresteringsordern varit korrekt utfärdad och därför kan Assange utlämnas.

Men Assanges advokater försökte återigen förhålla utlämningen genom att påpeka att domarna i Supreme Court hänvisat till argument som aldrig förts fram under förhandlingarna. Bland annat hänvisade domarna till att den franska motsvarigheten till begreppet "judicial authority" har en vidare mening än att bara gälla domare och domstolar som det gör i England. Därför kunde en arresteringsorder utfärdad av en svensk åklagare också godkännas.

Det här ville Julian Assanges team få möjlighet att bemöta. Men i dag avslogs försvarets begäran.

– De sju domarna är eniga om beslutet, säger Ben Wilson, presschef för Supreme Court i London. Utlämningen kan påbörjas först om 14 dagar i enlighet med det brittiska regelverket, men det är fortfarande inte helt säkert att Assange faktiskt reser till Sverige. Flera personer som stöttar honom har tidigare sagt att man kommer vända sig till Europadomstolen för mänskliga rättigheter och om den domstolen väljer att ta upp fallet kan de stoppa utlämningen i väntan på förhandling.

Advokat Claes Borgström, som företräder de två kvinnorna, välkomnar Högsta domstolens avslag:

– Det har varit ganska givet. Det är det enda rimliga beslutet, säger han.

Claes Borgström tror inte att Europadomstolen kan förändra något.

– Det kan inte påverka överlämningsförfarandet. Han är ju inte förbjuden att vända sig dit men alla instanser hittills har ju haft samma uppfattning i frågan.

Borgström har, när Aftonbladet pratar med honom, ännu inte meddelat sina klienter.

– Nej, men ju närmare man kommer ett avslut, desto bättre. Så mycket kan jag säga å deras vägnar, säger han.

En av Julian Assanges svenska advokater Per E Samuelsson nåddes av nyheten men har varken hunnit tala med kollegan Thomas Olsson eller deras gemensamma klient.

– Men vi kommer att vara väl förberedda, säger han och fortsätter:

– Jag sökte precis Assange och kom inte fram, men han ringer säkert tillbaka under kvällen.

Stora delar av de båda svenska advokaternas försvarsstrategi är upprättad sedan länge, enligt advokat Per E Samuelsson.

• *Torbjörn Ek o. Oskar Forsberg*

SvD: 14 juni 2012

Kvinnorna har utsatts för skoningslös förföljelse

Av de jurister och journalister som har uttalat sig om brottsmisstankarna mot Assange är många totalt ointresserade av hur situationen ter sig för de två kvinnor som är målsägande i den pågående utredningen. Det skriver advokat Claes Borgström i en replik till Assanges advoakt Per E Samuelson.

Per E Samuelson tycker att det "är på tiden att någon med erfarenhet från verkligheten slår näven i bordet" och kritiserar därefter det svenska häktningsinstitutet och tillämpningen av häktningsreglerna på ett okunnigt och missvisande sätt (Brännpunkt 8/6). Det är synd. Han gör saken och alla dem som under åren har riktat skarp och genomtänkt kritik mot de svenska häktningsreglerna en björntjänst.

Om Samuelson tror att han är först med "att slå näven i bordet" så känner han tydligen inte till den kritik som advokater, bland andra Henning Sjöström, Bertil Molle, Peter Althin med flera sedan 50 år riktat mot häktningspraxis. Tyvärr häktas fortfarande alltför många, häktningstiderna är många gånger oacceptabelt långa, häktade åläggs restriktioner, det vill säga förbud mot eller begränsningar i kontakten med omvärlden, i alldeles för stor utsträckning och mycket ofta under orimligt lång tid.

Samuelson anger två exempel på när häktning skulle vara motiverat: Behring Breivik och Anna Lindhs mördare Mijailovic. Det är intellektuellt ohederligt och vilseledande att lägga ribban på den nivån.

Självklart måste ett rättssamhälle göra en avvägning mellan de olika intressen som bryter sig mot varandra— den misstänktes rättigheter, brottsoffers rättigheter och samhällets ansvar att utreda och beivra brott. Vi som har erfarenhet som försvarsadvokater vet att det finns många situationer när häktning är motiverat, till exempel om den misstänkte kan förväntas försöka påverka målsägande och vittnen eller hålla sig undan lagföring och straff. [*Det är ju "intellektuellt ohederligt och vilseledande att lägga ribban på den nivån" i detta fall. --A.B.*] Men brottsmisstanken måste naturligtvis vara tillräckligt stark och häktningstiden begränsad och där brister det inte sällan i rättstillämpningen.

Allt detta kan utvecklas mycket mer men det har ingenting med Assange att göra. Självfallet är Sverige, trots befogad kritik mot rättsregler och praxis, en rättsstat. Och i rättsstatens åtagande ligger bland annat att tillgodose brottsoffers rättigheter.

Av de jurister och journalister som har uttalat sig om brottsmisstankarna mot Assange är många totalt ointresserade av hur situationen ter sig för de två kvinnor som är målsägande i den pågående utredningen. [*Vad bygger denna slutsats på, och vad har det att göra med Samuelssons kritik? --A.B.*] Aldrig, vågar jag påstå, har en målsägande utsatts för sådan skoningslös, lögnaktig och kränkande förföljelse som de två kvinnor som Assange misstänks ha utsatt för sexuella övergrepp. [*Inte av Assange, vars rättigheter tycks Borgström inte särskilt intresserad av. --A.B.*]

A Swedish Feminist's Perspective On Swedish State "Feminism"

Helene Bergman. Journalist, feminist and former radio host of the legendary women's programme Radio Ellen on Swedish Radio.

*Professors blogg
June 14, 2012*

Preface

Journalist Helene Bergman is definitely one of the pioneers of "classic" egalitarian feminism in Sweden, a concept whose relevance and importance is as significant today as in the days when Helene was pioneering it. Her voice in Sweden is heard with respect as a woman and a feminist, and as a human rights advocate, already since the late 60's. She led the legendary program Radio Ellen, which was in the front-line of the noble struggle for full women's rights and respect for gender equality.

When I was myself a student in the sixties we heard often that absurd distinction between developed countries and underdeveloped countries. [*The underdeveloped countries are still making the distinction today, for example in the negotiations for the Rio + 20 convention. --A.B.*] However, our fighting generation repelled such pejorative and misleading notions, and instead we referred a distinction between "wrong developed" countries and "poorly developed countries". We were young and radical— radical we are still— yet we understood in that distinction that "modern" is not always synonymous with progress. We wanted others also to understand that, behind the

glitter of “development”, lies partly hidden an underlying premise that causes an enormous volume of misery for greater or lesser segments within the population. Partly, those miseries are also intellectual. [*Relevance? --A.B.*]

In the present piece of Helene Bergman here submitted to Professors blog— and which we are honoured to publish— she develops anew her critical theses on key issues about the development— or less fortunate development?— of some streams of Swedish feminism.

Whether one agrees or not with Helene’s vanguard [???] analyses, intelligent readers and/or unbiased critics will surely recognize that the issues she has taken up are of primary relevance, and also intriguing in their treatment. Helene is a woman with a bright, brave, and wise voice. Professors Blogg presents her opinion proudly, not least because here in these columns we authors are not exactly conservative.

— *Prof. Ferrada-Noli*

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A Swedish Feminist’s Perspective On Swedish “State Feminism”

Helene Bergman

Julian Assange's case exposes the prevailing doctrine of "state feminism" in Sweden and its accompanying propaganda machinery. It is a machinery where man-hating radical "feminists" with no grasp of feminism's legacy, journalists who wield power but have no real understanding of the purpose of journalism, and members of the judicial system who want to make a career out of the equal rights and opportunities doctrine work hand in hand.

What is happening in Sweden today is unworthy of a country that calls itself a democracy.

But that's not all! Julian Assange's case has revealed the true face of Swedish patriotism as well. Whosoever dares criticize this propaganda machinery risks being either ignored or condemned through guilt by association. But I take this risk because, after all, I am a journalist and a feminist in Sweden, and the right of freedom of expression also applies to me, even if I am critical.

Julian Assange’s affairs in Stockholm opened the floodgates for the downgraded variants of feminism and journalism that are present in Sweden today.

The preliminary investigation protocol detailing Julian Assange's liaisons with two women makes for shocking reading for a Swedish feminist pioneer of the 1970s. I am one of those who, as the host for many years of the legendary women's program Radio Ellen on Swedish Radio, fought for women’s rights and equality between the sexes.

I could never have dreamt that a legitimate struggle for equal rights and opportunities for both women and men would degenerate into state feminism devoid of common sense and reason.

Those of us who pioneered feminism in Sweden in the 1970s fought for our sexual freedom and for the right to take responsibility for ourselves, but we also fought to be able to, like men already do, enjoy sex.

Sexual liberation went hand-in-hand with the demand that we as women must be able to support ourselves and not be economically dependent on men. This is essential because only when we women are economically independent will we be able say 'no' if we feel we are being sexually used.

Being a feminist is not about hating men. Feminism is about strengthening women's self esteem, not about making ourselves into victims or being categorized by the state as victims by default.

But in today's feminist Sweden, the following can happen. In the preliminary investigation minutes for the case of Julian Assange in Sweden, I read: Woman A. says about her relationship with Julian Assange: "I was proud as hell to get the world's coolest man in bed and living in my apartment." After having sexual intercourse on numerous occasions, she goes to the police.

How did Sweden's sexual revolution of the 1970s transform into an oppressive 21st century power apparatus where men are portrayed as potential enemies and threats to the state? A state in which those who criticize the prevailing system are denied a voice in the media.

Liberation feminism was hijacked in the late 1980s when it was disarmed and renamed 'Jämställdhet' (the equal rights and opportunities doctrine) and co-opted into the power apparatus. Jämställdhet became the state norm and an ideology in Sweden. **And it became a career ladder, especially in politics, civil service and in the judicial system.**

Many pioneering feminists disappeared into Swedish universities, where they transformed our struggle into 'scientific knowledge', and became elite feminists. They got money from the State, as universities in Sweden are publicly funded. Instead of talking about 'the sexes' they started talking about 'genders', and the struggle no longer focused on transforming the state apparatus: it switched to targeting the male sex and men as sexual creatures. The present totalitarian gender ideology was also promoted by the Swedish media, which does what is required from it by the State.

In today's Sweden, the media is dedicated to educating the population rather than to keeping power in check.

When it comes to Julian Assange there are, naturally, underlying motivations.

He challenged media by doing what every journalist dreams of: a global Scoop!

What Julian Assange and WikiLeaks did was wound the pride of many journalists.

Every journalist dreams of getting The Scoop, but very few manage to pull it off.

The Swedish tabloid Expressen tried to turn Julian Assange himself into the scoop with the headline: "Manhunt for Wikileaks Julian Assange— suspected of rape in Sweden."

Some hours later the investigation was cancelled. It was later re-opened by a new prosecutor, Marianne Ny, who clearly holds radical feminist views. She collaborates with the politician, lawyer, and former Jämställdhet ombudsman, Claes Borgström. And now it's not only the two women who voluntarily invited Julian Assange to their

homes and slept with him several times before they discovered that he was simply a normal horny man. Now, the media too had discovered that Julian Assange was not some saint, but a typical horny man.

But the bloodthirsty media forces initiated a hunt without checking the facts of the case and without waiting for a trial. Instead, the media became judge and jury because **the politically correct approach in today's Sweden is that women are always victims and are blameless when it comes to sex.**

That fact that the media behaves like some kind of people's court of mob justice in the case of Julian Assange is very serious; the media whipping up a hostile sentiment against Julian Assange before he has even been brought to trial in a Swedish court is in violation of his human rights. **It is a grave state of affairs when Sweden's biggest newspapers won't even publish his own words.**

The media should not take the role of the courts by speculating about a case before due process has been carried out and judgment rendered. The media's role is to examine the facts and show respect for the rule of law in a democracy.

Sensationalist headlines, tabloid journalism based on rumor and personal antagonism is not journalism. It is simply a way of selling newspapers and cheating the public. This form of Swedish journalism is unworthy of a democracy.

Worst of all is the fact that Julian Assange has been under house arrest in England with an electronic tagging device on his ankle for over 500 days. He does not want to go to Sweden because he fears that Sweden will extradite him to the United States. Julian Assange's case raises serious questions about human rights violations in the democratic country we call Sweden. But the media will not report on this. **It is preoccupied with creating as much antagonism towards Julian Assange as possible.**

<http://ferrada-noli.blogspot.it/2012/06/julian-assange-is-already-condemned-by.html>

Sweden Will Imprison Assange When Extradited

*Juha Saarinen
Wired.com
June 15, 2012*

Julian Assange will be imprisoned after he is handed over to Swedish authorities when he is extradited and will have a court hearing four days after extradition from the United Kingdom to decide if he will stay in custody, the Swedish government announced Friday.

Earlier this week, the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom decided not to reopen Assange's appeal and upheld the decision that the WikiLeaks founder should be extradited to face sex crime proceedings in Sweden.

The UK Supreme Court has ordered that Assange won't be handed over to the Swedes until June 28. After that date Assange will be brought to Sweden within 10 days, according to European Arrest Warrant rules, Sweden's Office of Public Prosecutions said.

Within four days of his arrival in Sweden, a court hearing will decide whether or not Assange should be remanded in custody for questioning by prosecution. Any decision by court can be appealed, according to the Swedish prosecutors.

Assange will be brought to Sweden by the country's Department of Corrections, which will also take him into custody. Since Assange is considered to be a flight risk, he will be kept in prison while waiting for the remand hearing.

However, the Prosecutor's Office says Assange won't be kept in isolation and will be able to watch TV, read newspapers and associate with other inmates.

Since December 2010, Julian Assange has been under house arrest in Britain while appealing decisions by UK courts to extradite him to Sweden. He fears Sweden will hand him over to the United States, where he may face a secret indictment on charges of espionage because of WikiLeaks publishing confidential State Department cables.

Swedish authorities have arrested Assange in his absence on suspicion of unlawful coercion, two counts of probable sexual molestation, rape and other lesser crimes against two women. Assange says the encounters were consensual [*and so do the two women involved --A.B.*].

Director of Public Prosecutions Marianne Ny will be in charge of Assange's questioning when he arrives in Sweden. No further information will be given by her office so as not to disturb the investigation or hurt people affected by it, officials said.

<http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2012/06/sweden-prison-assange>

After Sweden: Assange to become Manning II?

RT
15 June, 2012

Julian Assange's extradition to Sweden has fueled fears he will be transferred to US jurisdiction. Political rhetoric branding Assange as a terrorist and reports of a secret indictment make a fair trial seem unlikely should he fall into US hands.

It is likely that the WikiLeaks founder will be handed over to the US where he will be tried for espionage, given "the unusualness of the extradition with no charges in place," David Swanson, an author and activist, told RT.

He said that in response to the thousands of classified documents leaked by the whistleblower, the US government "has issued a secret closed indictment and pressured other governments in Britain and in Sweden to ship Julian Assange to the

US." Swanson added that Assange could face conditions amounting to torture or even murder, the very crimes that he exposed.

According to an email from US-based intelligence company Stratfor leaked in February, US prosecutors had already issued a secret indictment against Assange.

"Not for Pub. — We have a sealed indictment on Assange. Pls protect," Stratfor official Fred Burton wrote in a January 26, 2011 email obtained by hacktivist group Anonymous.

Attorney Kevin Zeese described Assange's extradition ruling as "extraordinary" in that no charges have actually been leveled against Assange. "He could've done the questioning by Skype. There's no need to go to Sweden to be questioned," Zeese told RT.

Referring to the strong US rhetoric that brands the WikiLeaks founder as a "high-tech terrorist", Zeese said that the US is scared by the information disseminated by Assange, as it reveals corruption at all levels of the US government.

Highlighting double standards in the Obama administration, he referred to a leaked memo signed by Hillary Clinton ordering US politicians to spy on diplomats coming to the UN. **"She should be being prosecuted, not Julian Assange," stressed Zeese.**

Julian Assange's appeal to the UK Supreme Court to reopen his extradition case was denied on Wednesday and he will be transferred to Sweden in two weeks. The Australian whistleblower is wanted by the Swedish government for questioning over allegations of sexual assault and rape.

'The good, the bad and the illegal'

Concerns have been voiced that Assange is heading for the same fate as Bradley Manning the US army private currently facing court martial for leaking classified military information to WikiLeaks.

The two whistleblowers have been targeted by the US government as criminals for releasing information that could potentially put the US public at risk. However, investigations carried out by the US into the overall impact of the leaking of classified documents reveal it was minimal.

"There is an embarrassment to the US Empire, but no one has been killed by this. There has been no undermining of US national security," said Kevin Zeese. He emphasized that what really worries the government is that the public sees what the US does on a "day-to-day basis."

"You see the good, the bad, the ugly and the illegal of US foreign policy" which is exactly what the US government does not want people to see, concluded the attorney.

"The US government has very much blurred the line between law enforcement and war," David Swanson told RT, referring to the US treatment of whistleblowers.

Video:<http://youtu.be/2n4gGR9GUHE>

Brief History of Swedish Sex: The rise and fall of "Swedish Sin"

Submitted by GMason
WL Central
2012-06-17

In 2008, University of Chicago Chair and former Stockholm University professor Don Kulick observed: "From being admired and envied by many as beacons of sexual enlightenment in the 1960s and '70s, the Scandinavian countries today have some of the most repressive sex laws in the Western world. Sweden is the most draconian.... The message conveyed by [recent laws] is clear: your sexuality is the property of the state, and the state will claim its right to regulate and punish that sexuality, wherever you may be. So whatever, indeed, happened to sex in Scandinavia?" *[Nonsense. Societies have always regulated sexual and other conduct. The issue concerns which behaviours are to be regulated, and Sweden has been among the first to legalize forms of sexual behaviour that are still illegal in other countries. In recent years, however, it has adopted stricter laws on the purchase of sexual services, pedophilia and the definition of rape. Those measures can be debated, but most sexual behaviour is still not "the property of the state". — A.B.]*

Although it does not directly answer the Kulick's question, Oscar Swartz's new book, *A Brief History of Swedish Sex: How the Nation That Gave Us Free Love Redefined Rape and Declared War on Julian Assange*, traces the change that Kulick describes. Structured as a timeline, the volume vividly illustrates how a political coup by a group of radical feminists at the highest levels of government caused the free-love era of "Swedish sin" to give way to a wave of anti-sex and anti-male hysteria that vilified heterosexual sex and villainized men *[only among a tiny minority — A.B.]*. It was into this morass that WikiLeaks leader Julian Assange waded when he had consensual sexual relations with Anna Ardin and Sofia Wilén— and then became the target of a Sweden-initiated international manhunt.

The notion of "Swedish sin" springs from the days of the country's sexual revolution, which started earlier than in most other Western societies. Beginning in the 1950s, a wash of Swedish erotic culture included pornographic films, books, and magazines; clubs where audiences could view live sex acts; mandatory sex education for all children from age seven; early legalization and public acceptance of homosexuality; and contraceptives and abortion on demand.

How did this sex liberalism give way to a Christian moralism that devolved into a War on Sex and then a War on Men? *[It hasn't. Most elements of "Swedish erotic culture" remain legal and new ones, e.g. unisex marriage, are being added. — A.B.]* One irony shown in Swedish Sex is that the very openness and moralism of Swedish society— which allowed women entry into the upper echelons of politics— ultimately permitted that society to be dominated by a bloc of female *[and male — A.B.]* political actors who espoused sexual repression, as well as oppression of the other half of the country's population. At the height of the sexual revolution, these disgruntled radical feminists spearheaded a backlash: by claiming the moral high ground and casting women invariably as victims in any sexual encounter *[only in those where there is said to be a victim — A.B.]*, they swung the country's moral fulcrum and almost unilaterally imposed their own agenda on this small nation *[the more restrictive new laws have all been backed by political majorities — A.B.]*.

A major actor in this drama, according to Swartz, was former Swedish Deputy Prime Minister Margareta Winberg. Winberg also chaired the militant National Federation of Social Democratic Women; she surrounded herself with radical feminists and routinely unleashed virulent anti-male diatribes in public. In 2004 she published an article asking Swedish women: "Why do you put up with it? Why can't you bear witness about men as oppressors, wife-beaters, members of the Taliban and unpleasant types in general? ... For who are a burden to society and us women? Who is in prison? Who is a soccer hooligan? Who abuses women at home? Who is most expensive when he is ill? ... Who neglects his children? Who requires too much space in the public arena— without having anything to say? Who starts and wages war?... Do men want to be such a burden? Do they know they are?" [*This is "militant"?* --A.B.] Later that same year Winberg gave a public speech portraying prostitutes as victims and johns as abusers: "Men buy living beings, men beat, men degrade, men run away from responsibilities, men own more, men earn more money, men grab, men shoot, men rob etc. Sometimes I'm really wondering why more women do not really hate men. The way they behave!" [*A question that I, a male, have often posed.* --A.B.]

Such attitudes, viewed as marginal in other countries, became the Swedish norm. In the radical feminists' worldview, pornography and prostitution are always the same as "degradation, abuse, torture and rape" propagated by men. In 2007 prominent Social Democrat Katrine Kielos opined in print that "what we regard as 'normal' male sexuality actually [presupposes] systematic abuse of women". [*Selective quotation: Kielos is not especially bright.* --A.B.]

One female politician in the Moderate Party recounts her experience at the annual congress of ROKS, a government-backed women's advocacy group [*it receives a state subsidy, like countless other organizations in Sweden* --A.B.]: "There was such an aggression and hatred and such unpleasant attitudes against half of the Swedish population ... In the evening the Board sang songs— it was a party evening. But when you sing a song about 'we shall boil them' and 'we shall burn them' and it is all about men... I must distance myself." At the Left Party's congress, Chair Gudrun Schyman made a speech comparing Swedish men to the Taliban. Winberg's advisor Gunilla Ekberg equated prostitution with violence and opined that no woman "can endure" being "subject to penetration four to five times a day". [*Minority views. Schyman's Taliban analogy, for example, has been widely criticized.* --A.B.]

The extremism of this anti-male, anti-sex [???] bloc became clear when, in 2005, a government-supported group of two dozen feminists attacked employees of a Stockholm porn club with "baseball bats, bottles, umbrellas and a bag of pebbles as weapons". A newspaper later reported that "traces of the riot" included "blood drenched clots and dried pools of blood". [*"Extreme" is the right word.* --A.B.] The government financed [*as it does countless other cultural events* --A.B.] a live production of the SCUM [Society for Cutting Up Men] Manifesto, a theatrical staging of a 1967 publication by radical feminist Valerie Solanas. Solanas, who infamously shot Andy Warhol a year later, espoused "selectively destroy[ing] property and kill[ing] men". Swartz notes: "The kind of hateful radical feminism, that a mentally unstable Valerie Solanas developed, is internationally regarded as marginal extremism. In the 2010s of Sweden it has become normal feminism [*not in my experience* --A.B.]."

This anti-male, anti-heterosexual-sex agenda was intended to be reinforced by legislation; at their 2001 congress, the Social Democrats vowed to politically overturn

the "Gender Power Order, the systematic subordination" of females by males. In 1982 the government introduced an anti-prostitution bill that "proposed that all of society join in the goal of changing men's sexuality: boys must learn that sex should only occur in conjunction with emotional relationships." The proposal included "propaganda activities" that would reinforce this message. Bans on live-sex clubs and sauna clubs soon followed. "Rape" was drastically redefined, and now included acts that did not involve sexual penetration. Radical feminists even insisted that "pleading sex"—i.e., "when a partner begs and pleads for sex so insistently that the woman agrees to sex just to end the nagging" — is rape [*a definition not included in the new law --A.B.*]. This position later served as the basis for a government propaganda campaign encouraging females to report their lovers to the authorities [*if they are subjected to abuse --A.B.*]. Prostitution, according to the radical feminists, is always rape; therefore only the [mostly male] purchasers of sex, and not the prostitutes themselves, are subject to legal punishment [*for purchasing sex, not for "rape" --A.B.*]. Sexual offenses were more harshly prosecuted. Swedes could now be punished for sexual violations they committed while outside the country [*e.g. pedophilia --A.B.*]. Not surprisingly, this state of affairs has led to a false rape figure reportedly as high as 80%. [*There are no reliable figures on this, and the figure of 80% is highly doubtful. --A.B.*]. Police spokespersons quietly acknowledge that false rape accusations are "an enormous problem and we are deadly tired of it". [*Numerous studies have found that genuine rape is grossly under-reported. --A.B.*]

Why did all this happen? [*As noted, much of it did not happen. --A.B.*] Swartz' timeline indicates that both the rise and the fall of "Swedish sin" resulted from the Swedes' perpetual eagerness to be seen as morally correct. U.S. intellectual Susan Sontag notes Sweden's desire to "see [it]self as morally leading other nations" and its citizens' "strong conviction of their country's moral superiority". [*Sontag's analysis was based on her own, undocumented imaginings. The vast majority of Swedes that I have met during the past 20 years are modest and self-effacing. --A.B.*] It was this quest for the moral high ground that led to the sexual revolution [*"moral high ground"? --A.B.*] and the flowering of gender-egalitarianism; and it was the same moralist bent that, 20 years later, withered into a neo-Puritanism admonishing that sex is wrong unless it occurs in the context of a traditional, "healthy" romantic relationship.

Ultimately, however, the true goal is state control of all aspects of the lives of citizens. [*Absurd. Among other things, it is administratively impossible. --A.B.*] Swartz' book depicts a contemporary Sweden in which Swedes' sexuality is treated as "the property of the state"; in which tourist-industry businesses like hotels and taxi operators are subject to prosecution if they fail to report the [*illegal --A.B.*] sexual activity of their customers to the police; and in which a woman dressed in a "provocative" manner or receiving male guests is assumed to be a prostitute [*what?! --A.B.*]. British journalist Robert Huntford perceived this trend in Sweden as early as 1971, when he published his book *The New Totalitarians*. Swartz reports: "The book was a scathing criticism of a country governed by social engineers where every aspect of life would be regulated." Huntford writes: "The State, anxious to control the citizen absolutely, has taken sexuality in hand as well. Even in the fundamental human act, the welfare mentality has intruded, and the Swedes, while encouraged to release their political frustrations through the reproductive procedure, are yet admonished to do so decently, hygienically, and properly." [*Huntford was apparently complaining about the sex education which the author of this article has previously cited as an example of the allegedly bygone era of sexual liberation. --A.B.*]

After detailing a number of sensational sex scandals that call into question Sweden's new stance on sexuality, *Swedish Sex* finishes with a focus on the Assange case. Swartz

examines the complainants' significant involvement with the Social Democrats' radical feminist wing [*"radical feminists" can be found in most political parties, of which the SDP happens to be the largest --A.B.*] — and the later manipulation of evidence following the first prosecutor's initial assessment that, in regard to the women's rape allegation, "the content of the interrogation does not support any claim that a crime has been committed".

[*Note: This diatribe is as exaggerated as the radical feminist views it targets. —A.B.*]

Assange requests political asylum from Ecuador

*Submitted by m_cetera
WL Central
2012-06-19*

WikiLeaks announced this evening via Twitter (19:40 local time) that Julian Assange has requested political asylum at the Ecuadorian embassy in London.

This comes after the UK Supreme Court refused a submission to reopen his case on June 14. Julian Assange has spent 560 days under house arrest without charge. His extradition to Sweden is set between June 28 and July 7.

Mr Assange will remain at the embassy under the protection of the Ecuadorian government while they process his request.

In his statement to the Diplomatic Mission of Ecuador, Julian Assange commented on his abandonment by his home country, Australia, as well as the threat of the death penalty in the U.S.

Ecuador has been offering political asylum to Julian Assange since November 2010. At that time, Vice Chancellor Kintto Lucas stated, "We are open to grant him Ecuadorian residency, without any kind of problem or any kind of conditions."

Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa was a guest on Julian Assange's talk show "The World Tomorrow" this past May. The full interview is available online in English, Spanish, Italian, Russian, and Arabic.

Updates will be added as they become available.

[UPDATE: 21:25 BST] Julian Assange's U.S. based lawyer Michael Ratner commented on the request via Twitter:

Julian's asylum not about questioning in Sweden. Facing life in solitary in US with no comm. for exposing war crimes, What Would You Do???

Sweden easier. Smaller. lawyers in UK remarkable. More public support. He would be in jail in Sweden, US lodges warrant and he never is out....

WikiLeaks Editor-in-Chief Seeks Political Asylum in Ecuador

Kevin Gosztola

Firedog Lake

June 19, 2012

Julian Assange, editor-in-chief of WikiLeaks, entered the Ecuadorian embassy in the United Kingdom last night and requested political asylum. Ecuador's foreign minister says the country is now reviewing the request.

The decision to seek asylum comes just days after the UK Supreme Court decided to not reopen his appeal against extradition to Sweden for questioning on alleged conduct that occurred during sexual encounters with two women in 2010. The Court ruled against his appeal on May 30.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Integration put out a press release on Assange's request for asylum. The release indicated that he believes high-ranking officials in Australia have made statements that make it impossible for him to return to his home country.

A *Foreign Policy* magazine article provides a brief history of how embassies have become a sanctuary for those seeking refuge from political persecution:

In 1961, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations codified prevailing customary law by declaring the "premises" of diplomatic missions "inviolable" — effectively barring security agents in a host country from entering embassy grounds without the embassy's permission. The treaty added that "premises" included the head of the diplomatic mission's residence and that the private residences of diplomats also enjoyed "inviolability," though it's unclear whether this clause applies to all diplomats. The *New York Times* points out that if Chen is indeed holed up in an American diplomat's apartment, it "could leave him open to an attempt by security forces to seize him," according to unnamed diplomats interviewed by the paper.

This inviolability explains why embassies are our modern-day sovereign sanctuaries. But, importantly, the Vienna Convention says nothing about a diplomatic mission granting asylum to a person fleeing authorities in the host country — what the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and others have called "diplomatic asylum" (Latin America, for its part, has enshrined the concept of "diplomatic asylum" in regional treaties.) Asylum seekers typically leave their country before applying for help either in the country where they want to resettle or in a third country.

Interestingly, the Vienna Convention is exactly what the UK Supreme Court invoked when they ruled against Assange's appeal. It would be ironic if this treaty was what gave Assange the cover to avoid extradition to Sweden and seek asylum in Ecuador.

On November 30, 2010, just days after the release of US State Embassy cables began, Ecuador extended an offer to Assange to establish residency. BBC News reported that Deputy Foreign Minister Kintto Lucas said, "We are open to giving him residency in Ecuador, without any problem and without any conditions." Lucas also said, "We are

going to try and invite him to Ecuador to freely present, not only via the internet, but also through different public forums, the information and documentation that he has.”

Cables from Ecuador had not yet been released. Australia was just beginning to look into whether Assange had broken Australian laws by releasing documents. And Sweden had already announced months ago that it was investigating Assange but a European Arrest Warrant had not been issued and he was not yet under house arrest in the United Kingdom.

Ecuador President Rafael Correa appeared on the sixth episode of Julian Assange’s television show, “The World Tomorrow.” In the opening, Correa asked Assange how many days he had been under house arrest. Assange said over five hundred days. His face reacted to this with an expression of disbelief and empathy. The two discussed Ecuador’s perception of the United States, how Correa was handling big media owners and how he had managed to push through radical changes in Ecuador. When the interview was over he said to Assange, “It has been a pleasure to meet you, Julian, at least through this means. And, cheer up! Cheer up! Welcome to the club of the persecuted!”

Correa made quips about the United States, like, “The only country that can be certain it is never going to have a coup d’etat is the United States because it doesn’t have a US Embassy.” Assange laughed. Correa showed no animosity toward Assange for the release of diplomatic cables. He held up a book by two Argentina authors called “Wiki Media Leaks” and highlighted how Ecuadorean “media did not publish those cables or news which affected them.” And he added: “We believe, my dear Julian, that the only things that should be protected against information sharing are those set in the international treaties, in the Inter American Convention on Human Rights: the dignity and the reputation of the people and the safety of people and the state. The rest, the more people find out about it, the better.”

Assange can appeal his extradition to Sweden in the European Court of Human Rights (EHCR). Yet, what are the chances that succeeds? If Ecuador will help him escape the European Union, it seems like a good move. In Ecuador, the government under Correa would stand up to the US and seek to prevent the US government from persecuting him. He would escape a struggle that has already forced him to endure over five hundred days under house arrest. So, it’s tough to not sympathize with Assange’s decision to seek help from Ecuador.

Glenn Greenwald explains the situation in his post:

Assange’s resolve to avoid extradition to Sweden has nothing to do with a reluctance to face possible sex assault charges there. **His concern all along has been that once he’s in Swedish custody, he will far more easily be extradited to the U.S.**

In general, small countries are more easily coerced and bullied by the U.S., and Sweden in particular has a demonstrated history of acceding to U.S. demands when it comes to individuals accused of harming American national security. In December, 2001, Sweden handed over two asylum-seekers to the CIA, which then rendered them to be tortured in Egypt. A ruling from the U.N. Human Rights Committee found Sweden in violation of the global ban on torture for its role in

that rendition (the two individuals later received a substantial settlement from the Swedish government). **The fact that Sweden has unusually oppressive pre-trial procedures — allowing for extreme levels of secrecy in its judicial proceedings — only heightens Assange’s concern about what will happen to him vis-a-vis the U.S. if he ends up in Swedish custody.**

It’s hard to conclude that Assange’s fear is unfounded and wholly unreasonable. Given the way that the United States government reacted hysterically to the WikiLeaks releases in 2010 and the fact that a wide-ranging law enforcement investigation in the FBI into WikiLeaks and all individuals connected was launched, it is incredibly possible that Assange would face a request for extradition once he was in Sweden.

Here’s President Rafael Correa’s appearance on “The World Tomorrow” with Julian Assange: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1E-1-9QXd3Y>

Assange asks Ecuador for asylum

The WikiLeaks founder is motivated by one thing: a desire to avoid extradition to the U.S. Can anyone blame him?

*Glenn Greenwald
Salon.com
June 19, 2012*

Julian Assange was scheduled within days to turn himself over to British authorities for extradition to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning in connection with a sexual assault case in which he has never been charged. Instead, Assange earlier today went to the Embassy of Ecuador in London and sought asylum from that country under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Ecuadorian Foreign Minister, Ricardo Patino, issued a statement indicating that his government is “evaluating the request” and that Assange will remain under protection at the Embassy pending a decision.

Ecuador may seem like a random choice but it’s actually quite rational. In 2010, a top official from that country offered Assange residency (though the Ecuadorian President backtracked after controversy ensued). Earlier this month, Assange interviewed that nation’s left-wing President, Rafael Correa, for his television program on RT. Among other things, Correa praised the transparency brought about by WikiLeaks’ release of diplomatic cables as being beneficial for Ecuador (“We have nothing to hide. If anything, the WikiLeaks [releases] have made us stronger”). President Correa also was quite critical of the U.S., explaining the reason he closed the American base in his country this way: “Would you accept a foreign military base in your country? It’s so simple, as I said that at the time, there is no problem in having a U.S. military base in Ecuador but ok, perfect— we can give permission for the intelligence base only if they allow us to install an Ecuadorian base in the United States, a military base. That’s it, no more problem.”

Assange has been fighting extradition to Sweden for a year-and-a-half now, during which time he has been under house arrest. He has never been charged with any crime

in Sweden, but a prosecutor from that country is seeking his extradition to question him. After the British High Court ruled against him by a 5-2 vote earlier this month, and then refused to re-hear the case last week, his appeals in Britain contesting the extradition are exhausted.

Assange's resolve to avoid extradition to Sweden has nothing to do with a reluctance to face possible sex assault charges there. His concern all along has been that once he's in Swedish custody, he will far more easily be extradited to the U.S.

In general, small countries are more easily coerced and bullied by the U.S., and Sweden in particular has a demonstrated history of acceding to U.S. demands when it comes to individuals accused of harming American national security. In December, 2001, Sweden handed over two asylum-seekers to the CIA, which then rendered them to be tortured in Egypt. A ruling from the U.N. Human Rights Committee found Sweden in violation of the global ban on torture for its role in that rendition (the two individuals later received a substantial settlement from the Swedish government). The fact that Sweden has unusually oppressive pre-trial procedures — allowing for extreme levels of secrecy in its judicial proceedings — only heightens Assange's concern about what will happen to him vis-a-vis the U.S. if he ends up in Swedish custody.

Can anyone claim that Assange's fear of ending up in American custody is anything other than supremely reasonable and rational? Just look at what has happened to people — especially foreign nationals — over the last decade who have been accused of harming the national security of the United States.

They're imprisoned — still — without a whiff of due process, and President Obama just last year signed a new indefinite detention bill into law. Moreover, Assange need merely look at what the U.S. has done to Bradley Manning, accused of leaking documents and other materials to WikiLeaks: the Army Private was held for almost a year in solitary confinement conditions which a formal U.N. investigation found were "cruel, inhuman and degrading," and he now faces life in prison, charged with a capital offense of aiding Al Qaeda.

Beyond that, the Obama administration has been uniquely obsessed with punishing whistleblowers and stopping leaks. Worse still, the American federal judiciary has been staggeringly subservient to the U.S. Government when it comes to national security cases, rendering defendants accused of harming national security with almost no chance for acquittal. Would you have any confidence in obtaining justice if you were accused of harming U.S. national security and came into the clutches of the American justice system?

Over the past two years, I've spoken with numerous individuals who were once associated with WikiLeaks or who still are. Of those who no longer are, many have said that they stopped even though they believe as much as ever in WikiLeaks' transparency cause, and did so out of fear: not fear that they would be charged with a crime by their own government (they trust the judicial system of their government and are confident they would not be convicted), **but out of fear that they would be turned over to the United States.** That's the fear people have: ending up in the warped travesty known as the judicial system of the Land of the Free. That is what has motivated Assange to resist extradition to Sweden, and it's what has undoubtedly motivated him to seek asylum from Ecuador.

UPDATE: Just to address some media chatter I'm seeing around: Assange has not "fled" anything, is not a fugitive, and did not concoct some new and exotic procedure to evade legal process. Everyone knows exactly where he is: at Ecuador's Embassy in London. Seeking asylum based on claims of human rights violations (such as unjust extradition) is a widely recognized and long-standing right, as *Foreign Policy* documented during the recent Chen Guangcheng drama. It's a right that Assange, like everyone else, is entitled to invoke. If Ecuador refuses his asylum request, then he'll be right back in the hands of British authorities and presumably extradited to Sweden without delay. He has a lot at stake, and — like anyone else accused of serious crimes (though he's not been charged with anything) — he has every right to invoke all legal procedures available to him.

http://www.salon.com/2012/06/19/assange_asks_ecuador_for_asylum/singleton

Live Blog: Assange requests political asylum from Ecuador (Day 2)

Submitted by m_cetera
WL Central
2012-06-20

This is part of our live-coverage on Julian Assange's request for political asylum. The most recent news is available here. Follow @wl_central on Twitter for all the latest updates.

WikiLeaks announced via Twitter on the evening of June 19 (19:40 local time) that Julian Assange has requested political asylum at the Ecuadorian embassy in London.... Mr Assange will remain at the embassy under the protection of the Ecuadorian government while they process his request.

In his statement to the Diplomatic Mission of Ecuador, Julian Assange commented on his abandonment by his home country, Australia, as well as the threat of the death penalty in the U.S....

[UPDATE: 22:33 BST] Daniel Ellsberg has come out in support of Julian Assange's decision to seek asylum. He stated: "Political asylum was made for cases like this. Freedom for Julian in Ecuador would serve the cause of freedom of speech and of the press worldwide. It would be good for us all; and it would be cause to honor, respect and thank Ecuador."

Others who have come out in support of Mr Assange's decision include Coleen Rowley and [retired CIA agent] Ray McGovern.

[UPDATE: 22:05 BST] A [petition](#) has been started in support of Julian Assange's request for asylum. It also asks that the U.S. does not intervene if Ecuador accepts his application. Currently it has 1,200 signatories....

A vigil for Mr Assange was held in front of the DFAT in Brisbane, June 20th. A rally is also taking place at the DFAT in Sydney on June 21st, 5-7PM.

[UPDATE: 20:25 BST] Kier Simmons of ITV News spoke with Kristinn Hrafnsson. According to him, Julian Assange will be spending another night at the Ecuadorian Embassy. Jason Farrell of Sky News also spoke with Mr Hrafnsson and will have more information shortly.

Australian journalist Mary Kostakidis wrote to the Ecuadorian Embassy expressing her concern for Julian Assange and asking that Ecuador grant him asylum....

[UPDATE: 17:50 BST] Jesselyn Radack from the Government Accountability Project was [on RT discussing](#) Julian Assange's application for asylum. She discusses the real risks he faces in the U.S., where the Obama Administration has been waging a "war on whistleblowers"....

[UPDATE: 16:10 BST] WikiLeaks spokesman Kristinn Hrafnsson has arrived. at the Ecuadorian Embassy....

labSurlab and other organizations published a [press release](#) urging Ecuador to support Mr Assange's request for asylum. The letter is available in its original Spanish, and an English translation is available as well....

[UPDATE: 13:07 BST] RT published an [exclusive interview](#) with Julian Assange's mother, Christine. She discusses his decision to seek asylum and his abandonment by the Australian government....

[UPDATE: 08:45 BST] Vaughan Smith tweeted a correction to BBC's quotation of him: "My BBC quote on #Assange asylum is wrong. A well-funded campaign to undermine him for nearly 2 years, not just a few months."

[UPDATE: 07:55 BST] Australian journalist Phillip Dorling reported on what would happen in the event that Julian Assange's asylum is accepted, or if it is denied:

In the event Ecuador grants Mr Assange asylum, any movement outside the Ecuadorean Embassy would be subject to negotiation and agreement between the governments of the United Kingdom and Ecuador.

Should his application be rejected, he would be most likely be arrested once he left the embassy and his extradition to Sweden would proceed.

Australian Greens Senator Scott Ludlam [approached the Senate](#) regarding WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, and whether the Australian Government would prevent attempts by the U.S. to extradite and prosecute him. Chris Evans, acting representative for Prime Minister, first answered the question with jokes about Twitter, and then gave a vague answer....

[UPDATE: 01:55 BST] Australian Greens Senator Scott Ludlam was [on ABC discussing](#) Julian Assange's decision to seek asylum. He said Mr. Assange's concerns are well-founded after being labeled a terrorist by the U.S. Vice President and Stratfor emails revealing a sealed indictment against him. Watch the interview below. Senator Ludlam [also spoke](#) in front of the Senate doors on the matter.

[UPDATE: 2012-06-20 00:30 BST] WikiLeaks [has published](#) an effective "declaration of abandonment" from the Australian Government, which refuses to protect Julian Assange or make any requests on his behalf.

'Swedish men just don't want to use condoms'

The Local
19 June 2012

"No glove, no love"—the age-old English saying about condoms may ring true in most cosmopolitan cities, but when it comes to Stockholm, I say good luck finding a Swedish man who will actually want, or even knows, how to wear one.

This, of course, is just my personal experience. But as a single American woman in her late twenties who has now lived in Stockholm for over a year, I am constantly amazed that the majority of Swedish men I've encountered do not use—or, dare I say—never use, condoms.

Let's first talk numbers. Out of the six Swedish men that I've casually dated so far here in Stockholm, every single one of them seems to have some sort of issue or hang-up with using this little piece of plastic.

First there was Jim*, who joked that the reason he didn't use condoms was because disease hadn't yet spread to Sweden.

Then there was Kevin, who confessed that while he hadn't used a condom in years, he was at least willing to try (although when he finally did put one on, let's just say it was a "lost" cause).

And when I met the mysterious yet sexy Chris, he claimed that because he was an "expert at pulling out," that meant we didn't need to use a condom. I didn't buy his ridiculous excuse.

Then there was John, the handsome 37-year-old I met out one night in Östermalm.

When I told him after two dates that I would prefer it if he used a condom the first time we had sex, he suddenly turned into a petulant child and vowed he would never again use a condom because they are both "uncomfortable and unnecessary."

Perhaps not surprisingly, we stopped seeing each other after that.

As a born-and-bred American who has sat through many a sex ed class in her adolescent years, it's essentially been drilled into my brain that condoms are a must when you first start having sex with someone.

Of course the number one reason is to prevent pregnancy, especially if you aren't on birth control, but in this day and age, the prevalence of STIs is staggering and for me, that's reason enough to make the new guy I'm dating wear one.

In case you're wondering, I have been with men from other countries— not just American men who are often staunch condom supporters— and I can honestly say that since moving to Sweden, this is the first time that I have encountered such a strong dislike for something that really is only meant to protect you.

Maybe it's just me but I think I dislike the idea of chlamydia far more than a thin piece of plastic.

But I should be fair and say that the Swedish men are not the only ones to blame.

According to a close Swedish female friend of mine, she recalls only ever having used a condom once in her life. Yes, you read that correctly: only once.

The reason? It seems as though every single Swedish woman is on some form of birth control, hence her reason for not ever having to use a backup method of contraception.

And as for the Swedish men? Well, they've apparently become so accustomed to women already being on the pill that they've never felt the need to "wrap it up"— pardon the pun.

"You make it sound like all Swedes do is sleep around," Patrick said when I first asked if he was OK with wearing one for me.

We had been out on several dates and clearly enjoyed each other's company so sleeping together, to me, seemed like the appropriate next step. Apparently, this seemingly innocuous request of mine was considered a deal breaker. I never saw Patrick again.

So, here's a little note to all those single, Swedish men out there: It's not an insult to your masculinity if a woman asks you to wear a condom— it's because she likes you and likes having safe sex. Okej?

• *Elizabeth Carlsson*

*Typical American names are used to protect Swedish identities

SvD: 19 juni 2012

Assange söker asyl i Ecuador

Wikileaks grundare Julian Assange, som ska överlämnas till Sverige, har sökt politisk asyl i Ecuador. Det uppgav landets utrikesminister på tisdagskvällen.

Assange har tagit sin tillflykt till det sydamerikanska landets ambassad i London, där han nu ansökt om politisk asyl. Enligt brittiska medier, som hänvisar till Ecuadors utrikesminister Ricardo Patino, är hans ansökan under behandling.

Julian Assange är misstänkt för sexuella övergrepp i Sverige mot två kvinnor. Deras advokat, Claes Borgström, räknar med att Assange överlämnas inom kort— oavsett hur han nu agerar.

– Han får söka asyl var han vill för min del. Men han är häktad av Svea hovrätt och det pågår ett överlämnandeförfarande som han inte kommer ifrån.

Borgström har svårt att förstå meningen med Assanges "olika manövrar".

– Han får använda de rättsmedel som finns, det är jag den första att säga. Men meningen med det är svårt att förstå, Mer än att han möjligen är rädd att bli dömd för våldtäkt i Sverige. [Han har upprepade gånger sagt vad han är rädd för, och det är inte detta som t.o.m. Borgström bör kunna begripa; se följande artikel. ---A.B.]

Julian Assange har inte längre några juridiska möjligheter kvar i Storbritannien att stoppa en överlämning. Han har tidigare talat om att ta fallet vidare till Europadomstolen, men det skulle inte innebära att frågan om överlämning prövas igen.

Joakim Nergelius, professor i rättsvetenskap och juridik vid Örebro universitet, säger till TT att en europeisk arresteringsorder ligger till grund för brittiska myndigheters beslut att överlämna Assange till Sverige.

Om han rent fysiskt skulle kunna ta sig till Ecuador gäller inte arresteringsordern.

– Men det är ju helt omöjligt att bedöma de eventuella juridiska följderna av det här eller förutsättningarna för att han skulle få asyl.

DN hemsida, 2012-06-19



Ecuadors utrikesminister Ricardo Patino. *Foto: Dolores Ochoa / AP*

Julian Assange har sökt asyl i Ecuador

- ▶ **Är på landets ambasad i London.** "Hans ansökan är under behandling", sade utrikesminister Ricardo Patino till reportrar i huvudstaden Quito. [139](#)
- ▶ **Sverige förutsätter överlämning.** "Har noterat att det här har hänt."
- ▶ **Advokat Claes Borgström:** Assange förhalar överlämnandet.
- ▶ **Folkrättsexpert:** Latinamerika generösa med asyl.
- ▶ **Nej i brittiska HD för Assange.** Ska överlämnas till Sverige. [71](#)
- ▶ **Anklagelserna mot Julian Assange.** Bakgrund och fakta.



Borgström: Assange förhalar överlämnandet

Advokat Claes Borgström som företräder de två kvinnorna som har anklagat Julian Assange för sexuella övergrepp säger att Assange genom att söka asyl i Ecuador försöker förhala överlämnandet till Sverige.

– Han fortsätter den linje som han har slagit in på sedan mycket lång tid tillbaka, nämligen att försöka förhala överlämnandet till Sverige, säger Borgström till DN.se.

Enligt Borgström medför detta att uppmärksamheten flyttas från de sexuella övergreppen som Assange är misstänkt för.

– **Det är tragiskt för de två klienter som jag företräder.**

– Uppmärksamheten flyttas till helt andra saker som som inte har någon betydelse för den här frågan, som Wikileaks, CIA och utlämnandet till USA och så vidare.

Vad tror du händer om Assange beviljas asyl?

– Jag kan inte svara på det. **Jag kan inte föreställa mig att det finns några som helst skäl att han beviljas** asyl. Det förutsätter ju att man kan råka ut för tortyr, förföljelse och så vidare. Och några sådana skäl finns ju inte. Jag kan inte föreställa mig att det här leder någonstans, säger Claes Borgström. *[Herr Borgström, i likhet med större delen av den svenska journalistkåren, tycks inte vara särskilt väl insatt i vad USA har hållit på med under senaste decennierna. --A.B.]*

• *Victor Lindbom*

Assange felt 'abandoned' by Australian government after letter from Roxon

*Philip Dorling
Sydney Morning Herald
June 20, 2012*

Julian Assange decided to seek political asylum in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London because he felt abandoned by the Australian government, WikiLeaks insiders say.

Assange's closest confidants say they were surprised by his move but have no doubt that it was triggered by a letter from Attorney-General Nicola Roxon that Assange's lawyers describe as an "Australian declaration of abandonment".

In the letter, to one of Mr Assange's legal representatives, Australian human rights lawyer Jennifer Robinson, Ms Roxon made it clear that Australia would not seek to involve itself in any international exchanges about his future.

Ms Roxon wrote: "Australia would not expect to be a party to any extradition discussions that may take place between the United States and the United Kingdom or the United States and Sweden, as extradition is a matter of bilateral law enforcement cooperation."

She also took the opportunity to advise Ms Robinson that "should Mr Assange be convicted of any offence in the United States and a sentence of imprisonment imposed, he may apply for an international prisoner transfer to Australia".

Mr Assange's lawyers characterised Ms Roxon's reply as a "declaration of abandonment". Some of Mr Assange's closest associates first learnt of his decision to seek political asylum when journalists rang them seeking comment overnight after the WikiLeaks publisher formally sought the protection of the Ecuadorean government in London.

"I didn't know about it, it came as a complete shock," one of Mr Assange's small WikiLeaks team told Fairfax Media.

Earlier, Mr Assange said in a short statement: "I can confirm that today I arrived at the Ecuadorean Embassy and sought diplomatic sanctuary and political asylum. This application has been passed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the capital Quito. I am grateful to the Ecuadorean ambassador and the government of Ecuador for considering my application."

Mr Assange failed last week to persuade the British Supreme Court to reopen his appeal against extradition to Sweden to be questioned about sexual assault allegations. Mr Assange, who has not been charged with any offence in Sweden, has expressed grave fear that extradition to Stockholm will facilitate his ultimate extradition to the US on espionage and conspiracy charges relating to the alleged leaking of hundreds of thousands of classified military and diplomatic documents.

The Ecuadorean embassy said that while Mr Assange's application for asylum was assessed he would remain "under the protection" of the Ecuadorean government.

"The decision to consider Mr Assange's application for protective asylum should in no way be interpreted as the Government of Ecuador interfering in the judicial processes of either the United Kingdom or Sweden," the embassy said in a written statement.

The Ecuadorean Foreign Ministry also issued a statement that said Mr Assange's application for asylum referred to a "regrettable factual statement of abandonment" by the Australian government that made "it impossible to return to my home country and put me in a state of helplessness to be requested for questioning by the Kingdom of Sweden ... and investigation for political crimes in the United States of America, a country where the death penalty for such offences is still in force".

Foreign Minister Bob Carr and Prime Minister Julia Gillard have repeated that the Australian government "has no evidence" of any US intention to charge and extradite Mr Assange, though Ms Gillard added the qualifying words "at this stage" in answer to a parliamentary question from Australian Greens deputy leader Adam Bandt.

Ms Gillard and acting prime minister Wayne Swan said today that Ms Assange's asylum application was "a matter for him" and repeated that he would continue to receive what they described as "full consular support".

Fairfax Media has now confirmed that the Australian Federal Police actively considered recommending cancellation of Mr Assange's passport when the government was considering its response to WikiLeaks's release of classified US diplomatic cables in November 2010.

Released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet under freedom of information legislation, the partially redacted minutes of the Australian government's WikiLeaks taskforce recorded on 30 November 2010 that "the AFP is currently assessing options for any legal action it may be able to take on this matter". Further details have been redacted on national security grounds.

The AFP subsequently concluded that Mr Assange and WikiLeaks had broken no Australian laws by publishing classified US government documents.

A copy of the WikiLeaks taskforce minutes released by the Attorney-General's Department includes an additional sentence, apparently accidentally not redacted, that indicates the AFP was considering "the possibility of cancelling Mr Assange's passport, though it would be rare in these circumstances".

National security sources have told Fairfax Media that an AFP recommendation for cancellation of Mr Assange's passport on national security grounds was overtaken by the WikiLeaks publisher's arrest in London in connection with Sweden's extradition request and the seizure of his passport by British police.

Then foreign minister Kevin Rudd said that he never received a request to cancel Mr Assange's passport and former attorney-general Robert McClelland said such action could have been "counterproductive" to efforts to track Mr Assange's movements and in any case proved to be "irrelevant."

Ecuador's Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino told a news conference yesterday that Mr Assange had argued that "the authorities in his country will not defend his minimum

guarantees in front of any government or ignore the obligation to protect a politically persecuted citizen".

In late 2010, Ecuador offered Mr Assange residency but quickly rescinded the offer after controversy erupted and the US government reportedly made diplomatic representations against such action.

Earlier this month, WikiLeaks released an interview between Mr Assange and Ecuador's left-wing President, Rafael Correa, for Mr Assange's television program The World Tomorrow.

President Correa applauded the transparency brought about by WikiLeaks' release of US diplomatic cables as being beneficial for Ecuador, saying "we have nothing to hide. If anything, the WikiLeaks [releases] have made us stronger".

Last December, Fairfax Media obtained the release under freedom of information of Australian Embassy cables that in December 2010 reported from Washington to Canberra that WikiLeaks was the target of an "unprecedented" US criminal probe and that media reports that a secret grand jury had been convened in Alexandria, Virginia, were "likely true".

The released cables show that the Australian embassy in Washington confirmed from US officials that the US Justice Department was conducting an "active and vigorous inquiry into whether Julian Assange can be charged under US law, most likely the 1917 Espionage Act".

Australian diplomats asked for advance warning if any US extradition moves "so that ministers could respond appropriately" to media and public inquiries.

In the event Ecuador grants Mr Assange asylum, any movement outside the Ecuadorean Embassy would be subject to negotiation and agreement between the governments of the United Kingdom and Ecuador.

Should his application be rejected, he would be most likely be arrested once he left the embassy and his extradition to Sweden would proceed

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/assange-felt-abandoned-by-australian-government-after-letter-from-roxon-20120620-20npj.html>

Key aspects of the Assange-Sweden case

References & web links

Assange & Sweden website: <http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange.htm>

Sequence of Events (summary): <http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/sequence.htm>

Suspicious Behaviour (case history): <http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/suspicious.pdf>

“Sweden, Assange & USA”: <http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/assange-usa.pdf>

From Neutrality to NATO: <http://www.nnn.se/nordic/americult/allsteps.pdf>

Note: The page numbers cited below refer to those given in the documents, not to those shown in Adobe Reader or other programs, which may differ.

1. Several agencies of the U.S. government have invested large resources in efforts to cripple WikiLeaks and punish Assange. They include the Justice Dept., the FBI, the CIA, the Pentagon and a grand jury which for over a year has been developing a case against Assange. According to a memo from Stratfor, a private intelligence company with close ties to the government, the grand jury has already issued a sealed indictment against Assange. The persecution of Bradley Manning is also related; the government is applying pressure to Manning in hopes that he will incriminate Assange. It is therefore clear that the U.S. government is determined to get Assange, and it appears that the government of Australia (Assange’s homeland) is co-operating in those efforts.

In the assessment of retired CIA analyst David MacMichael: “It has been suggested that the real reason Sweden wants Assange is so that its government can in turn extradite him to the United States where he will face prosecution for conspiracy to harm U.S. ‘national security’.

“How well-founded is that suspicion? From the perspective of many former officers in the U.S. intelligence system, it is almost a certainty. In this context, it may be noted that the Obama administration has already initiated more prosecutions of so-called whistleblowers than in the entire previous history of the United States. Moreover, the trend in current ‘national security’ legislation grants the administration the authority to arrest and imprison, indefinitely and without trial, both citizens and noncitizens of the U.S. anywhere on the ‘world battlefield’. Now the administration has even claimed the right to murder U.S. citizens whom it designates as threats to national security.

“These and related developments indicate that it would be foolish to dismiss the notion that powerful elements in the U.S. government would resort to almost any means to get their hands on Assange and, in effect, lynch him.”
(*Suspicious Behaviour*, p. 45)

2. Especially since the assassination of Olof Palme in 1986, Sweden has been transformed into a vassal-state of the U.S. That process is documented in *From Neutrality to NATO*; see for example pages 36-37 and 59-60. The relevance of that transformation for the Assange case is analysed in “Sweden, Assange & USA” (see links above).

Given the resources invested by the U.S. government in the pursuit of Assange, as noted above, it can be expected to place heavy pressure on the Swedish government to surrender Assange to the U.S. if he returns to Sweden. If so, "... it will be Carl Bildt and perhaps other members of the Reinfeldt government who will decide— openly or, more likely, furtively behind a facade of legal formality— on whether or not to approve the anticipated U.S. request for extradition. Everything in their past clearly indicates that any such request will be granted." ("Sweden, Assange & USA", p. 5)

3. From the very beginning of the Swedish sex case, the police and prosecutors have violated their own guidelines on how an investigation is to be conducted, and have generally behaved in a very suspicious manner. See "Complete disregard for objectivity" on page 15 and "Abuse of Office by Public Prosecutor" on page 31 of *Suspicious Behaviour*.

4. Although the Swedish justice system is exemplary in many respects, its procedures for dealing with sex crimes have long been criticized by prominent Swedish jurists. See pages 24-25 and 42-44 of *Suspicious Behaviour*.

5. The mainstream Swedish media have conducted an aggressive campaign against Assange for nearly two years, thereby polluting public opinion and increasing the risk that the Swedish government would submit to U.S. pressure regarding extradition. See pages 45-46 of *Suspicious Behaviour*.

— Al Burke
20 June 2012

Reminder

WL Central
20 June 2012

As a reminder of the threat Mr Assange faces from the U.S., there is a list of political figures who have called for his assassination.

Sarah Palin

Former US Vice Presidential Candidate

Julian Assange should be targeted like the Taliban

<http://www.computerworlduk.com/news/it-business/3251386/sarah-palin-says-target-wikileaks-julian-assange-like-the-taliban/>

Thomas Flanagan

former advisor to Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper

I think Assange should be assassinated, actually. (laughs) I think Obama should put out a contract or use a drone or something. I wouldn't feel happy, uh, unhappy, if Assange disappeared.

<http://freedomradar.com/news/39-world-news/72-tom-flanagan-calls-for-assassination-of-wikileaks-julian-assange.html>

Bob Beckel

FOX News commentator

A dead man can't leak stuff... This guy's a traitor, he's treasonous, and he has broken every law of the United States. And I'm not for the death penalty, so...there's only one way to do it: illegally shoot the son of a bitch.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/12/07/fox-news-bob-beckel-calls_n_793467.html

Eric Bolling

FOX News commentator

[Assange] should be underground— six feet underground.... He should be put in jail or worse, hanged in a public forum.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEak-3ya90Q#t=02m20s>

Todd Schnitt

Radio Host

ASSANGE IS A TERRORIST, AN ENEMY COMBATANT, AND NEEDS TO BE TREATED AS SUCH, SCHNITT HAS SAID REPEATEDLY ON HIS PROGRAM WHICH AIRS WEEKDAYS FROM 3:00pm-6:00pm EST.

<http://www.schnittshow.com/pages/reward.html>

Jeffrey Kuhner

Washington Times columnist

Headline: Assassinate Assange? Body: Julian Assange poses a clear and present danger to American national security... The administration must take care of the problem— effectively and permanently.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/dec/2/assassinate-assange/>

John Hawkins

Far-right blogger

Julian Assange is not an American citizen and he has no constitutional rights. So, there's no reason that the CIA can't kill him. Moreover, ask yourself a simple question: If Julian Assange is shot in the head tomorrow or if his car is blown up when he turns the key, what message do you think that would send about releasing sensitive American data?

http://townhall.com/columnists/JohnHawkins/2010/11/30/5_reasons_the_cia_should_have_already_killed_julian_assange/page/2

Ralph Peters

U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel and author

Julian Assange is a cyber terrorist in wartime, he's guilty of sabotage, espionage, crimes against humanity— he should be killed, but we won't do that.

<http://rightwingnews.com/2010/07/the-cia-should-kill-julian-assange/>

Ralph Peters

U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel and author

I do not believe in leaks. I would execute leakers. They're betraying our country.

<http://www.examiner.com/american-politics-in-vancouver/video-lt-col-ralph-peters-declares-that-julian-assange-should-be-killed>

Steve Gill

Right-wing Nashville radio host

Folks like Julian Assange should be targeted as terrorists. They should be captured and kept in Guantanamo Bay, or killed.

<http://www.nashvillescene.com/pitw/archives/2010/11/30/steve-gill-kill-wikileaks-founder>

Rush Limbaugh

Right-wing radio talk show host

Back in the old days when men were men and countries were countries, this guy would die of lead poisoning from a bullet in the brain.

http://www.theodoresworld.net/archives/2010/11/rush_limbaugh_on_wikileaks_fo_u.html

William Kristol

Editor of the Weekly Standard

Why can't we act forcefully against WikiLeaks? Why can't we use our various assets to harass, snatch or neutralize Julian Assange and his collaborators, wherever they are?

http://www.weeklystandard.com/blogs/whack-wikileaks_520462.html

G. Gordon Liddy

Former White House Adviser, talk show host

This fellow Anwar al-Awlaki— a joint U.S. citizen hiding out in Yemen— is on a 'kill list' [for inciting terrorism against the U.S.]. Mr. Assange should be put on the same list.

<http://www.wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=234905>

Deroy Murdock

Columnist for National Review

If convicted, [Bradley Manning] should be placed against a wall and executed by firing squad. (If extradited here, Assange deserves the same sendoff.)

<http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/255483/wikileaks-what-ifs-deroy-murdock>

Johan Goldberg

Editor-at-large of National Review Online

I'd like to ask a simple question: Why isn't Julian Assange dead? ...Why wasn't Assange garroted in his hotel room years ago? It's a serious question.

<http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/251393/all-quiet-black-ops-front-jonah-goldberg>

Donald Douglas

Blogger, Right Wing News

I won't think twice if Julian Assange meets the cold blade of an assassin, and apparently a significant number of others don't care for the guy.

<http://rightwingnews.com/author/donald-douglas/>

Paul Holmes

New Zealand Herald Columnist

I suppose they'll kill him, [Assange]. I would if I were them.

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=10693684

Mike Huckabee

Former Governor of Arkansas and FOX News talk show host

Whoever in our government leaked that information is guilty of treason, and I think anything less than execution is too kind a penalty.

<http://www.thestatecolumn.com/articles/mike-huckabee-calls-for-execution-of-julian-assange/>

The CIA

You Know Who They Are

"If legal attacks on Assange fail, he'll simply be assassinated by the CIA."—Paul Craig Roberts

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nuYLHCvM-7s>

Jason Lancaster

President of Spork Marketing

Assange is not a political figure... He represents a danger to the USA and he should be killed ASAP.

<http://jasonlancaster.com/34/usa-assassinate-wikileaks-founder/>

Swedish Extradition FACTS from Christine Assange

Submitted by Jaraparilla

WL Central

2012-06-20

Julian Assange's mother Christine recently tweeted the following FACTS about extraditions involving the USA, UK, Sweden and Australia:

1. Australian PM Julia Gillard and opposition leader Tony Abbot backed new Extradition Act amendments making it easier for U.S.A to extradite Aussies. The Greens fought it.
2. For the FIRST TIME Aussies can be now be extradited for minor offences.
3. The protection of "political" motives has been weakened. If the charge is "Terrorism" then "political" cannot apply to prevent extradition.
4. The U.S.A. recently expanded its definition of "terrorist" to include peaceful protesters— "Low level terrorism".
5. Under the new NDAA legislation, the U.S became a police state— citizens and foreigners can be arrested without warrant and indefinite detention applies.
6. In 1971 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled it legal to publish classified documents. Obama is now trying to label media who do so as terrorists.
7. Modifications to the Act included changing "protection from death penalty" to "likelihood the death penalty would be carried out".

8. Note that the U.S.A is in the top 5 countries for killing its own citizens, and the only Western country in that top 5.
9. Even Minor Offences under the new Extradition Amendments are punished with up to 12 months imprisonment.
10. The UK/US Bilateral Treaty allows the U.S.A to extradite from the UK without any *prima facie* case (i.e. evidence).
11. The Swedish/US Bilateral Treaty gets around safeguards of normal extradition with a fast-track "Temporary Surrender" clause.
12. The US Grand Jury convenes in secret. There are 4 prosecutors, no defence, and no judge. It can issue indictments for Extradition with no proper legal process.
13. Sweden has NEVER refused an Extradition request from the U.S.A.
14. In 2001 Sweden gave two innocent Egyptian refugees to the CIA for rendition to Egypt, where they were tortured.
15. The Swedish Justice Minister who signed off on the CIA rendition torture flight was Thomas Bodström.
16. Thomas Bodström is now the business partner of Claes Borgström, the politician/lawyer of the two Swedish women in the Assange case.
17. The Australian Greens supported a motion by Senator Scott Ludlam to protect Julian from "Temporary Surrender" to the U.S.A via Sweden. Both Labor and the Coalition opposed it.

Follow Christine Assange on Twitter: @AssangeC

Rundle: Assange makes his escape into a diplomatic storm

Guy Rundle
Crikey
20 June 2012

Six months ago. WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, on bail awaiting a decision about extradition to Sweden, quietly moved his official bail residence from Suffolk to Kent. The ostensible reason was that his Suffolk host — Vaughan Smith, founder of Frontline Media and the Frontline Club and his wife — were expecting a baby imminently, and Mrs Smith was finding the perpetual presence of a dozen or so WikiLeaksers stressful.

Myself, I thought one thing: channel run. Two hours after a judgment came down from the UK Supreme Court authorising Assange's extradition to Sweden, he would be on a yacht, one of those super-yachts that the cypherpunks of the '90s bought after they all got rich. It was easy to game it out. The super-yacht only has to get beyond the 12-mile UK waters line before it is in international waters. Assange would then be in a legal limbo.

I never wrote the suggestion up in an article, because I thought it was something Team Assange might be planning, and something the dim-bulb UK legal-police establishment would genuinely not have thought of. Instead, Assange has done something more creative — turned up at the Ecuadorian embassy in London and asked for asylum. The move has thrown the carefully choreographed rendition of Julian Assange into chaos, and created an international impasse in London, and in the EU as a whole.

To recap the state of play: 10 days ago, the UK Supreme Court denied Assange's appeal against a European arrest warrant to Sweden, to submit to further questioning on sexual assault allegations made by two women he had met in August 2010. Assange's barrister, thinking on her feet, noted the judgment relied in part on the Vienna Convention, which had not formed part of the case leading up to the Supreme Court review. The SC gave her leave to request an appeal on their own judgment.

Last week they dismissed that request rather curtly and set the clock ticking for Assange's extradition. The only option remained an appeal to the European Court of Human Rights, to overrule the UK Supreme Court. But the ECHR will only rarely grant injunctive relief and stop national legal proceedings — most likely it would take two years to consider the case by which time Assange would be in an orange jumpsuit in a Maryland supermax prison.

Had Assange consented to the extradition he would have entered the Swedish legal system, which has two main features:

There is no such thing as bail; you're either accused of a non-coercive crime and let out on licence, or you're on remand until trial.

Sweden has a distinctive system of extradition — especially to the US — in which someone accused of a crime in Sweden (and hence on remand) can be "loaned" to the US for prosecution there. This process does not exist in many other countries.

Assange's latest move has attracted a share of criticism, with both supporters and those neutral towards him questioning his conduct in this matter. About eight people have put up £240,000 bail for Assange, and while many of those — such as leftist filmmaker Ken Loach — would accept that Assange has to take drastic message, others will be less understanding. Jemima Khan has already tweeted that the move took her by surprise, and that she always thought Assange would face the accusations.

Given that Assange has made amply clear his opinion concerning the legitimacy of interlocking national security states, it is hard to regard such surprise as genuine. But it may be. **Others have been more sanguine, with Vaughan Smith saying Assange really had no choice but to make the jump if he truly felt the US was out to get him, via Sweden.**

There will also be a section of global pro-WikiLeaks opinion that will be dismayed — though why they thought Assange was resisting extradition for 500-plus days is something they would have to explain. The difficulties of the case have been apparent from the start — a hero of the Left (though he does not claim to be of the Left), accused of sexual assault/r-pe, by one of the world's most socially progressive countries, and by two women deeply [???] sympathetic to the WikiLeaks cause.

That has been the sentiment behind many of the calls from the liberal-left, that Assange should simply go to Sweden and face the accusations against him. That presumes a neutrality and genuine eye for truth on the part of the Swedish state, an unwise assumption for two reasons: first, the possibility that there may be an actual high-level US-Sweden conspiracy going on, and secondly, that the Swedish state legal process may have become so dominated by bureaucratic interests and statist feminism that it would be unable to deal with him fairly.

Let's take the second of these first, and remark on a few salient points:

- 1) Sweden's legal process for s-x crimes is archaic, and has not been overhauled properly. The slightest accusation — in this case of non-violent s-xual line-crossing — not only earns the accused months in remand, but eventually results in a trial in a closed court, before judges appointed by the ruling political parties.
- 2) The process by which Assange was accused, cleared, and then re-accused of these incidents beggars belief. Two women went to a Stockholm police station one Friday afternoon in August 2010, to either (and here accounts vary) report Assange for s-xual misconduct, or inquire as to how he could be forced to take an STI test. Only one woman, Sofia Wilen, gave a statement, saying that the morning after a s-xual encounter with Assange, he had initiated s-x while she was asleep, and without a condom; by her own testimony, she said that she then gave consent to continue the act.
- 3) While her statement was being given, police had already contacted a prosecutor to issue an investigation warrant for arrest. When Wilen was informed of this, she refused to sign her own evidence statement, saying that she had been pushed into making a complaint by people around her. The next day, the senior prosecutor for Stockholm rescinded the warrant, saying that there was nothing in the statement suggesting a crime had occurred.
- 4) By Monday, that decision had been appealed, with the two women now represented by Claes Borgstrom, a big wig in the Social Democratic party, and drafter of the 2005 s-x crimes laws under which Assange was being accused — laws that many had said were unworkable. The second complainant in the affair, Anna Ardin, now changed her story. She had been interviewed the day after Wilen had told of a rough but consensual s-xual encounter with Assange, but suggested he had torn a condom off during s-x.
- 5) In the weeks between the Stockholm prosecutor rejecting Wilen's statement as evidence of a potential crime, and the appeal, Ardin's story changed, and her account of rough consensual foreplay became an accusation that Assange had pinned her down with his body during s-x to prevent her applying a condom. This became the basis for a new accusation — s-xual coercion — which would have been sufficient as a felony, should the appeal prosecutor not reinstate Wilen's rape accusation. In that week, tweets were deleted and blog posts changed to remove any suggestion that Ardin had thought Assange's behaviour to her consensual.
- 6) The prosecutor to whom the appeal was made — Marianne Ny — was a former head of the "Crime Development Unit", whose specific brief was to develop new applications of s-x crimes laws, in areas where they had not previously been applied. She had previously spoken of remand as a form of de facto justice for men accused of s-x crimes, whom the courts would otherwise let free.

7) The European arrest warrant, and the Interpol red notice under which Assange is being extradited, was issued with a speed and seriousness usually reserved for major violent criminals, rather than someone simply wanted for further questioning, without a charge being present.

That is surely enough to get the antennae going, but there's more:

1) Assange's visit to Sweden during which these incidents occurred had raised alarm in both the centre-right Swedish establishment and the US. Had he been granted the residency he applied for that month, Assange could have become a registered Swedish journalist and based WikiLeaks there, gaining the substantial protections the Swedish state extends to journalists. It has been suggested the US had told Sweden it would curtail intelligence sharing if that occurred. After the accusations were made, Assange was denied residency.

2) Sweden's defence and intelligence needs are overwhelmingly oriented to its relations to Russia. Sweden runs a huge [???] northern fleet, and maintains a national service-based conscript army, all based on the premise that a military emergency between Russia and Europe would see the former try to enter through the top. Sweden's right, concentrated in the ruling Moderate party, have for years been trying to abolish Swedish neutrality, and have it join NATO. In fact, Sweden and NATO have been working together closely for years. Sweden becoming a centre for WikiLeaks would have been a disaster for that process.

3) Claes Borgstrom, the politician-lawyer who suddenly popped up to assist the two women accusers, is the law partner of Thomas Bodstrom, the former justice minister in the Social Democratic government that lost power in 2006. In 2001 Bodstrom had been an enthusiastic advocate of secret renditions at US request, with several Swedish citizens of Egyptian origin (Egyptian political refugees granted asylum and citizenship by Sweden, by another part of the state process) rendered back to Egypt and tortured. The entire interconnected Swedish establishment was oriented to a "war on terror" superstate strategy, and an Assange trial on criminal matters would fit that perfectly.

4) In 2011, a grand jury was secretly empanelled in Maryland in the US to bring down indictments in the matter of "cablegate", the vast release of files that — it is usually assumed — were leaked to WikiLeaks by Bradley Manning, a junior information officer who had become connected to the world of hacking through a personal relationship with a Boston-based hacker. Manning is now on trial on a brace of charges that will most likely see him in prison for the rest of his life; the intent of the prosecutors convening the grand jury appears to be to dynamically link Assange with Manning's leaking of the files, so that Assange can be indicted and extradited for espionage.

Those two interconnecting processes suggest that Assange is within reason to do whatever he can to stay out of the clutches of both states. He is banking on the fact that Ecuador — one of a brace of South American states that turned leftwards in the past decade — would be willing to assist the WikiLeaks leader, given the "cablegate" releases showed the way in which a hidebound US diplomatic elite saw the Latin-American left turn as nothing other than another challenge to US interests by "crypto-communists".

In 2010, an Ecuadoran deputy justice minister said that Assange would be welcome in Ecuador, a promise walked back to some degree by President Rafael Correa. However, Correa has recently appeared on Assange's World Tomorrow chat show, and he might be willing to take the heat.

For the moment, the Ecuadorian government is playing a straight bat, issuing this statement: "This afternoon Mr Julian Assange arrived at the Ecuadorian Embassy seeking political asylum from the Ecuadorian government. As a signatory to the United Nations Universal Declaration for Human Rights, with an obligation to review all applications for asylum, we have immediately passed his application on to the relevant department in Quito. While the department assesses Mr Assange's application, Mr Assange will remain at the embassy, under the protection of the Ecuadorian Government."

So, on we go. The extradition clock continues to tick, the Swedes will fume, and should asylum be granted, a full-blown diplomatic crisis will occur. Where will he be in a year? Quite possibly in Quito. Not exactly the Bond-style escape to a yacht in Vaughan Smith's helicopter, but quite a move all the same.

<http://www.crikey.com.au/?p=297671>

Ask Ecuador to grant Assange's request

Roots Action
20 June 2012

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is asking Ecuador for asylum, while Sweden seeks to extradite him from England.

Sweden... is seeking to extradite and imprison someone without charging him with a crime — after having refused opportunities to fully question him in England.

We don't know the facts behind the sexual assault accusations against Assange and can take no position on them. We take sexual assault seriously. But the WikiLeaks leader is seeking protection from the United States, not Sweden.

Sweden has a record of bowing to U.S. pressure, including the handing over of two men to the CIA in 2006 — leading the U.N. to find Sweden complicit in torture.

The United States reportedly has a sealed indictment prepared for Assange, charging him with crimes against 'national security.'

The United States has a record of, and an open formal policy of, incarceration without proper trial, solitary confinement and other abusive treatment, and the death penalty. Assange has the international human right to be protected from such a nation and to request asylum elsewhere.

Assange, neither charged with nor convicted of any crime, is acting out of fear of our nation's abuses of the rule of law. It is the same fear that has led some of his WikiLeaks

colleagues to quit doing the work that has so benefitted the people of our country and the world.

Ask Ecuador to grant asylum to the WikiLeaks founder. [Sign here](#).

The RootsAction team
E-mail: info@rootsaction.org

Julian Assange of WikiLeaks Seeks Asylum in Ecuador in Attempt to Avoid Extradition to U.S.

Democracy Now!
June 20, 2012

NERMEEN SHAIKH: WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has taken refuge in Ecuador's embassy in London and asked for asylum. Assange made the move Tuesday in a last-ditch bid to avoid extradition to Sweden over sex crime accusations. Earlier today, police in London announced Assange is now subject to arrest because his decision to spend the night at the Ecuadorian embassy violated the conditions of his bail.

Assange is seeking asylum because he fears extradition to Sweden may lead to his transfer to the United States, where he could potentially face charges relating to WikiLeaks. In an apparent reference to the United States, an Ecuadorian official said Assange fears being extradited, quote, "to a country where espionage and treason are punished with the death penalty." The Ecuadorian government says Assange can stay at the embassy for now as it reviews his request for asylum....

AMY GOODMAN: ...Well, for more on Julian Assange's decision to seek asylum in the Ecuadorian embassy and in Ecuador, we're joined by Michael Ratner, president emeritus of the Center for Constitutional Rights, lawyer for Julian Assange and WikiLeaks. Michael, welcome to Democracy Now! Talk about this surprise move of Julian Assange.

MICHAEL RATNER: Well, I was completely surprised by it. In fact, I got a tweet from— or, no, a text message from you, Amy, that said, "Michael, Julian Assange has gone into the Ecuadorian embassy." So that really surprised me.

On the other hand, if you look at what he was facing, I had— I've been really very upset and nervous for, really, since he lost the decision in the High Court of England on the 14th of June, because here's his situation. He's about to be extradited now to Sweden. Sweden does not have bail. Now, these are on allegations of sex charges— allegations, no charges— and they're to interrogate Julian Assange. But despite that, he would have been in prison in Sweden. At that point, our view is that there was a substantial chance that the U.S. would ask for his extradition to the United States. So here you have him walking the streets in London— sure, under bail conditions; **going to a jail in Sweden, where he's in prison, almost an incommunicado prison; U.S. files extradition; he remains in prison; and the next thing that happens is whatever time it takes him to fight the extradition in Sweden, he's taken to the United States. There's no chance then to make political asylum application any longer. In addition, once he**

comes to the United States— we just hold up Bradley Manning as example one of what will happen to Julian Assange: a underground cell, essentially abuse, torture, no ability to communicate with anybody, facing certainly good chance of a life sentence, with a possibility, of course, of one of these charges being a death penalty charge.

So, he was in an impossible situation. And in my view, it was a— it is a situation of political persecution of Julian Assange for his political activities. And it does fit within the asylum— the asylum application procedure under the Declaration of Human Rights, which is what President Correa and/or at least what the embassy in London was mentioning. His choices were terrible— not that they're so great right now. I mean, now he's in the embassy in London. He's asked for political asylum. The Ecuadorians will decide whether to give him political asylum or not. Assuming they do, whatever time it takes, what happens then? He gets political asylum, how does he then leave the embassy? And that's a difficult question. He may need— the Ecuadorians could ask the British for a safe passage to get him out of London and into Ecuador. On the other hand, it's conceivable that the English could— the Britishers, the U.K., could arrest him if he tries to leave the embassy, even if it's in a diplomatic car. And while I think that might be illegal, it's taking a big chance. So now he is in the embassy and having to stay there indefinitely until the situation can resolve.

But let me just say, the other situation was so terrible, in my view, the extradition to Sweden, which was really— it's not about the charges in Sweden. There's no charges. It's not about the allegations in Sweden or the interrogation. I think if the United States tomorrow said, "We will not be prosecuting WikiLeaks or Julian Assange, there will be no indictment of him, the grand jury is over," etc., etc., I don't think Julian Assange— I haven't spoken to him about this— **I don't think he would have any issue about going to Sweden for interrogation on these charges. It's really—what this is about is the United States wanting to get their hands on him, put him into an underground cell with no communications, giving him life imprisonment. And, of course, people have already called for his death in the United States.** And he was faced with really a terrible situation, considering—considering that he is the person who, as a publisher and journalist, has exposed massive U.S. war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan and the WikiLeaks cables....

AMY GOODMAN: For people who aren't following this that closely, you talked about the— an indictment against— against Assange by the United States, a grand jury, a secret grand jury. What do you understand the U.S. wants with Assange? And why wouldn't they have moved on that while he was in Britain? I mean, he wasn't walking a free man, but he was able to walk around during the day.

MICHAEL RATNER: Right.

AMY GOODMAN: And he was home at night. So they could have gotten him any time.

MICHAEL RATNER: Right. It would have— for the U.S. to move within Britain, of course, it would have complicated matters a great deal, because then he's facing a Swedish— a Swedish prosecution, and then the U.S. comes in. So what happens to the U.S.— to the U.S. indictment? And then, of course, Julian Assange gets notice that he's been indicted in the United States, and of course it makes his situation more precarious. And in addition, he would have probably been able to remain on the streets in London, whereas the U.S., really, I think, probably understood that as soon as he gets into

Sweden, he's in prison, he may— those charges may not amount— not charges, those allegations may not amount to anything once he testifies, once he gives evidence, and then they can keep him in prison with this warrant.

And I also think that, if you look at the situation, Sweden versus the U.K., the U.K. can take years to get someone extradited. I mean, we know of the case— I forgot his name, but the young man who supposedly hacked into the Pentagon computer to find out about UFOs— seven, eight years on his extradition. **Incredible extradition lawyers in London. It's a big country. Sweden, whatever we think of Sweden, its justice system certainly seems to have some problems, because Julian Assange would be in jail without bail. And also, it's a smaller country and just can be knocked around more by the United States.**

AMY GOODMAN: And why the U.S. wants Julian Assange? Why the U.S. would prosecute him over WikiLeaks? This is nothing to do with the sex crimes charges.

MICHAEL RATNER: No, it's nothing, but it's the ultimate issue in this case. The allegations about sex crimes, as I said, I think will be disposed of quickly. I don't think those are the issues underlying. It has— it has really—

AMY GOODMAN: And we should say— I shouldn't say "sex crimes charges" —

MICHAEL RATNER: Right.

AMY GOODMAN: —because he wasn't charged.

MICHAEL RATNER: He wasn't—

AMY GOODMAN: Allegations of sex crimes that— where he would be questioned in Sweden, and possibly let go.

MICHAEL RATNER: Oh, that's very conceivable. I mean, it's very conceivable. But when you say "possibly let go," it's important to understand, he's in prison while that proceeding is going on. The minute— the minute— there would be someone in court— assuming there's an indictment of Julian Assange, there would be someone in court— when they say, "We order you released," they would file the warrant at that moment, and Julian Assange would not be able to leave the court, would be back in prison, and would be in the United States, where only his lawyers will probably be able to communicate with him. And I probably wouldn't be able to say a word about what he ever said to me.

But let's look at what he's facing. The claim would be that he's being investigated for espionage, essentially for transmitting, you know, quote, "secrets" of the U.S. government, that were classified, that could harm the United States in some way. And that's the espionage indictment. That's what Bradley Manning is being looked at for, under military law. And that's what they would want to look at Julian Assange for. And there's a grand jury that's been going on really since at least 2011. We have the Stratfor emails that says that— that say that there's a sealed indictment against Julian Assange. We have recently two people who have some association with WikiLeaks being questioned again by the FBI by— around what— about Julian Assange and WikiLeaks.

AMY GOODMAN: Who is that?

MICHAEL RATNER: Zimmerman and McCarthy. One is from France, one is from Iceland. Again, questioned by the FBI about Julian Assange. This is an active investigation. We have, in Bradley Manning's case, what came out at the Article 32 —

AMY GOODMAN: The young U.S. private who is accused of releasing tens of thousands of documents to WikiLeaks.

MICHAEL RATNER: Right, and Bradley Manning is in a court-martial proceeding going on in Fort Meade. As part of that examination, as part of that court-martial proceeding, an FBI agent was asked about who else is being investigated here, and he said seven other civilians are being investigated with regard to— with regard to WikiLeaks. And who are they? He said— he didn't give the names, but he said these are — "Are these people who are managers or founders of WikiLeaks?" And he said, "Yes, they are." So we're talking about an active investigation, most probable an indictment already. **This is what Julian Assange was facing: never to see the light of day again, in my view, had he gone to Sweden.** And so, he's in not a great situation now, in the sense that, look at, he's sitting in an embassy in London. He has to get political asylum. And then, how does he get out of the embassy?

NERMEEN SHAIKH: But in response to some of these criticism, Swedish authorities have said that the European Court of Human Rights would intervene if Assange was to face the prospect of, quote, "inhuman or degrading treatment or an unfair trial" in the U.S.

MICHAEL RATNER: Well— well, first of all, wait a second, I'm not sure I understand that at all. The European Court of Human Rights only has jurisdiction over Europe. So, once he's in the United States, there's not much the European Court of Human Rights can do. In addition, the European Court of Human Rights recently came down with a major decision concerning four English Muslim men, and what they said was so negative and so outrageous, in my view, and such a denial of rights, that I would not depend on the European Court of Human Rights. They basically disregarded the fact that people spend years in solitary in the United States, that they get life sentences, that they have no way— that they have— they're in communications managements units where they can't speak to each other. And despite all of that evidence in the European Court of Human Rights, they just approved the extradition of four young—of four people from the United Kingdom. **So I would not put anything on the European Court of Human Rights as positive for this case....**

AMY GOODMAN: Finally, any precedent for people staying in embassies for years?

MICHAEL RATNER: Not such great ones, in the sense that they've been there for a long time. I mean, the one that comes mostly to mind— of course, the Chinese guy, he only stayed in the U.S. embassy for a couple of weeks, Chen, because then you had the U.S.— every diplomat in the world say, "Well, let's deal with the Chinese and get him out of the embassy and get him into the United States." We should only have that situation where the— where people are going to the Ecuadorian embassy and— or saying to the British, "Let's get him out and get him to Ecuador." I would love that.

But the precedent that I think of, Amy, is Cardinal Mindszenty. Cardinal Mindszenty— most people are too young for the Cold War— he was a Catholic prelate in Poland, opposition to the Polish government, took refuge in the U.S. embassy in Warsaw, spent 13 years in the embassy in Warsaw. So, there's precedent for very long times in the embassy. I don't— look at, I want to see Julian Assange— **I want to see no prosecution in the United States. I want to see him be able to go answer questions in Sweden without having the threat of immediate extradition to the United States, to deal with that and then to walk this world as a free person, having really done an incredible service to the peoples of the world.**

AMY GOODMAN: Michael Ratner, I want to thank you for being with us, president emeritus of the Center for Constitutional Rights, lawyer for Julian Assange and WikiLeaks.

http://www.democracynow.org/2012/6/20/julian_assange_of_wikileaks_seeks_asylum#transcript

Julian Assange asylum move is 'a tragedy' for his accusers, says lawyer

Lawyer representing two women who accuse WikiLeaks founder of sexual assault says he still expects extradition to go ahead

*Robert Booth
The Guardian
20 June 2012*

Julian Assange's decision to seek asylum in Ecuador is "a tragedy" for the two women who have accused him of sexual assault in Sweden, their lawyer has said.

Claes Borgström, who represents the two unnamed women with whom the WikiLeaks founder had sexual relations in Stockholm in August 2010, told the Guardian the women were frustrated and disappointed by Assange's decision to seek asylum rather than face investigation in Sweden over claims of rape, sexual molestation and unlawful coercion.

"They are disappointed, but they are getting used to this by now," said Borgström, who has represented the women throughout Assange's sequence of appeals against extradition in the British courts.

"They know that all they can do is wait. I have told them I am not sure, but I think he will still be extradited ... it is a tragedy for the women. I don't know how long it will take for him to be extradited now. Victims want to put these things behind them in order to be able to get on with their lives. **The tragedy is that he doesn't take his responsibility. He should have come to Sweden.**"

The UK supreme court finally ruled last week that Assange must be extradited to Sweden under a European arrest warrant and his removal from the UK was expected within weeks. It was believed he was considering a final appeal to the European court of human rights, but on Tuesday night sought asylum at the Ecuadorean embassy in Knightsbridge, London, where he said he hoped for "diplomatic sanctuary and political asylum".

Marianne Ny, the Swedish prosecutor who had secured Assange's extradition in the supreme court in London, is following developments closely, said her spokeswoman, Britta von Schoultz. Ny would not comment on Assange's decision to seek asylum at the Ecuadorean embassy until he was in Sweden.

"It is solely a case for the British authorities to handle," Von Schoultz said. "When it becomes a case for the Swedish prosecutor, she will comment on the case."

Brita Sundberg-Weitman, a former head judge at a district court in Solna, a Stockholm suburb, who gave evidence in Assange's appeal against extradition in the UK courts, said she feared Assange's decision to seek refuge in Ecuador was misguided.

"I can understand that Assange is afraid of being sent from Sweden to the US, but I am not sure it will turn out well for him," she said. **"I don't know what his situation would be if he really landed in Ecuador and whether he would be safe. If you think of the policy of the Obama administration to kill whoever the president considers a terrorist wherever they are in the world."**

She said there was considerable surprise in Sweden at Assange's move, adding she could not see how Assange could leave the Ecuadorean embassy in London without being arrested by the British authorities.

Borgström said he could not understand Assange's strategy. He said he did not believe the Ecuadorean government would find any basis on which to offer him asylum. "I think when he leaves the embassy he will be arrested," he said.

Claes Borgström anmäls till Advokatsamfundet

Dagens Juridik
2012-06-20

Rättsäkerhetsorganisationen anmäler Claes Borgström till Advokatsamfundets disciplinnämnd med anledningen av uttalanden som han ska ha gjort i media om Julian Assange.

Claes Borgström företräder de två kvinnor som anmält Julian Assange för våldtäkt och sexuella övergrepp.

Enligt Rättsäkerhetsorganisationens ordförande Johann Binninge ska Borgström ha gjort följande uttalanden i dagens nummer av Aftonbladet:

- Han vet själv vad han har gjort.

- Han talar hela tiden om utlämning till USA, men jag börjar undra om det handlar om att han är rädd för att dömas för de brott han är misstänkt för.

Det är till följd av dessa uttalanden som Rättsäkerhetsorganisationen nu anmäler Claes Borgström till Advokatsamfundets disciplinnämnd.

"När Borgström säger han syftar Borgström på Assange och i uttalandet ligger en klar insinuation om att Assange är skyldig vilket är minst sagt ett märkligt uttalande då anklagelsen inte ännu ens gått till åtal", skriver de i sin anmälan.

"En advokat får inte göra kränkande eller förklenande uttalanden om motparten, om det inte i den aktuella situationen ter sig försvarligt för att ta tillvara klientens intressen, och det kan inte göras gällande i detta fall", fortsätter de.

Dagens Juridik har försökt nå Claes Borgström utan resultat.

Kommentarer

Bra att någon agerar mot denne mardröm till advokat. Hur många oskyldiga kommer att buras in p g a inkompetente och mediakåte Borgström. Först Qvick och nu Assange. Han skiter totalt i oskuldspresumptionen eller att tillvarata hans klienters intressen och agerar som en statsåklagare snarare än advokat.

Borgströms tankar är grunda som en snustorr håla i öknen. Att vara rädd för att bli dömd behöver ju inte betyda att man känner/ anser sig skyldig, det kan ju vara så rent av att Assange inte litar på det Svenska rättsväsendet. Förövrigt har ja inte det ringaste förtroende för Borgströms omdöme. Han var Quick försvarare, och maken till inkompetent försvar får man leta efter.

Äntligen får man väl säga. Även om det här fallet inte har med Quick att göra så måste Advokatsamfundet reagera någon gång. Hoppas sedan att man gör en ordentlig utredning om Borgströms inblandning i försvaret/dömandet av Quick, så tillvida att han verkar ha sovit sig igenom åtta rättegångar. Kanske är normalt, vad vet jag?

Bra gjort! Det är på tiden att man synar Borgströms agerande i Assangefallet!

Jag tycker det värsta har ni missat. I Ekots förmiddagssändningar intervjuades Borgström som därvid insinuerade att Assange var rädd för att åka in i svenskt fängelse. Min undran är, måste han inte ha begått ett hiskeligt brott då, efter tiden han spenderade i Sverige. Annars skulle han väl ha häktats redan då! Det fanns ju gott om tid, flera veckor om jag förstått det rätt!

Oavsett vad Borgström säger — jag förstår inte varför Assange lägger ner sådan enorm energi och (sannolikt) stora summor pengar på att strida för sin rätt att inte behöva svara på frågor från svensk polis och rättsväsende. Om jag vore misstänkt för motsvarande brott (och var oskyldig) skulle jag vara väldigt mån om att bemöta anklagelserna för att få saken ur världen. Om han lyckas med sin plan att hålla sig ifrån Sverige så kommer han ju att befläckas av misstankarna i resten av sitt liv. Jag förstår inte den strategin. Om det är hans rädsla att bli utlämnad till USA som styr hans agerande eller "att alla som misstänks för våldtäkt i Sverige blir dömda", borde han skaffa sig bättre rådgivare. Jag kan tyvärr inte befria mig från tanken att han faktiskt njuter av att stå i rampljuset.

Jag förstår inte varför Sverige lägger ner ner sådan enorm energi och (sannolikt) stora summor pengar när Assange erbjuder sig att bli förhörd i England. Vidare så är det en extraordinär åtgärd att utfärda en EAW för det brott Assange är misstänkt för (för

betydligt allvarligare brott med klart bevisläge så väljer man att inte utfärda EAW). Det är också oerhört märkligt att en åklagare som verkar ha oerhört lite på fötterna (troligtvis bara en genomusel polisutredning), förhör som talar för Assange mm. kan tillåtas att driva ärendet så som hon har gjort. Vidare är det anmärkningsvärt att en åklagare har åsikten att det är bra att häkta personer som man inte tror man kan få dömda (så man kan ge de ett straff ändå). Sådana åsikter hos representanter för rättsväsendet hör inte hemma i en rättsstat (och särskilt inte om man hävdar att en åklagare ska vara neutral och även väga in delar som talar för den misstänkte). Förövrigt så är det komiskt att politiker (Reinfeldt och Ask) uttalar sig så frekvent och samtidigt hävdar att domstolar i Sverige är fristående från politiska intressen. Det är anmärkningsvärt att så mycket pengar har satsats i detta fallet samtidigt som polis och åklagare generellt sett inte har resurser att göra riktiga utredningar (inklusive detta fall, att inte spela in vittnesförhör på 2000-talet är faktiskt en bedrift i sig, det är skickligt att utföra ett arbete så oerhört inkompetent på alla plan som det skett i detta fall).

– Håller helt med!!! Bästa inlägget i debatten!

Borgström förtjänar att fällas av sitt eget förbund, han saknar all juridisk integritet.

Bra att utkräva ett ansvar men stanna inte vid Borgström. Thomas Bodström och Beatrice Ask har varit starkt drivande till Sveriges nu internationellt ökänt sjuka sexualbrottslagstiftning. Åklagaren Marianne Ny borde sparkas för att nämna en till.

Jag är mest förvånad att det tog sån tid att anmäla honom. Han stod ju i Mosebacke på ett seminarium som twitterkampanjen #prataomdet anordnade och solkade ner Assange rejält. Han har väldigt bråttom att komma till pressen, men när pressen söker honom är han till 98% oanträffbar, sen företräder han bara ena kvinnan fast han i medier säger sig företräda båda (den ena avsade sig all kontakt med honom).

Som utlandsboende svensk jurist med över 30 års erfarenhet i internationell juridik, slutresultatet är att förtroendet för, och anseendet för, det svenska rätts systemet och rättssäkerheten nu ligger klart under det som till exempel Kina har internationellt. **Rättssystemet ses som politisk kontrollerat, och USA styrt, oavsett vad svenskarna själva anser.** "Oliktänkande" kan hållas fängslade för långa perioder, personer fängslas på lösa grunder och ensidigt hörsägen eller myndigheters eller tjänstemäns godtycke. Vi vet dessutom att den kvinna som leder anklagelserna åtminstone har varit USA CIA agent [nej, det vet vi faktiskt inte --A.B.], stationerad på Kuba. Sannolikheten är stor att hon engagerades för att skapa anklagelser mot Assange, såsom skett så många gånger förut i USA politiken, vi vet att hon systematiskt och målmedvetet sökte ut Assange på ett personligt plan, bjöd hem honom, planen var nära att misslyckas när Assange övergav henne för en yngre kvinna. Hon sökte upp den kvinnan och övertygade henne att hjälpa till. Marianne Nys agerande i efterhand skapar även det stora osäkerheter, och frågan har ställts med rätta om även hon är värvad av USA. Om Ny bara ville förhöra Assange kunde det ha gjorts via video länk, vilket är normalt. Varför vill hon ha honom till Sverige? Vad är syftet, ligger någon dold agenda bakom? Stor sannolikhet för det. Dessutom har kraven för att utfärda en utlämnings begäran inte uppfyllts, personen måste åtalas, och Ny vet förmodligen att det aldrig skulle gå igenom. Sverige är betydligt mer en amerikansk lydstat är Storbritannien, det skulle vara lätt för USA att sätta press på Sverige, liksom dom gjorde i fallen med banksekretessen i flera finans centra. USAs syfte är att "förstöra" Assange, på vilket sätt som helst. Vad vi iakttar är inte rättsskipning, utan amerikansk stor politik.

– Fantastiskt underhållande med dessa konspirationsteorier. Skriv mer. Visst måste Reinfeldt vara inblandad också?

– Det är varken teorier eller en fråga om konspiration. Mycket information kommer aldrig fram i Sverige, eftersom det filtreras ut av främst gammelmedia, som ägs av storföretagen och således i slutändan drar deras vagn med deras intressen, vilka i tur är beroende av politikerna. Vi får en bättre bild om vi överger PK syndromet och arbetar mer intellektuellt med sannolikheter. Många vill avfärda allt med slask yttranden som detta, men lägg ner lite arbetet i dom grå cellerna om vad som är sannolikt, byggt på fakta och indicier, och det kan ge några mycket intressanta resultat. Jag skulle bli synnerligen förvånad om politikerna, Reinfeldt inkluderat, inte tog ett aktivt intresse i utvecklingen.

Det finns otaliga sätt att för Claes Borgström tillvarata sina klienters intressen utan att solka ner motståndaren. "Han vet vad han har gjort". Assange vet säkert vad han gjort, inte gjort och vad hans motparter gjort. Det lustiga är att Borgströms formulering indikerar att han har en spåkula på vinden och själv full insyn i vad Julian Assange har gjort.

Jag delar nog [uppfattningen] om att Sverige och Sveriges rättsväsende nu utsätts för en internationell granskning av sällan skadat slag, vilket bevisligen fått många att reagera. Många svenskar verkar sluta sig inåt och reagerar indignerat på all förundran och kritik. Samtidigt som internationella observatörer, jurister och många vanliga människor världen över reagerar med häpenhet och förvåning på det som nu framkommer.

Man måste nog inse (för att ta hjälp av en metafor) att Sverige sedan snart 2 år nu granskas av "världens" kollektivt samlade svar på Janne Josefsson. Med internationellt erkända journalister och människorättskämpar som bland annat Michael Moore, John Pilger och Daniel Ellsberg (Som läckte "The Pentagon Papers", till New York Times 1971) i spetsen.

Feministen Naomi Wolf går tex i flera artiklar i "Huffington Post", till ett mycket detaljerat och explicit angrepp mot Sverige i vad hon ser som ett hyckleri och ett fruktansvärt hån mot kvinnor och våldtäktsoffer världen över.

Ta därefter det faktum att varken SVT eller någon annan större svensk nyhetsredaktion hade "live" sändningar från de tidigare förhandlingarna i London, till skillnad från ledande tidningar och TV kanaler över hela världen, från Australien, Storbritannien, USA, Ryssland, Norge, Danmark till arabvärlden och (Al Jazeera).

Jag tror man också måste komma ihåg att översättningar av förundersökningsprotokollet sedan länge är spridda över hela världen, och att dess innehåll har kommenterats, granskats och skärskådats av både lekmän och juridiska experter oerhört ingående.

Vilket tillsammans gör att det inte är omöjligt att många vanliga människor utanför Sverige har en mycket djupare insikt och kunskap om misstankarna mot Assange, bevisen, händelseförloppet och om det svenska rättsväsendet, än vad många Svenskar har idag.

Det är nog sällans som Svenskarnas syn på sig själva och landet Sverige och den internationella uppfattningen divergerat så snabbt och blivit så smärtsamt påtaglig som nu.

The World Tomorrow Julian Assange Interviews Imran Khan

June 20, 2012

No country has ever been bombed by its own ally, like Pakistan has been bombed by the US, Pakistani politician Imran Khan tells Julian Assange. He says it is time to put an end to the US-Pakistani 'client-master' relationship. □ In the ninth episode of his show, Julian Assange talks to Imran Khan, whose political party was ignored for years and which US State Department cables called "Pakistan's one-man party."

Video at:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WacS98ATtIM&feature=player_embedded

Julian Assange runs out of options says mum

Kristin Shorten and Andrew Drummond

News.com.au

June 20, 2012

The mother of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange said her son was left with no option but to seek political asylum at the Ecuadorian embassy in London. Australian-born Assange walked into Ecuador's embassy in London early yesterday claiming Australia would not protect him from possible extradition from Sweden to the United States where he feared he could face the death penalty.

He claimed the US has secretly indicted him for divulging American secrets and will act on the indictment if Sweden succeeds in extraditing him from Britain. Britain's Supreme Court last week rejected the 40-year-old's bid to reopen his extradition case to stop him being taken to Sweden where he faces sexual misconduct charges, which he denies.

"I think it's the only alternative left to him to get any kind of justice because he is a political prisoner," Queensland-based Ms Assange said. "There's no due process anywhere. **What's happening here is you've got a journalist who has spilled the beans and a big superpower doesn't like it.** I'm terrified for him but I have to put these feelings aside so I can work to try to get justice for him."

Ms Assange— who visited her son last week— rejected the Labor Government's claim her son had received more consular assistance than any other person over a comparable period.

Assange is optimistic about his chances of securing political asylum in Ecuador, says a supporter after visiting the Australian WikiLeaks chief. Gavin Macfadyen emerged from the Ecuadorian Embassy building in the exclusive London suburb of Knightsbridge, where Assange arrived on Tuesday seeking asylum.

"It is a small room with a bed, but he seems in good spirits and he seems to be well looked after," Mr Macfadyen said of Assange's situation inside the embassy. "At the

moment he just needs to consult with his lawyer and that's what's going on now... but it is an optimistic situation and he is confident in the process of Ecuador's consideration (of his asylum application)."

Just prior to Mr Macfadyen's appearance, a handful of Assange supporters holding banners took up residence outside the embassy. "We have been supporting Julian throughout this case and... we are here to show our continued support," said Ben Griffin, holding one end of a banner that read: "free Assange... end the wars".

The British Supreme Court has ordered that Assange be extradited to Sweden where he is wanted for questioning over the alleged sexual assault of two women in 2010. The Queensland-born 40-year old denies the accusations and has argued that Swedish authorities will hand him over to the United States, where he is being investigated for WikiLeaks' publication of hundreds of thousands of secret government documents.

Mr Macfadyen said he had no idea how long Assange would remain inside the embassy or how the asylum application was progressing in Ecuador.

At 10pm local time on Tuesday (7am Wednesday AEST), Assange breached his bail conditions by being away from the country estate where a court directed he reside. A string of police have entered the seven-storey embassy throughout the morning and officers are closely guarding the area. But Assange has not been sighted.

Acting Prime Minister Wayne Swan said the Government has no information about any US indictment pending against Assange and would provide him with the same assistance as any other Australian citizen.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said the Ecuadorian government had confirmed that Assange had sought asylum. Ecuador's foreign minister Ricardo Patino said Assange had written to leftist President Rafael Correa saying he was being persecuted and seeking asylum.

He said Assange had argued "the authorities in his country will not defend his minimum guarantees in front of any government or ignore the obligation to protect a politically persecuted citizen".

Ms Assange said she was saddened her son— a sixth-generation Australian— may never return to Australia.

"He loved this country," she said. "He has very deep roots here. His family is here. He loves Australia. This is his home— his country. This is the country which should be standing up for him against this bully (the US government)."

Julian Assange's Artful Dodge

Exclusive: Faced with extradition from London to Sweden to face sex-abuse allegations, WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange fled to the Ecuadorian embassy and asked for asylum, what ex-CIA analyst Ray McGovern considers an artful dodge to avoid possible U.S. persecution.

Ray McGovern
Consortium News
June 20, 2012

Barring a CIA drone strike on the Ecuadorian embassy in London, WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange's sudden appeal for asylum there may spare him a prison stay in Sweden or possibly the United States. Assange's freedom now depends largely on Ecuadorian President Rafael Vicente Correa Delgado, a new breed of independent-minded leader like Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez.

Correa has been a harsh critic of U.S. behavior toward Ecuador and its Latin American neighbors as well as an outspoken fan of WikiLeaks. Atypically for the region, Ecuador is not a major recipient of U.S. economic or military aid, so Washington's leverage is limited. This suggests that the Ecuadorian government may decide to defy Washington, accept Assange's request for asylum, and have him flown to Ecuador pronto.

In which case, most British "justice" officials will probably say good riddance and breathe a sigh of relief — literally. They have been holding their noses for weeks against the odor of their obeisance to U.S. diktat, after the British High Court rejected Assange's argument that he should not be extradited to Sweden.

Although Swedish "justice" officials have not charged Assange with any crime, they insist that he be extradited to face questions resulting from allegations by two women of sexual assault. **This is widely — and in my view correctly — perceived as a subterfuge to deliver Assange into Swedish hands to facilitate his eventual extradition to the U.S.** to face even more serious charges for publishing classified information highly embarrassing to Washington.

There have been persistent reports that Assange has been the target of a secret grand jury investigating disclosures of classified U.S. documents allegedly slipped to WikiLeaks by Army Pvt. Bradley Manning. A leaked 2011 e-mail from Fred Burton, a vice president of the private intelligence firm Stratfor, informed colleagues that "we have a sealed indictment on Assange," but that claim has not been confirmed. Manning, however, is facing a court martial for allegedly leaking U.S. documents to WikiLeaks.

Interesting, is it not, that Assange — just days before he was to be extradited to Sweden — was able to (I guess) slip out of his ankle monitor, sneak through the cordon of Bobbies on watch at the estate where he was under house arrest, dodge other Bobbies and security chaps, and hit pay dirt inside the Ecuadorian embassy.

There is no denying that Assange is a clever chap. But unless you think him some kind of Houdini, there has to be some more likely explanation as to how he slipped through the various police checkpoints and walked into the embassy, which is located behind the popular Harrods department store in London.

Were the British security forces all out for tea? Or were they just as happy to have the Assange case—and all the pressure from Washington—focused elsewhere? Certainly, the British had enough clues that, *in extremis*, Assange might attempt to make it to the Ecuadorian embassy. In late November 2010, Ecuadorian Deputy Foreign Minister Kintoo Lucas publicly offered Julian Assange residency in Ecuador, saying that Ecuador was “very concerned” by information revealed by WikiLeaks linking U.S. diplomats with spying on friendly governments.

“We are open to giving him residency in Ecuador, without any problem and without any conditions,” Mr. Lucas said.

President Correa promptly backtracked, saying that Kintoo Lucas’s remarks were unauthorized and that no formal invitation had been extended to Assange, and noting that residency for him would require legal review in the event he requested it. (This came just one week before Assange was arrested, imprisoned, and then put under house arrest.)

Ecuador’s embassy in London, announcing Assange’s arrival Tuesday afternoon, said he was seeking asylum, and added: “As a signatory to the United Nations Universal Declaration for Human Rights, with an obligation to review all applications for asylum, we have immediately passed his application on to the relevant department in Quito. While the department assesses Mr. Assange’s application, Mr. Assange will remain at the embassy, under the protection of the Ecuadorian government.”

The embassy added that the bid for asylum “should in no way be interpreted as the government of Ecuador interfering in the judicial processes of either the United Kingdom or Sweden.”

Temporizing diplomatic phrasing of this kind seems *de rigueur*, as President Correa and his associates take time to choose how to react to the *fait accompli* of Julian Assange in Ecuador’s custody. In Quito, Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino told reporters that his country “is studying and analyzing the request [for asylum].”

Assange’s mother not only applauded her son’s decision to seek asylum, but summed up the situation concisely, telling the press: “I hope Ecuador will grant him asylum, and if not, another third-world country. **I hope the third world can stand up for what’s morally right when the first world can’t and won’t because they’ve got their snouts in the trough, rolling over for U.S. greed and big business.**

“Julian is a political prisoner, a journalist, a publisher of the truth about corruption, war crimes, kidnapping, blackmail, and manipulation. ... He remains uncharged and unquestioned on a crime which, if you explore it, has absolutely no basis. Of course he would seek asylum.”

She added that her son was a victim of decisions by the United States, Britain, Sweden and Australia to abandon proper legal process.

Abandoning proper legal process? Such thinking seems so — to borrow words from the eminent legal scholar Alberto Gonzales — so “quaint,” so “obsolete,” so pre-9/11! **Abandoning proper legal process post-9/11 has become the “new paradigm” adopted not only by the Bush, but also by the Obama administration.**

Not only is Julian Assange within his rights to seek asylum, he is also in his right mind. Consider this: he was about to be sent to faux-neutral Sweden, which has a recent history of bowing to U.S. demands in dealing with those that Washington says are some kind of threat to U.S. security. Glenn Greenwald on Tuesday provided an example:

“In December 2001, Sweden handed over two asylum seekers to the CIA, which then rendered them to be tortured in Egypt. A ruling from the U.N. Human Rights Committee found Sweden in violation of the global ban on torture for its role in that rendition (the two individuals later received a substantial settlement from the Swedish government).”

For those of you thinking, Oh, but that was under the Bush administration and that kind of thing is over, think again. In 2010 and 2011, the hysteria surrounding WikiLeaks’ disclosures of U.S. misconduct and crimes around the world brought cries from prominent American political figures seeking Assange’s designation as a terrorist, his prosecution as a spy and even his assassination.

Rep. Peter King, R-New York, chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, has called for WikiLeaks to be declared a terrorist organization and Assange to be prosecuted under the Espionage Act of 1917, a position shared by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-California, chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, who wrote in a Wall Street Journal op-ed: “The release of these documents damages our national interests and puts innocent lives at risk. He should be vigorously prosecuted for espionage.”

Others have gone even further, demanding that Assange be put to death, either by judicial or extrajudicial means. For instance, a former Canadian official Tom Flanagan has urged Assange’s assassination.

Former Alaska governor Sarah Palin denounced Assange as an “anti-American operative with blood on his hands” and said he should be treated no differently than an al-Qaeda terrorist.

In a Facebook posting, Palin said Assange was no more a journalist than “the ‘editor’ of al-Qaida’s new English-language magazine *Inspire* is a ‘journalist.’” She added: “His past posting of classified documents revealed the identity of more than 100 Afghan sources to the Taliban. Why was he not pursued with the same urgency we pursue al-Qaida and Taliban leaders?”

So, put yourself in Julian Assange’s place. If the New York Times accurately described President Barack Obama as saying it was an “easy” decision to authorize the killing of Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen alleged to have participated in terrorist operations against U.S. targets, how confident would you be that the one-time constitutional scholar would resist the political pressure to get rid of you?

A drone strike over London can be ruled out. But Assange understandably could fear a covert operation by Britain’s FBI and CIA counterparts — MI-5 and MI-6 — to eliminate him “with extreme prejudice,” in old CIA parlance.

As melodramatic as that might sound, it should be remembered that nine years have gone by since British Ministry of Defense biologist and U.N. weapons inspector Dr.

David Kelly's "suicide." Yet there remains considerable circumstantial evidence that his "suicide" was not self-inflicted.

Kelly was found "guilty" of disclosing accurate information regarding the bogus nature of the "evidence" of Iraqi WMD and, conveniently, was removed from the scene, supposedly by his own hand. Ecuadorian embassy dwellers may wish to hire beekeepers to taste the foie gras, truffles, or cakes ordered from nearby Harrods.

Correa on TV With Assange

Four weeks before Assange sought asylum, he interviewed Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa for Episode 6 of *The World Tomorrow* (Assange's program Tuesdays on RT). Assange asked Correa why he has advocated that WikiLeaks release all its cables. Correa responded:

"First, you don't owe anything, have nothing to fear. We have nothing to hide. Your WikiLeaks have made us stronger" with the damaging revelations showing the attitude of the U.S. embassy toward the sovereignty of the Ecuadorian government.

Correa continued: "On the other hand, WikiLeaks wrote a lot about the goals that the national media pursue, about the power groups who seek help and report to foreign embassies. ... Let them publish everything they have about the Ecuadorian government. You will see how many things about those who oppose the civil revolution in Ecuador will come to light. Things to do with opportunism, betrayal, and being self serving."

Correa made the point that when WikiLeaks cables became available to the national media in Ecuador, they chose not to publish them — partly because the documents aired so much "dirty linen" about the media themselves. He added that when he took office in January 2007, five out of seven privately owned TV channels in Ecuador were run by bankers. The bankers were using the guise of journalism to interfere in politics and to destabilize governments, for fear of losing power.

Correa, 49, educated in Belgium at the Université Catholique de Louvain and at the University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign (for four years, where he earned both a masters and a PhD), said he "admires the American people a great deal." But the U.S. government can be a different matter.

Assange and Correa discussed Correa's decision to send the U.S. ambassador, Heather Hodges, packing as a result of the disclosures in the WikiLeaks cables, as well as her "arrogance," and the Ecuadorian president's unilateral closure of the U.S. military base at Manta.

Still, Correa seems to have had high hopes that things would improve under the Obama administration. The Ecuadorian president once commented that Hugo Chávez's description of George W. Bush as Satan was unfair to the Devil and that the previous administration had made Latin America "invisible."

Regarding Ecuador's general relationship with the U.S., Correa underscored on Assange's program that it must be "a framework of mutual respect and sovereignty."

That wished-for mutual respect and especially Washington's regard for Ecuadorian sovereignty are likely to be put to the test in the coming weeks.

Hillary Clinton may be having second thoughts about the energy she expended earlier this month on her first visit to Sweden as Secretary of State. If Assange succeeds in skirting Sweden and makes it to Ecuador, she may now have to put Quito back on her travel schedule.

A Clinton visit to Ecuador two years ago was marred by protests, but she found President Correa a gracious host. But that was before WikiLeaks disclosed Ambassador Hodges's pejorative comments on Correa et al. and Correa decided to expel her from the country for "arrogance."

Correa does seem to have developed an allergy to arrogance, so Clinton may wish to consider sending someone in her stead to try to persuade Ecuador to surrender Assange to the tender mercies of American "justice."

Julian Assange's celebrity backers 'surprised' but supportive of bail breach bid for political asylum

*Adam Sherwin
The Independent
20 June 2012*

Julian Assange's backers expressed surprise at his shock move to seek asylum at the Ecuador Embassy but continued to give him their support, despite the potential loss of £200,000 in bail money. Assange's bail was provided by high-profile supporters including Jemima Khan and film director Ken Loach, who each offered £20,000 as a surety.

Khan wrote on Twitter: "I had expected him to face the allegations. I am as surprised as anyone by this."

Another backer, the journalist Tariq Ali, told The Independent: "I totally approve." He asked: "Why the double-standards? A Chinese dissident becomes a folk-hero for reaching the US embassy, but a Western dissident doing the same re a South American embassy is not kosher. Fuck the money."

Phillip Knightley, the investigative journalist who was among those asked to guarantee the bail surety, said: "When I first heard about it last night, my reaction was one of surprise. **Not total surprise because I'd been expecting something like this for a long time.**"

Assange had alerted supporters that he would take drastic action following the failure to reopen his appeal against extradition to Sweden. "He did send an email and said something like this might happen," **Knightley told Radio 4's The World At One. "He sort of apologised and said 'don't worry, it will all work out in the end.' He was reaching the end of the line. He had to make some dramatic move to look after his own future."**

Knighthley had agreed to pay £20,000 in the event that Assange breached his bail conditions. He said he was happy to support his fellow Australian. "I would do it again. He felt as I do that he's a victim of a conspiracy," he said. "He's been found guilty of nothing. The Swedes want to plug him in irons as soon as he arrived."

Bianca Jagger, an Assange supporter who said that she did not post bail, tweeted that the freedom of information campaigner had been "forced to seek asylum."

But Vaughan Smith, who housed Assange at Ellingham Hall in Norfolk for more than a year, said he was "worried" about losing the bail money he had put up. Smith, who runs the journalists' Frontline Club "had no idea" Assange was planning to claim asylum, and would have advised him not to if he had known. *[That's not all he or Jemima Khan said; see other reports. --A.B.]*

John Pilger, the documentary filmmaker who helped organise the surety, said Assange could expect a sympathetic hearing from the Ecuador authorities: "The Government expelled the last US Ambassador as a result of reading WikiLeaks cables. They appear to abide by the principles of transparency that he espouses. He has been offered safe passage by other heads of state too."

Pilger was not warned in advance of Assange's flight. "It's a desperate act," he said. "The last place he wants to be is a small Embassy in Knightsbridge. **But Julian couldn't get the assurances he was seeking that would give him protection against the threat of onward extradition.**"

SvD: 20 juni 2012

Assange behöver ingen asyl

Ledarblogg av Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein

Vad blir den mystiske mannens nästa drag?, var det vissa som frågade sig då en brittisk domstol beslutade att Julian Assange skulle utlämnas till Sverige. Jo, han rusade till Ecuadors ambassad i London för att söka asyl.

De flesta förknippar ordet asyl med flykt från förtryck. Och det finns hundratusentals personer i världen som både behöver och har förtjänat rätten till asyl bättre än Assange. Vissa flyr från politiska förtryckapparater som mördar människor på grund av vad de tycker och tänker. Assange flyr istället från rättegång i en av världens mest rättssäkra stater. Det är ingenting annat än patetiskt.

The Sneering Reaction by Media to Assange's Asylum Request

*Kevin Gosztola
Firedog Lake
June 21, 2012*

The Latin-American country of Ecuador is due to rule on WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange's request for asylum. On June 18, he entered the Ecuadorean embassy in the United Kingdom and formally requested that his home country, Australia, had abandoned him and he was now under threat of extradition to Sweden for questioning where he could be then extradited to the United States, be put on trial and possibly face the death penalty.

The coverage from media in the US, UK and Australia has been nothing but dismissive or outright sneering. Rather than admitting Assange is within his legal right to seek and apply for asylum from any country like Ecuador, media have focused on tangential issues. They've reported supporters that donated money to Assange's bail fund could lose the money— £240,000 (\$370,000) — because he violated his terms of bail when he failed to report to his "registered bail address near Tunbridge Wells, Kent, after 10pm on Monday." They've suggested Ecuador is "anti-press" and so it is quite ironic that Assange would want asylum from the country's government. They've **said Ecuador President Rafael Correa and Julian Assange to deserve each other because they are "anti-American."** **And they've rehashed a smear that he is doing this for attention and to create drama,** which the public has heard in some variation since WikiLeaks began to publish the major caches of documents like the Iraq and Afghanistan War Logs and the US State Embassy cables in 2010.

With regards to the issue of Assange violating the terms of his bail, it is fine to report this so people understand the situation. The violation of his bail terms is why police are currently waiting outside of the embassy to arrest Assange when he emerges. It further complicates Assange's request because, if Ecuador grants the request, the embassy then has to figure out how to get Assange on an airplane to Ecuador without police arresting him. However, one would think the media would actually know of an Assange supporter (perhaps even someone who was a high-profile supporter) who was upset with Assange's decision to seek asylum if they were going to run headlines about how he has short changed his "famous mates." One might think there should actually be supporters who feel betrayed by Assange's decision to make this move if such an issue were to be raised, but no such supporters appear to exist. **The best the media can come up with is this Twitter message from Jemima Khan,** the former wife of cricketer and now prominent Pakistani politician Imran Khan: "Yes. I had expected him to face the allegations. I am as surprised as anyone by this."

On President Correa's supposed chilling of press freedom and why Assange would choose this country, the media that raise this issue conveniently overlook the fact that, when Correa appeared on Assange's show, "The World Tomorrow," Assange shared how he had been opposed to the way Correa's regime had been imposing reforms on the country. Here's Assange's complete expression of what he thinks about Correa's new media laws and then Correa's full reply to the question posed by Assange:

President Correa, as you know for many years I have been fighting a fight for freedom of expression, for the right for people to communicate, for the right to

publish true information. We are not an organisation that publishes opinion, so we are not in a fight about whether our opinions are true, we are in a fight about the right to publish true documents from big governments and big corporations. And we have fought against media laws that are bad, like in England there are big businessmen who are able to stop the truth from being published.

There are secret gag orders on many publications within England and in other countries, like the United States and Sweden, there is a lot of self-censorship where journalists are scared to publish... scared to write about powerful people because they will be attacked. So, my initial instinct for these media changes in Ecuador was to be opposed, because I normally see governments trying to stop us from speaking. But then I... then I spoke at SIP — [Inter-American Press Society] — this media alliance and I was told beforehand 'Oh, these SIP people, they are really... they are terrible, terrible people', and I thought to myself 'Well, I can speak with anyone, you know, I can find some... some part that we agree on— maybe we disagree on ten parts but maybe we agree on one, so I should speak', but I was horrified that this SIP was some kind of caricature.

It was... you know, there was someone there from the Washington Post who was clearly very close to the State Department and this then opened my mind to understanding that actually that the media in Latin America, or some of the media in Latin America, really are a problem for democratic reforms in Latin America, and that... that it's true, that it's a fact, that there are these problems. So I want to hear more from you about this tension...

Correa answered:

You yourself are a very good example of how the media and the press and these corporations like the SIP, which is no other than a council of the owners of newspapers in Latin America. About your WikiLeaks they've published many books. This one which is an Argent [Argentinian], you know, where he analyses country by country and against Ecuador shows how in a very open way the media did not publish the cables that were against us, for example, disputes about... among media groups, and then they agree not to publish things which are the dirty linen in public. I read the translation in Spanish that — from WikiLeaks—that Ecuadorian press never published. More worrying than the recurrent threat... to trials of journalists that at the time when the President Lucio Gutiérrez, a previous president, was the worrying effect of the private interests in the media showed in the dispute in TC Television, which was a group of banks, and Teleamazonas, which was another group of bankers, and the Embassy concludes in your WikiLeaks — in your information — the fact that the media feels free to criticise the government but not a fugitive banker, and the memo of the Embassy reveals a great deal as to where exactly power resides in Ecuador.

These are the messages that WikiLeaks made public and the media in Ecuador did not publish. So then, you can see the kind of things that we confront in Ecuador and in Latin America. We believe, dear Julian, the only limits to information and to the freedom of expression are those that exist in international treaties, in the international conventions of human rights, the honours and reputation of people, and the security of people and of the State. Everything else, the more people knows about them the better, and you have expressed your fear, recurrent among

journalists — or good-faith journalists — but which are stereotypes of the fear that the State power limits freedom of expression. That almost doesn't exist in Latin America, it's... are idealisations, myths. Please understand that today the media power was and is probably much greater than political power, in fact normally has political power in function to defend their interests, economic power, social power and, above all, the informational power. And they have been the great electors.

That is not to say that Ecuador is sterling when it comes to press freedom. However, **those raising the issue of press freedom in the context of Assange's decision to seek asylum have not written much of anything at all about who owns and has typically owned the media in Ecuador.** In fact, Correa asserts the media were involved in the 2010 coup attempt by corrupt police, where Correa was kidnapped and military troops had to rescue him. He maintains they have an interest in destabilizing the country to make it impossible for him to govern. But, none of that is given consideration when suggesting Assange's request is fool-headed.

Anti-American Troublemakers Made for Each Other

Then, there's the idea that both Correa and Assange are "anti-American" so isn't it great that Assange managed to get to the embassy to ask for help? Canadian international lawyer Robert Amsterdam told CNN, "It's a very smart move to go there. Ecuador's President Rafael Correa and Assange have mutual interests — they both support the idea that the U.S. is an imperial power that has to be checked... From a Latin perspective, what a glorious thing to get Assange." Amsterdam emphasized how Ecuador is "hostile" toward US foreign policy and suggested he would be "welcomed" just for that fact.

The Washington Post editorial board went a step further (which is not surprising since they may have ties to the media organizations fighting Correa). **They call Correa a "small-time South American autocrat," who is in a position to take the "role of chief Yanqui-baiter and friend-to-roguers, which Mr. Chavez has modeled for the past dozen years" since Chavez is "dying" of cancer. They describe a "sycophantic interview" on a "Russian state propaganda outlet" where Assange and Correa "wallowed" in "anti-American slanders and paranoia" and Correa cried, "Welcome to the club of the persecuted!" And the editorial board argued Assange has "little to gain," as he will be arrested by UK police even if granted asylum, but, on the other hand, Correa "could make himself a hero with the global anti-American left by embracing Mr. Assange's cause."**

The editorial is symptomatic of the fact that Assange's request for asylum in a Latin American country perceived by the US to be governed by a left-wing autocrat formed a nexus destined to make any US media outlet promote sneering commentary ignorant of inconvenient facts. Even though the Post published multiple stories on US diplomatic cables, the Post loathes Assange and WikiLeaks because of what it represents and how its commitment to "scientific journalism" — the publishing of actual documents for public consumption — threatens their gatekeeper role in the US. And, as a US media outlet, they are consumed by American exceptionalism and function as a purveyor of government propaganda that reinforces the culture of imperialism in American society.

A “Fabulist” Creating Drama

Finally, to the charge that Assange is just doing this to create drama, the media have made it seem like Assange is hysterical to think he could end up in the grips of the United States if he goes to the United States. Commentators and headlines have wondered why the US would not just try to extradite him from the UK now if they wanted him in their custody. Joan Smith of The Independent called Assange’s asylum a part of an ongoing “one-man psychodrama.”

Lawyer for WikiLeaks, Michael Ratner of the Center for Constitutional Rights, pushed back against this perception and described on “Democracy Now!” why the US government would wait until he was in Sweden to request his extradition:

It would have— for the U.S. to move within Britain, of course, it would have complicated matters a great deal, because then he’s facing a Swedish— a Swedish prosecution, and then the U.S. comes in. So what happens to the U.S.— to the U.S. indictment? And then, of course, Julian Assange gets notice that he’s been indicted in the United States, and of course it makes his situation more precarious. And in addition, he would have probably been able to remain on the streets in London, whereas the U.S., really, I think, probably understood that as soon as he gets into Sweden, he’s in prison, he may— those charges may not amount— not charges, those allegations may not amount to anything once he testifies, once he gives evidence, and then they can keep him in prison with this warrant.

And I also think that, if you look at the situation, Sweden versus the U.K., the U.K. can take years to get someone extradited. I mean, we know of the case— I forgot his name, but the young man who supposedly hacked into the Pentagon computer to find out about UFOs— seven, eight years on his extradition. Incredible extradition lawyers in London. It’s a big country. Sweden, whatever we think of Sweden, its justice system certainly seems to have some problems, because Julian Assange would be in jail without bail. And also, it’s a smaller country and just can be knocked around more by the United States.

A responsible press in this instance would evaluate the claims by Assange that he would face political persecution in Sweden if he allowed himself to be extradited without struggle. Fair skepticism might resemble Peter Galbraith’s commentary, where he writes, “Much as US officials might want him in jail, the legal and constitutional barriers to a successful prosecution are insurmountable. There is no basis for extradition.” Galbraith at least weighs the possibility rather than concocting sidebar reasons that attack Assange’s personality and cajole his supporters to abandon him.

The breadth of caricature, misinformation, misrepresentation and pretentiousness in coverage of Assange’s asylum request would be surprising if it weren’t for the fact that media have allowed many labels and smears to be attached to Assange without question. As of now, it would be hard to fault someone from the public who called Assange a sleazy, self-important, anti-American, anti-Semitic and high-tech info-terrorist. That is, in fact, the perception which the total coverage by media has created, since press began reporting on him extensively in 2010.

Pundits like David Allen Green have also offered simplistic, un-nuanced and vainglorious comments like, Assange is “entitled to assert whatever legal rights he has in resisting extradition to Sweden to answer serious allegations of rape and sexual assault. But every delay, every evasion, of Assange in answering these allegations is also a further delay in dealing with the allegations.” This obscures the fact that this is not merely a case of a man trying to escape accountability for rape or sexual assault. It has, as journalist Alexa O’Brien has detailed, not necessarily been free of bias or prosecutorial misconduct. (And, in fact, if one argues this, they do not actually believe Assange is entitled to asserting his legal rights.)

Ecuador is expected to announce a decision on Assange’s request within the next twelve hours. Regardless of what happens, the media have once again shown how much they despise an insurrectionist of the people who is committed to disseminating the truth of corruption in institutions so that they cannot continue to use secrecy to conceal crimes, misconduct and wrongdoing. **They have once again shown they despise him because in one year he did what media institutions should have done from at least 2001-2010.** He laid bare the operations of the US military and US diplomats so all could see the atrocity, conceit, depravity and underhandedness of US foreign policy.

That media cannot understand his fear of extradition to the United States is not because they do not know the logic behind his anxiety. It is rather because they are committed to playing an elite role in society that might be jeopardized if they admitted governments just might be bullied by the United States into handing over Assange for a political trial in the United States.

<http://dissenter.firedoglake.com/>

Assange's appeal to Ecuador is no surprise

The WikiLeaks’ founder won admiration and gratitude in the South American nation back in 2010.

*Richard Gizbert
Al Jazeera
21 June 2012*

Julian Assange's attempt to gain asylum in Ecuador is just the latest turn in one of the biggest media stories of our time. The WikiLeaks co-founder is currently in the Ecuadorean embassy in London, which issued this statement on June 19:

"This afternoon Mr Julian Assange arrived at the Ecuadorean embassy seeking political asylum from the Ecuadorean government. We have immediately passed his application on to the relevant department in Quito. While the department assesses Mr Assange's application, Mr Assange will remain at the embassy, under the protection of the Ecuadorean government."

This story goes back to 2010, which news junkies may come to remember as the year of WikiLeaks, Assange's online whistle blowing machine. In April of that year, Wiki-

Leaks released footage of 18 civilians in Iraq shot dead by troops on board a US helicopter, cockpit video the Pentagon had insisted was no longer in existence. A few months later, the site began posting hundreds of thousands of classified US government documents on the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Then came the diplomatic cables, which provided an insider's view of American diplomacy, and uncensored views of US diplomats on the countries they deal with.

It was also the year that Mr Assange began to be pursued by Swedish and, eventually, British authorities. Assange has been accused of raping one woman and sexually assaulting another during a trip to deliver a lecture in Sweden in August 2010. He was arrested in London in December of that year, after a European arrest warrant was issued. After eight nights in prison, he was granted bail at \$315,000. Since then he's been under house arrest at, at least, two addresses in the UK.

Throughout his legal ordeal, Assange has maintained the sex was consensual and that he was being persecuted for reasons of politics. He also said he feared the Swedish authorities would simply hand him over to the Americans, who might already have a cell at Guantanamo with his name on it.

In February 2011, a British court ruled that Assange be extradited to Sweden. He has been embroiled in battles in the British courts ever since. In November last year, the High Court ruled that Assange's extradition was not unfair or unlawful, and last week the country's highest court backed that decision.

With his legal options in the UK exhausted, Mr Assange had one more appeal route open to him. He had until June 28th to file an appeal at the European court of human rights. But instead he walked into the Ecuadorean Embassy in London, and requested political asylum.

Why Ecuador? Anti-American sentiments run high there. In April last year, Ecuador announced that it was expelling US ambassador Heather Hodges, over claims she made in diplomatic cables of widespread corruption within the Ecuadorean police force. The cables were written with the frankness that comes when the author believes their work is confidential. But they were released to the world via Wikileaks.

The country's deputy foreign minister first raised the prospect of sheltering Assange in 2010, when American politicians were calling him an enemy of the state.

In mid-2011, I attended a WikiLeaks event at the stately manor house where Assange was under house arrest. Many people spoke that day, but **I remember one in particular. He was Ecuadorean, an official at the embassy in London. Of Assange, he said something along the lines of:** "We Ecuadoreans always knew Washington did not approve of our president, the same way it does not approve of Hugo Chavez or other leftist leaders in Latin America. But we never knew the extent of American animosity or interference in our country's affairs. WikiLeaks and the almost 1,500 diplomatic cables originating for the US embassy in Ecuador changed all that. They made the murky world of diplomacy crystal clear. Our country will always be grateful to Julian Assange. That is why I am here today, to support him and his organization."

Last month, Assange interviewed President Rafael Correa on his talk show, which is broadcast on the state-funded Russian news channel, RTV. Correa happens to be

locked into a Chavez-like struggle with Ecuadorean media, most of which is owned by right-wingers. He has attracted criticism for going too far in his response.

But the two men appeared to get on well during their 25 minute online chat. Assange described Correa as "a leftwing populist who has changed the face of Ecuador." Toward the end of their discussion, Correa told Assange: "Cheer up. Welcome to the club of the persecuted."

That chummy exchange doesn't quite square with the official tone of the statement from the government in Quito, the one about passing Assange's asylum application to the relevant department.

Because Julian Assange is no stranger to the Ecuadorean government. He is no ordinary asylum seeker. They know who he is; what he's done; how Wikileaks has affected Ecuador and other countries that live in the long, cold shadow of a superpower.

Assange is considered a renegade, but he's no fool. I very much doubt that he would walk into that embassy without knowing precisely how his asylum application would turn out.

Incidentally, he saw this coming. When I interviewed Assange for The Listening Post, in November 2010, we talked about the legal net closing in on him. I asked where he saw himself living in five years.

Assange replied, "Well, I joked the other night. The way things are going, what do I do? Apply for refugee status in Cuba?"

Right neighbourhood; wrong country.

He might even be able to see Guantanamo from the plane. Although it would be unwise of him, at this stage, to fly through American airspace.

• *Richard Gizbert is the presenter of Al Jazeera's Listening Post.*

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/06/2012620183512807718.html>

Vilified Assange may not get fair hearing, says friend

Estelle Shirbon
Reuters
June 21 2012

Julian Assange has been demonized and may not have fair access to justice, one of his British backers said on Thursday, defending the WikiLeaks founder's decision to jump bail and hole up in the Ecuadorean embassy in London.

Vaughan Smith, who hosted Assange at his country mansion for a year while the

Australian battled to avoid extradition to Sweden, was given no warning of Assange's dramatic plan even though he stands to lose 20,000 pounds (\$31,500) in bail money.

Despite this, Smith has been speaking out on behalf of his friend, accusing the Western media of double standards. "We seem to welcome it when a Chinese dissident goes to an American embassy, but when an Australian dissident in London goes to an Ecuadorean embassy we try to suggest it's nuts," Smith told Reuters in a telephone interview.

Chinese activist Chen Guangcheng sought refuge in the U.S. embassy in Beijing in April in a high-profile case that caused diplomatic tensions with Washington. Chen was eventually allowed to fly to the United States with his wife and his two children.

Assange was due to be flown within days from Britain to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning over alleged sexual assault, when he sought refuge at the embassy on Tuesday. He risks being arrested for breaching his bail terms if he emerges.

The former computer hacker, who angered Washington in 2010 by posting secret U.S. diplomatic cables on WikiLeaks, denies the allegations. He fears being sent on to the United States where he believes he could face charges punishable by death.

"I don't think we should be blind to that possibility. He clearly believes that. We can't comment whether that's realistic, but I think we can accept that it's reasonable for him to believe that," said Smith, calling on Sweden to offer assurances that it would not fly Assange to the United States.

Smith said he did not know exactly what Assange's plan was when he entered the embassy, but he was convinced the activist was acting in what he believed were the interests of WikiLeaks.

"He is no fool. He is a clever man, and he is very committed to his work at WikiLeaks which he is convinced serves a social purpose. I can assure you that he's committed to carrying on, and that's what I believe is his main motivator," he said.

Neither Swedish nor U.S. authorities have charged Assange with anything. His critics say he should go to Sweden to answer the allegations made by two former WikiLeaks volunteers in 2010.

"Why should we automatically assume that justice is freely available to Assange in Sweden?" asked Smith, who has championed independent journalism through a now defunct war reporting TV news agency, and through his Frontline media club in London.

He criticized Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt for commenting publicly on the Assange case— an objection that has also been voiced by Assange's British legal team.

"We would be disturbed by that in this country. We would feel it was not correct," said Smith. **"Considering the uniqueness of his situation, the Swedes could have attempted to reassure him and they haven't. They've done absolutely nothing to reassure him,"** he said.

Smith gave Assange shelter after a British court granted him bail in December 2010, pending extradition proceedings. Assange stayed at Smith's sprawling countryside property for a year until he moved on to stay with other friends just before Christmas 2011 because Smith's wife was about to have a baby.

The two remain friends and Assange phoned Smith from inside the embassy on Wednesday to thank him for taking his side....

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/21/us-britain-assange-idUSBRE85K1CQ20120621>

SvD: 21 juni 2012

Assange tar del i Correas maktspel

När Julians Assange söker politisk asyl i Ecuador blir han samtidigt en del av det politiska maktspel som landets populistiska president Raphael Correa står bakom. Han har bland annat fängslats och krävt skadestånd av kritiska journalister. Det skriver juristen Christian Ernheide.

Efter Assanges ansökan om asyl på Ecuadors ambassad i London i tisdags kväll kan det vara intressant att analysera varför han har valt just Ecuador, hur landets politiska situation ser ut och chanserna att asylansökan ska beviljas.

Ecuadors populistiska president Raphael Correa har de senaste åren trappat upp sina angrepp mot kritiska nyhetsorganisationer och journalister genom domstolsprocesser angående förtal och hot om stora belopp i skadestånd. Att uttrycka förakt för presidenten kan leda till fängelse i Ecuador och detta är något som har kritiserats starkt av bland annat Inter American Press Association som menar att det inte hör hemma i en demokrati.

Två fall där Correa attackerar journalister är utmärkande: i det ena så hävdade tidningen El Universo att Correa hade gett order till militären att skjuta skarpt på ett sjukhus där han blev fast under ett polisupplopp i Ecuador 2010 och att detta således kunde leda till åtal för Correa. Tre av tidningens redaktörer och en journalist blev dömda till tre års fängelse vardera samt att betala ett sammanlagt skadestånd på 40 miljoner dollar. Det andra gällde journalister som rapporterade om att Correa var medveten om affärskontrakt mellan regeringen och företag knutna till president Correas bror, Fabricio Correa (detta har även bekräftats av brodern men journalisterna blev trots detta dömda att betala skadestånd på två miljoner dollar för förtal).

Dessa attacker riktade mot journalister har fått stark kritik internationellt från såväl organisationer som arbetar med mänskliga rättigheter såsom Human Rights Watch, Reporters Without Borders och Amnesty International samt utländska regeringar och internationella organisationer.

Correa benådade visserligen tidigare i år de journalister som dömts att betala dessa ofantliga belopp i skadestånd men hotet mot journalister att bli dömda för förtal då de kritiserar Correa kvarstår och det är troligt att Correa inte egentligen intresserade sig för de enstaka fallen utan ville statuera exempel för att hålla pressen i schack och

undvika ytterligare kritik då valet i januari 2013 närmar sig.

Men attackerna på pressfrihet i Ecuador är inte begränsade till direkta attacker på journalister genom domstolar. Det är även en pågående trend att radio- och tv-stationer som är kritiska mot Correa stängs ner samtidigt som medierna under regeringens kontroll tar över allt mer. Så sent som förra veckan gick Freedom House ut med ett pressmeddelande där de beskriver hur tvångsnedläggandet av medieorganisationer i Ecuador ger en alarmerande bild av Correas växande försök att tysta kritik.

Correas bakgrund att respektera grundläggande mänskliga rättigheter är således långtifrån fläckfri och med ett välkomnande av Assange till Ecuador får han ytterligare belägg för vad som verkar vara hans nuvarande strategi där Ecuador görs till en motpol till USA och västvärlden. Det passar hans populistiska politik utmärkt. Samtidigt är det ett sätt att avvisa kritik från organisationer såsom Human Rights Watch och Amnesty International genom att påvisa att "endast Ecuador välkomnar den store frihetskämpen Assange".

Det är kanske inte förvånande att Correa såldes kan vara intresserad av att välkomna Assange samtidigt som Assange själv verkar mer intresserad av de maktspel som sker internationellt än verklig pressfrihet.

Genom att spela Correas spel, ger Assange ammunition till en av dem som gör mest för att underminera demokrati och respekt för mänskliga rättigheter i Sydamerika, och agerandet gör också narr av Sydneys fredspris och andra utnämningar som Assange har fått för sitt främjande av mänskliga rättigheter. Tyvärr spelar det heller antagligen inte så stor roll i slutändan för pressfriheten i Ecuador ifall Assanges asylansökan blir beviljad eller inte då Correa antagligen redan har vunnit politisk mark genom Assanges begäran om asyl.

CHRISTIAN ERNHEDE, jurist, bosatt i Bryssel, har bl a arbetat med mänskliga rättigheter hos Advokater utan gränser

[Jämför denna mindre begåvade analys med de föregående av Gosztola o. Gizbert. --A.B.]

Kommentarer

Sanslös artikel, vilka presidenter är inte populistiska? Sedan, alla dessa yrkesorganisationer med tilläget "utan gränser" och med kopplingar till allsköns NGO:s ska man nog ta med en nypa salt. Läkare och advokater i all ära, javisst men varför då inte lika gärna simlärare, pizzabagare, parkeringsvakter, porrstjärnor utan gränser eller inbrottstjuvar utan gränser?

Larv, Christian Ernheide; låg trovärdighet. Assange drivs av ren överlevnadsinstinkt och vill undvika att hamna i svenskt "populistiskt" garn med Borgström i spetsen.

Jag förstår inte varför Clas Borgströms inlägg inte är kommenterbart? Frågan jag skulle vilja ställa till CB är att han som är så omtänksam om sina klienter varför har han inte skyndat på Marianne Ny:s resa till London. Istället verkar han fördröja hela förloppet av någon anledning jag inte förstår?

Måste ha varit bättre att Ny farit över och förhört JA och saken hade antingen

utagerats eller ett åtal kunde ha väckts. Nu händer ingendera och CB:s klienter får lida än mer.

Herr Borgström borde ställas till svars för sitt "försvar" av Tomas Quick. Verkligheten kommer ikapp denne charlatan som aktivt bidragit till en av Sveriges större rättsskandaler.

Så, Assange skulle alltså ha varit mer sparsmakad i valet av asylland? Som om någon annan fråga än hans eget välbefinnande och säkerhet betytt något för honom. "Nej, president Correa är dum. Jag tar hellre risken att ruttna i ett amerikanskt fängelse än söker asyl i hos honom."

Live Blog: Assange requests political asylum from Ecuador (Day 3)

Submitted by m_cetera
WL Central
2012-06-21

This is part of our live-coverage on Julian Assange's request for political asylum....
Follow @wl_central on Twitter for all the latest updates....

[UPDATE: 22:03 BST] Julian Assange was on ABC Radio National Breakfast discussing his application for asylum in Ecuador....

Washington Post's poll currently shows that 84% of people believe that Julian Assange should be allowed to leave Britain for asylum in Ecuador.

[UPDATE: 20:18 BST] Supporters of Julian Assange have been holding a vigil outside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London since Mr Assange applied for bail. The vigil will continue tomorrow morning....

[UPDATE: 20:00 BST] Vaughan Smith was interviewed by Reuters about Julian Assange's request for asylum. Mr Smith is a friend of Mr Assange's who provided his house arrest location for a year and also helped provide his bail surety.

We seem to welcome it when a Chinese dissident goes to an American embassy, but when an Australian dissident in London goes to an Ecuadorean embassy we try to suggest it's nuts.

On Mr Assange's concerns about extradition to the U.S. and charges that could lead to life imprisonment or death, Mr Smith said the following:

I don't think we should be blind to that possibility. He clearly believes that. We can't comment whether that's realistic, but I think we can accept that it's reasonable for him to believe that.

Mr Smith continued:

He is no fool. He is a clever man, and he is very committed to his work at WikiLeaks which he is convinced serves a social purpose. I can assure you that he's committed to carrying on, and that's what I believe is his main motivator.

Why should we automatically assume that justice is freely available to Assange in Sweden?

Mr Smith also criticized Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt for commenting publicly on the Assange case:

We would be disturbed by that in this country. We would feel it was not correct.

Considering the uniqueness of his situation, the Swedes could have attempted to reassure him and they haven't. They've done absolutely nothing to reassure him.

Jemima Khan, another supporter who helped provide bail, commented on Twitter:

For the record, in response to those asking about Assange & bail money....

I personally would like to see Assange confront the rape allegations in Sweden and the 2 women at the centre have a right to a response

BUT there is no doubt that Assange has a real fear of being extradited to the US nor that the US gov is out to get WikiLeaks.

[UPDATE: 19:00 BST] Sarah Saunders visited Mr Assange at the Ecuadorian Embassy. She said he is working hard on his asylum bid with the lawyers, and is comfortable and in good spirits. Ms Saunders is one of the supporters who helped put up surety, but she is not worried about her money at this stage.

[UPDATE: 18:17 BST] WikiLeaks spokesman Kristinn Hrafnsson visited Julian Assange at the Ecuadorian Embassy today. He said it could be hours or days before a decision is reached in Mr Assange's application for asylum. Ecuador has asked for information from Britain, Sweden and the United States to study before deciding whether or not to accept his request. Mr Assange is in good spirits and prepared to wait things out in the Embassy.

[UPDATE: 17:30 BST] Julian Assange's U.S. lawyer [Michael Ratner was on RT](#) discussing the recent developments in his application for asylum. Mr Ratner said this was an important move, as he faces the worst prison in the U.S. with 40+ years in prison or the death penalty.

[UPDATE: 17:27 BST] Christine Assange [spoke with her son](#) over the phone recently.

The people who gave surety for his bail support his action. He's got his own money tied up in that as well and his understanding is that (seeking) asylum is an appeal process and his bail should be protected because of that. **Julian told me that the**

asylum process is internationally recognised as a legitimate form of appeal and that the bail should not be forfeited.

The Crown Prosecution Service representing Sweden has been trying to stop... Julian take his case to the Court of Human Rights. The Supreme Court gave him 14 days to get his appeal in but they (Sweden) are pushing for no days... which would close that avenue of appeal. That's one of the reasons why he sought asylum.

If they are going to have to go through a detailed legal submission, it's not going to happen overnight. I don't know what his plan is. I guess that will be decided when his asylum is granted.

The fact is that many countries are signatories to this Universal Declaration for Human Rights but it seems that the US and UK and Australia and Sweden have abdicated their responsibility.

[Julian's] spirits are buoyed by the support and he's grateful and humble and thanks his supporters, including those in the media, and he's in fighting spirit. Hearing him sound OK and knowing that he is at least in good hands made a huge difference to me.

Democracy Now! [reported on](#) the most recent updated in Julian Assange's application for asylum. They briefly interviewed WikiLeaks spokesman Kristinn Hrafnsson.

[Business Insider published](#) "8 Reasons Why Ecuador Should Give Julian Assange Asylum".

Alexa O'Brien has been [gathering evidence](#) which shows the U.S. plan to prosecute Julian Assange, as well as six others. The FBI is targeting those seven civilians for "criminal activity and espionage".

RT correspondent Sarah Firth tweeted:

Interesting - Embassy's cars are also inviolable so re safe passage #Assange could hop in a diplomatic car <http://www.morton-fraser.com/news/2801-assange-in-the-embassy-history-repeating-itself>

This means, if granted asylum, Mr Assange may have an easier time getting to Ecuador than previously thought...

[UPDATE: 16:10 BST] Washington Post is holding a poll asking its readers whether Julian Assange should be allowed to leave Britain for asylum in Ecuador. Currently 79% of voters have said he should.

Supporters of Julian Assange continuing rallying outside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, despite the rain. (photo via @sombernessunlit)



[UPDATE: 15:55 BST] Twitter users are organizing [#Stand4JA](#), asking people to head to the Ecuadorian Embassy in London and be there to ensure Julian Assange can leave the Embassy safely. He will be arrested by the London Police when leaving for breaking his curfew, a part of his bail conditions. A [Pirate Pad](#) is also open for discussion and planning.

Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard [stated](#) she will not meet with Ecuadorian President Rafeal Correa during the Rio+20 Summit.

Julian Assange's mother, Christine, [attacked](#) Australian Foreign Minister Bob Carr for failing to provide adequate protections for her son.

This is a person who is uncharged, unquestioned, decorated all around the world for his journalism. It's really awful, here's my kid over there, alone in a foreign embassy with the cops out the side salivating. It's absolutely disgusting.

[UPDATE: 09:55 BST] Sarah Joseph, Director, Castan Centre for Human Rights Law at Monash University, [wrote an article](#) about what is likely to happen next for Julian Assange, depending on whether his request for asylum is approved by the Ecuadorian Government.

Twitter users have been sending their concerns and questions about Mr Assange to Australian Foreign Minister Bob Carr using the hashtag [#askbob](#).

A rally in support of Julian Assange is currently taking place in Sydney. Speakers include Cameron Murphy, Richard Neville, Professor Jake Lynch, with statements being read from Phillip Adams, Austin Mackell, Mary Kostakidis, and local Ecuadorian activists....

Adelaide Friends of WikiLeaks are holding a meeting to discuss Mr Assange's situation and plan future support action. The meeting will be held at Alfonso's, 202 Hutt Street, June 24 at 2PM.

[UPDATE: 07:50 BST] In [his letter](#) requesting asylum sent to Ecuador's president, Rafael Correa, Julian Assange stated "he wants to continue his mission in a country ... without limits, to reveal the truth, in a place of peace dedicated to truth and justice". President Correa said he was impressed with the letter.

The Australian Senate [passed a motion](#) by the Greens to withdraw prejudicial statements made against Julian Assange. Here is the full text of the motion:

To move – That the Senate –

Notes that:

1. Inconsistent or selective application of the Consular Services Charter leaves Australian citizens in doubt about the level of assistance they may receive if facing difficulties overseas.

Calls on the Prime Minister to:

1. Ensure that the government's efforts and engagement on behalf of Mr. Julian Assange are consistent with the highest level of support provided to other Australians in difficulty overseas.
2. Retract prejudicial statements regarding the illegality of Wikileaks publishing endeavours, found to be groundless by the Australian Federal Police, which have the potential to seriously jeopardise the potential for any fair trial or hearing for Mr. Assange.

The Australian Socialist Equality Party (SEP) condemned the Prime Minister Julia Gillard and her Labor Government for "its role in forcing WikiLeaks editor Julian Assange to seek asylum in Ecuador", i.e. failure to give him even the basic assurances that he would be protected from U.S. extradition and prosecution.

NYT eXaminer [tracked the changes](#) that NYT journalist Ravi Somaiya made to his article about Julian Assange's application for asylum. It shows how he started with an angle focused on Ecuador, changed to Mr Assange's violation of bail conditions, and then to a "stand off" between Britain and Ecuador. It also shows that an entire paragraph on the WikiLeaks Grand Jury was deleted.

Bernard Keane wrote [an op-ed in Crikey](#) which comments on how the U.S. "has already won" against WikiLeaks by strangling it with a financial blockade and causing Mr Assange to request asylum due to the real concern that the U.S. will extradite and prosecute him....

[UPDATE: 03:50 BST] Sydney Morning Herald [has published](#) "A rough guide to refuge in Ecuador" which details what Julian Assange may expect if his request for political asylum is granted.

Australian Greens Senator Scott Ludlam wrote [an article for The Drum](#) entitled "No surprise Assange looking elsewhere for support". He describes the hostile environments in both Australia and the U.S. towards the WikiLeaks founder....

[UPDATE: 02:45 BST] Human rights lawyer Jennifer Robinson visited Julian Assange at the Ecuadorian Embassy. In [an interview with ABC](#) AM, she commented that Mr Assange would not have the option to seek asylum after extradition to Sweden. She also stated that Mr **Assange remains willing to be questioned by the Swedish prosecution while at the Embassy.**

Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard recently [stated](#): "Our High Commisison in London is ... discussing the matter involving Mr Assange directly with their counterparts from Equador."

[UPDATE: 02:02 BST] The Alyona Show [discussed](#) Julian Assange's request for political asylum in depth, featuring Jesselyn Radack from the Government Accountability Project and Kevin Zeese of the Bradley Manning Support Network.

[UPDATE: 01:48 BST] Many of Julian Assange's high-profile supporters who provided his bail have [come out in favor](#) of his decision to seek asylum.

Tariq Ali: "I totally approve. Why the double-standards? A Chinese dissident becomes a folk-hero for reaching the US embassy, but a Western dissident doing the same re a South American embassy is not kosher. Fuck the money."

Phillip Knightly: "I would [provide bail] again. He felt as I do that he's a victim of a conspiracy. He's been found guilty of nothing. The Swedes want to plug him in irons as soon as he arrived."

Bianca Jagger: "I wouldn't presume to advise Julian Assange on a course of action. Only he and his legal team can make an informed judgement.

"One thing I know is that the US Federal government can impose the death penalty. For many years I have campaigned on behalf of prisoners on death row in America. I know how many miscarriages of justice take place. This is one of the reasons I have been campaigning for the abolition of the death penalty in the USA and throughout the world.

"If one looks at the trial of Bradley Manning, which has been an appalling mockery of the judicial process, one can understand Julian Assange's concern. He fears that justice will not be served if he is extradited to the United States."

[UPDATE: 01:00 BST] Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño Aroca made a statement on Twitter regarding Julian Assange's request for asylum. Here is a translation via @Jaraparilla:

Thanks for the thousands of messages received regarding the request for political asylum made by Julian Assange to the govt of Ecuador yesterday. Assange's request requires in depth analysis. Ecuador declares that it will protect the human rights to life and freedom of expression. We are now studying the risk claimed by Assange of being judged for political reasons and that he could be condemned to

death. Ecuador's constitution respects the right to life, does not recognize the death penalty and fully defends freedom of expression. The Ecuadorean government led by Rafael Correa has maintained a sovereign and principal foreign policy which will not change now.

[UPDATE: 00:50 BST] RT [interviewed WikiLeaks spokesman Kristinn Hrafnsson](#) outside the Ecuadorian Embassy. He says Mr Assange is in good spirits as always and is certain he has made the right move by requesting asylum. Watch the interview below.

A [vigil](#) for Julian Assange will take place at the Occupy Frankfurt Camp on 23 June, from 9PM.

[UPDATE: 2012-06-21 00:13 BST] Ecuador's Deputy Foreign Minister Marco Albuja stated that the decision on Julian Assange's asylum request is expected within 24 hours.

A thousand apologies, but we still can't make a final decision public yet until tomorrow. The national government is considering its position and the president will give us his instructions tomorrow. So the only information I can add is to refer you to statements already made.

Per E Samuelson, Julian Assange's Swedish lawyer, was [on Sveriges Radio](#). He said Mr Assange is not afraid of the allegations in Sweden, but rather his potential extradition to the U.S. He also said things are a bit chaotic now, but Mr Assange has a temporary room in the Embassy and everything is under control....

Christine Assange was [interviewed on RT](#) about her son's choice to seek asylum.

<http://wlcentral.org/asylum-day03>

Transcript: Julian Assange's first interview from Ecuadorian Embassy

*Submitted by m_cetera
WL Central
2012-06-21*

Julian Assange interview on ABC Radio National Breakfast, 21 June 2012. This is his first interview conducted since he applied for political asylum in Ecuador. At the time of this interview, Mr Assange had been at the Ecuadorian Embassy for three days. [Full audio](#) is available at the ABC Radio website.

Fran Kelly: And let's head straight to Britain where Julian Assange is about to spend his third night holed up in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, as he awaits a decision on his bid for political asylum. The 40 year old Australian walked into the Embassy on Tuesday in a dramatic bid to avoid extradition to Sweden for questioning over sexual assault allegations. Even if he's granted asylum in Ecuador, British police say they will arrest him as soon as he steps foot outside the embassy, accusing him of being in breach of his bail conditions. Julian Assange joins

us now live from the Ecuadorian Embassy in London. Julian, welcome back to RN Breakfast.

Julian Assange: G'day, Fran. Good to be with you.

Fran Kelly: Julian Assange, why did you walk into the Ecuadorian Embassy?

Julian Assange: Well, I just noticed in your promo, Fran, you said 'dramatic bid to do something about Swedish'...

Fran Kelly: To avoid extradition to Sweden for questioning?

Julian Assange: Yeah, and that's... I don't know where you get that from. We've never said that's the case, and that's simply not the case. **The issue is about a very serious matter in the United States and an announcement was made by the Swedes and the Swedish Government that I would be detained, without charge, in Sweden, immediately on extradition. They tried to cancel the 14 days that I had here to apply to appeal the matter at the European Court of Human Rights.** So my opportunity to exercise my asylum rights in the United States was at an end. And this is not a matter of onwards extradition from Sweden to the United States. The situation here for me in the UK is extremely, has been extremely precarious. And the refusal by the Swedish prosecutor has led to a technical... the refusal by the Swedish prosecutor to come to the UK for the past 18 months, despite that being absolutely normal procedure, and the refusal of her to explain it in any matter whatsoever to the British court, has kept me trapped in the United Kingdom while the United States has prepared a case against me. We now have intelligence, public record, that **the FBI file in its case preparation now runs to 48,135 pages.**

Fran Kelly: Okay, let's break this down a bit just in the name of complete accuracy, Julian. Yes, I did say that you had sought political asylum in Ecuador to avoid extradition. What you're saying is, you did it because the Swedish Government had made an attempt to truncate your curtailed freedom as it already is there in the UK, but you are not prepared to go to Sweden under the terms that you believe you would be held in there. Is that what you're saying?

Julian Assange: That's right. My ability to exercise an asylum right would be at an end, and even to exercise rights of appeal, would be at an effective end because the Swedes announced publicly that they would detain me, in prison, without charge, while they continued their so-called investigation, without charge. So we had heard that the Ecuadorians were sympathetic in relation to my struggles and the struggles of the organization with the United States. And the ability to exercise that option was at an effective end **and we had the surprise news that the Crown Prosecution Service here suddenly objected to the 14 days we were meant to have to file an EU appeal and were asking for zero.**

Fran Kelly: Okay, I'll come back to those bigger issues, but just in the short term people, I think, are very interested in what indications you're getting from the Ecuadorians there in terms of the success of this application for political asylum.

Julian Assange: Well the Ecuadorian people have been quite supportive; I saw the Ecuadorian Ambassador in Australia was making supportive comments. Ecuador, back

in 2010, suggested that perhaps I should come to Ecuador and be given residency. So they are sympathetic over a long period of time. So we hope the asylum application will be viewed favorably. Now it's a matter of gathering alleged sort-of extensive evidence about what has been happening in the U.S. and submitting that with a formal request for asylum. There's Ecuadorians on the outside of the Embassy, together with Londoners, protesting in the street, demanding that Ecuador accept the asylum application.

Fran Kelly: Have you gotten any indication of the timing of this?

Julian Assange: We have no indication of the timing.

Fran Kelly: When this happened, it took a lot of people by surprise, including many of your own supporters, and for some people, I believe, it made you look more guilty, it made you look like you're on the run, desperate to avoid questions about those sexual assault allegations.

Julian Assange: Well, this Swedish prosecutor, if the intent is really to proceed with the technical requirements of this case, she is perfectly entitled to come to Embassy, the Ecuadorians have said she could come to the Embassy, she could pick up the telephone, **like she could've picked up the telephone for the past 18 months, if that's really what she is interested in.**

Fran Kelly: And did you have legal advice suggesting you seek asylum in another country, including Ecuador?

Julian Assange: I spoke to several lawyers about the situation. In relation to sureties and other supporters, because of the sort-of legal requirements there, for their own protection I was not able to speak to them before I have to.

Fran Kelly: So your position is that you don't believe that the evidence suggests that the Swedes are really interested in having you there for questioning, because they could come to Britain to question you, and that's been your position all along. So you're more concerned, as you say, with what's been happening in the U.S. What makes you so worried about the Americans, because repeatedly the Americans are saying they are not interested in extraditing you?

Julian Assange: Well, **they are being very, very careful with their words**, Fran. They now have a 48,135 page FBI file, there's official statements made in court in the prosecution of Bradley Manning, the next date which is on Monday, saying the founders and managers of WikiLeaks are among the subjects of the grand jury proceedings, which has now been going since 2010. Their careful statements reflect that the Department of Justice is not able to formally confirm or deny the existence of the grand jury, a policy with all grand juries.

But there are subpoenas everywhere, there are witnesses who have come out on public record about how they've been dragged into the grand jury, we have received subpoenas, the subpoenas mention my name, in the past months two people have been detained at U.S. airports by U.S. officials and interrogated by the FBI, asked questions about me and my organization, asked to become informers -- one of those has gone on the public record, he's a prominent free speech activist of France, Jérémie Zimmermann -- and the other, Smári McCarthy, who has worked with me in Iceland. This is a hot, ongoing, active investigation. And as of two weeks ago.

Fran Kelly: It's a quarter past six on Breakfast, our guest this morning is Julian Assange. He's currently inside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, where he arrived three days ago now seeking political asylum. In terms of the public record, the Australian Government says they've received no indication that the U.S. would seek your extradition from Sweden if you were to go there. Can I just play you -- we spoke to the Attorney-General Nicola Roxon about this yesterday -- let's have a listen.

Nicola Roxon (recording): We have, I've made clear that I've made representations... [Kelly: And the answer was?] Let me tell your listeners who those have been made to -- because it's not just the Ambassador -- the Minister for Homeland Security, the Deputy to Attorney-General in the U.S.; we have from all of those conversations no indication that they are about to take action, and we have also said that we don't believe, now having taken advice from the federal police, that we have any evidence of Mr Assange having committed any offence that would breach an Australian law.

Fran Kelly: So that's the Attorney-General Nicola Roxon speaking to us yesterday, no indication that the Americans are about to take legal action. That doesn't reassure you? And is that what the Australian Government is telling you?

Julian Assange: **But they are taking legal action. There have been nine prosecutors working this case, the evidence is everywhere**, they've been issuing subpoenas to our ISPs, to the people I've been meeting, etc. It's a matter of public record. They are taking legal action. They've taken action against Twitter. We've been fighting a legal case in the public record in relation to the Twitter subpoenas for over a year now; it involves the ACLU, etc, etc.

So they're playing word games here. The games that they're playing is that the grand jury needs to conclude. On the conclusion of the grand jury process, they... The grand jury is a device, a judicial device, if you like -- it does not seem to be part of the executive -- and so they can say they are not about to extradite, because the grand jury has not yet concluded. On the conclusion of the grand jury, the Department of Justice will take the indictments of the grand jury and pursue the matter.

They are certainly spending vast amounts of resources; I mean, just today it was discovered that a contract put out by the Department of Justice for one to two million dollars to maintain the WikiLeaks computer systems that the Department of Justice is running -- one to two million dollars contracted to MANTEC as a matter of public record, just discovered today.

Fran Kelly: So, you're clearly agitated, understandably, if you believe that the U.S. is preparing this extradition treaty for you. Therefore, your future is very much up in the air, you're waiting to hear whether the Ecuadorian Government will give you protection. Do you feel cornered? Because the British police are saying if you set foot outside that Embassy, you will be arrested.

Julian Assange: Well, there's, I think, **an important question is why aren't I in the Australian Embassy?**

Fran Kelly: Why didn't you seek protection in the Australian Embassy?

Julian Assange: Because Nicola Roxon, after very reasonable requests made by my lawyer Jennifer Robinson to her in a half an hour meeting, and following reasonable

requests by one of the most celebrated human rights lawyers who represents me here in the UK, Gareth Pierce, asking them to ask for very simple conditions of the Swedes-- such as that if I was imprisoned in the United States and I could serve my sentence in Australia-- refused any of those requests, refused to consult in any extradition to the United States, refused to be involved in any of those discussions, refused to ask that the Swedes come and solve this matter by simply coming and speaking to me in the UK, etc. **So this is has been an effective declaration of abandonment; there is not a single matter of concern under which the Australian Government, as represented by the Attorney-General, would ask other governments to be reasonable or just in this case.**

Fran Kelly: Again, I put that to the Attorney-General yesterday. Do you want to hear her -- let's hear her response.

Nicola Roxon (recording): I totally reject that he has been abandoned by the Government. We've offered support to him through consular services, we've made representations to the British Government, to the Swedish Government, to the U.S. Government.

Fran Kelly: That's what the Attorney-General said yesterday in terms of... and the Government has also said that you have received as much or more consular support as anybody else has in matters like this.

Julian Assange: There is no matter like this at all, everyone knows that. But y'know, maybe that's up until this recent case in Libya, maybe that's true even. The Australian Government simply does not support it's people. There's a journalist, Austin Mackell, who's trapped in Egypt and he also has exactly the same complaints I have. These are empty words. When you hear this word "consular assistance" -- **I haven't met with anyone from the Australian High Commission since December 2010. What are they talking about?**

Fran Kelly: So you've had no consular contact with the Australian High Commission since 2010?

Julian Assange: **Well, they send SMS messages, 'Does Mr Assange have any concerns?' But we know what this is for: this is so they can just tick off a box. And yes, we formally put our concerns to the Attorney-General and the response was dismissal in every single area.**

Fran Kelly: And have you formally put to the Australian Government, ask them to seek reassurances from the U.S. about any plans to extradite you and what those answers are?

Julian Assange: Yes, we have formally put requests to Nicola Roxon and DFAT to ask that the United States... I can't remember the exact request, but for instance for the prisoner transfer arrangement and so on. And she rejected this in every single area. In relation to the sort-of clever rhetoric that's being used at the moment, when they say that there is not... we have not received evidence from the United States that they plan to extradite -- of course not. At the moment the matter is before the grand jury and until it comes out of the grand jury there will be no such evidence afforded. And you look at other questions of Gillard, for example, where the follow-up question... Sorry,

sorry, to the Foreign Minister -- 'Is there any indication, any evidence from the U.S. that they will try to extradite Mr Assange' and the Foreign Minister says, 'Oh no, no, of course not'. Follow-up question, **'Have you asked for any evidence?' -- no!**

Fran Kelly: So, Julian Assange, let's go to what's next for you. If Ecuador doesn't grant you asylum, what's Plan B?

Julian Assange: Well, we're in the position to draw attention to what is happening. Y'know, the Department of Justice in the United States has been playing a little game, and that little game is they refuse to confirm or deny the existence of a grand jury. And as a result, **the press goes, 'Oh well, they don't confirm it, and therefore we can't really write about it'. That's not true; there's public record everywhere**, there's multiple witnesses everywhere, there's testimony in military courts about the existence of what is happening in these 48,000 pages, and that the founders and managers of WikiLeaks are amongst the subjects.

So, we hope what I am doing now will draw attention to the underlying issues. In a case where the truth is on your side, what is most against you is lack of scrutiny. So, y'know, I welcome the lack of scrutiny -- welcome the scrutiny. People should go to <http://justice4assange.com> and they can read about some of these issues. Good journalists in Australia, such as Phillip Dorling who's been heroic in exploration of the FOI traffic between Australia and the U.S., are also showing that there are serious issues here, and they are being hidden through slimy rhetoric coming out of the U.S. Ambassador to Australia, by Gillard, and by the Foreign Minister. And that really needs to stop.

Fran Kelly: Is scrutiny really what you're after here, rather than a life and a future in Ecuador? What if you're granted political asylum? Are you ready for a life in Ecuador? And also, back to that original question, do you think you'd ever make it there given what the British Metropolitan Police are threatening: to apprehend you if you stepped foot outside the embassy?

Julian Assange: Well, a life in Ecuador, I mean these are friendly generous people, is much better than a life behind bars in the United States under SAMS restrictions which are Guantanamo Bay-like restrictions, which they routinely apply to people accused of espionage. You can't speak, can't communicate, because I might communicate some password or something. And this is a routine matter that is applied in these sorts of cases.

Fran Kelly: And in terms of a life in Ecuador, amongst more than friendly people-- no doubt they are -- but Ecuador's justice system and record on free speech has been criticized by Human Rights Watch, Reporters without Borders, Amnesty International... You know, it seems ironic, really, that you, the founder of WikiLeaks, would be seeking protection in a country which is criticized as limiting free speech.

Julian Assange: Well, **it's free speech issues are certainly no worse than ones in the UK. I mean, this is the country with hundreds of gag orders, so let's keep things in perspective. I mean, I would enjoy campaigning for the rights of journalists in Ecuador.**

Fran Kelly: Do you think you'd have the freedom to do that? I mean, Human Rights Watch says journalists get locked up for doing that.

Julian Assange: Well, look. Human Rights Watch is based in New York. Ecuador has an issue with Chevron, which is a U.S. company, and so on. There's been a lot of tussles between the U.S. and Ecuador which is one of the reasons why Ecuador, I presume, would be happy to grant me asylum because they understand the difficulties when you square off with the United States.

Fran Kelly: Julian Assange, thank you very much for joining us on Breakfast.

Julian Assange: Thank you, Fran. B-bye.

Fran Kelly: Julian Assange is the founder of WikiLeaks. He's currently taken refuge, sought refuge in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London where he's made an application for political asylum, and he's still waiting, as we heard, for that decision by Ecuador. And as he does, the world watches.

<http://wcentral.org/node/2676>

Opinion poll: Should Julian Assange be allowed to leave Britain?

*Anup Kaphle
Washington Post
2012-06-21*

As Julian Assange spends his third day inside the Ecuadoran embassy in London, the world is waiting to see if President Rafael Correa will grant asylum to the Wikileaks founder. British authorities on Wednesday hinted that Assange could be arrested for breaking the terms of his bail, as reported in the Washington Post.

Should Wikileaks founder Julian Assange be allowed to leave Britain for asylum in Ecuador?

Yes	88%
No	12%
Other	1%

(explain in the comments)

1504 people have taken this poll.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/blogpost/post/should-julian-assange-be-allowed-to-leave-britain-poll/2012/06/21/gJQAVQUlsV_blog.html

Assange's asylum bid and Washington's WikiLeaks response: matching hysteria

The embassy cables did not harm national security and US laws shield publication of state secrets. Assange will not be extradited

Peter Galbraith
The Guardian
21 June 2012

If Ecuador grants Julian Assange asylum at its London embassy, he could be confined far longer than if he went to Sweden to face questioning and possible charges there. South American countries have had a long history of granting political asylum at their embassies.

For much of the continent's history, coup or revolution was the usual path for political change. New rulers preserved their future exit options by allowing safe passage into exile for any ousted leader who made it to a brotherly South American embassy. *[This case is hardly analagous. --A.B.]*

Outside South America, there is no similar tradition. Cardinal Mindszenty took refuge at the US legation in Budapest during the 1956 uprising and stayed 15 years in a cramped apartment before being allowed to go into exile. UK authorities are unlikely to allow Assange leave the Ecuadorean Embassy, lest the London embassies become a magnet for would-be fugitives. Scandinavian prisons have a reputation for humane-ness — no bars, nice rooms, furloughs and conjugal visits — and Assange might find a short incarceration there preferable to an indefinite stay in what I presume is a relatively cramped Ecuadorian embassy. *[Gee, why didn't Assange think of that? --A.B.]*

Julian Assange's lawyer has said his client is concerned not by the sex offense charges in Sweden, but that Sweden might extradite him to the United States. There, his lawyer says, he could face the death penalty for espionage and treason. While I am no expert on Swedish and British extradition law, I have never understood why Sweden— a neutral country with a long tradition of harboring American draft dodgers and deserters *[that Sweden no longer exists, and it is remarkable that the author's knowledge is so outdated --A.B.]* — would be more likely to extradite Assange than the United Kingdom, a staunch US ally whose laws authorize prosecution of journalists for official secrets violations in a way that is not possible in either the US or Sweden *[again, the author's knowledge is very incomplete --A.B.]*.

In the United States, constitutional protections of freedom of the press are nearly absolute and this makes it almost impossible to prosecute the publisher of classified information. Earlier this month, the New York Times ran articles detailing ongoing US covert operations, including cyber attacks on Iran's nuclear program and targeted killing of al-Qaida operatives. These revelations clearly compromised US national security — presumably, both Iran and al-Qaida will now take defensive measures — but no one is calling for the prosecution of the reporter, David Sanger, or the newspaper. Indeed, Sanger is now feted on national television and his book, based on what he learned of US intelligence activities, is certain to be a bestseller. *[Totally irrelevant of the Assange case. --A.B.]*

Strategic leaking -- even of the nation's most sensitive secrets -- is a Washington tradition. While Republicans allege these latest leaks were done to make President Obama look good (and indeed, he appears far more aggressive than his predecessor both on Iran and in combating terrorism), the Bush administration was often reckless in its use of intelligence for partisan purposes. To its credit, the Obama administration has been serious about prosecuting leakers. In addition to prosecuting Private Bradley Manning (Assange's alleged source), the administration has launched a criminal investigation of these latest leaks and **has been willing to force journalists to testify about their sources.**

While the volume of material WikiLeaks released is staggering -- millions of pages of classified State Department cables -- it contains no intelligence reporting, and very little of what is truly sensitive. (Full disclosure: cables I wrote as ambassador to Croatia were among those leaked.) Ambassadors generally use special channels for policy recommendations, discussion of intelligence activities and for accounts of sensitive meetings with top officials. Private Bradley Manning had no access to cables in these channels, nor to intelligence reporting.

Washington's reaction to WikiLeaks was wildly disproportionate to the actual sensitivity of the material released. While one Republican congressman *[and many other prominent figures --A.B.]* did call for the death penalty (Republicans have, over the years, proposed the death penalty for almost everything except overdue library books), prosecutions proceed on the basis of the law. Publishing secret documents is not against the law and other suggested criminal charges -- such as conspiracy to steal US government property -- have never been used against media organizations and would almost certainly fail in a prosecution of Assange. *[Recent U.S. governments have demonstrated a near-total disregard for both international and domestic law; and who can prevent the current one from arbitrarily defining Assange as a spy rather than a journalist? --A.B.]*

The WikiLeaks cables cut short several ambassadorial tenures and forced some embarrassing apologies to foreign leaders. The cables also showed American diplomats to be acute observers of the foreign scene, who do not suffer autocrats or kleptocrats gladly (even when from friendly countries). In Tunisia, cables describing corruption in the Ben Ali regime helped fuel the uprising in the country that kicked off the Arab Spring.

Julian Assange may stay in the Ecuadorian embassy or go to Sweden to answer the charges there. He will not end up in the United States. Much as US officials might want him in jail, the legal and constitutional barriers to a successful prosecution are insurmountable *[like the repudiation of habeus corpus or the assassination of U.S. citizens, for example]*. There is no basis for extradition. *[Well, now he can rest easy. --A.B.]*

The State Department does, however, have discretion as to who can get a visa. Assange is not likely to get one. *[Very amusing. --A.B.]*

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Will Ecuador Give Assange Asylum?

Ray McGovern: Washington Post threatens Ecuador if Wikileaks founder given asylum

Real News Network

22 June 2012

PAUL JAY, SENIOR EDITOR: Welcome to The Real News Network. I'm Paul Jay in Baltimore. Julian Assange is still in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, his third day after seeking asylum against extradition to Sweden and the fear that he might be then extradited to the United States for what he may then be put in front of a grand jury that people think has already sat and has already indicted him in some way but that is not entirely public.

Now joining us to talk about this affair is Ray McGovern. Ray's a former CIA analyst. He's also a cofounder of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, and he is a friend of whistleblowers almost everywhere, maybe everywhere. Thanks for joining us, Ray.

RAY MCGOVERN, FORMER CIA ANALYST: Most welcome, Paul.

JAY: So, first of all, tell sort of what we know factually so far about what's happening, and then give us your take.

MCGOVERN: Sure. I suppose I should do full disclosure right off the bat. I am what The Washington Post accuses Julian Assange of being, and that is a self-described advocate of free speech. I also have a respect for state secrets when they deserve to be kept secret. But I think what Julian Assange has done is the archetypical example of how one can put the prevention of wars and other injustices ahead of petty classification systems. And that is why our group Sam Adams Associates for Integrity gave Julian Assange our annual award in 2010. And so that's full disclosure of the bat....

What's happened here is a standoff between Julian Assange in the Embassy of Ecuador in London and the London police and those who do not wish to allow the Ecuadorians to give him political asylum. There's no doubt but that he merits political asylum, given the hatchet job that the Swedes and others have done to him, and the fact that there is almost certainly—the lawyers still need to say probably, but almost certainly a secret indictment served against him in accordance with what Dianne Feinstein of the Senate Intelligence Committee wanted, and that is an indictment on foreign espionage, which carries, as you know, very full penalties. Feinstein's saying a year— well, almost two years ago now, that this fellow is not a journalist; he's rather a agitator intent on blackening the United States. Now, if full disclosure is ipso facto blackening the United States, well, that's just too bad.

JAY: And in terms of the facts of this, just quickly— I would suppose most of our viewers know this, but Assange has been charged with certain sexual indiscretions. I think the facts of it is he's been accused of not wearing a condom in some sexual acts, and he's been asked— he's being extradited to come back to Sweden for that investigation. My understanding is Assange has said he's more than happy to answer any investigators' questions in London. And it does seem to be something that could have been done in London. It's not clear why he needs to be sitting in a jail cell in Sweden simply to answer some questions. And I guess that's sort of the nub of the controversy and why people think there's more going on here than just answering an investigator's questions. Do I have this more or less right?

MCGOVERN: That's exactly right, except for the fact that he also volunteered to offer himself for questioning in Sweden before he realized that he really had to get out of Dodge, so to speak, and escaped (he thought) to London, where he was also arrested and placed under house arrest for many, many months now, and just decided, after the High Court in Britain, under extreme pressure from our country, refused his appeal not to be extradited to Sweden— 7 July was the day that he was supposed to be thrown out of London, given to the tender mercies of the Swedes. And so he chose to walk into the Ecuadorian Embassy the day before yesterday and ask for political asylum.

One of the unanswered questions is, you know, with all the attention to Julian Assange and with all the previous information that Ecuador was very susceptible to offers of asylum, why there were no police following Julian, why he was allowed to go into the Ecuadorian [incompr.] And I think probably the answer to that is that the British would just as soon get rid of him, they'd just as soon get this headache off their hands. Otherwise I think the bobbies would have intercepted him before allowing him to get into the Ecuadorian Embassy.

JAY: Well, the press is describing this as a standoff now between London and Ecuador. What's your understanding of the law of all this? What are the legalities in play here?

MCGOVERN: Well, there is a standoff. And the question is whether Correa, the Ecuadorian president, will offer political asylum. I think chances are very good that he will. Then the question arises: how does Assange get from the Ecuadorian Embassy in London to the airport to fly off to Ecuador? Now, The Washington Post, no fan of Assange, is saying that Scotland Yard is saying that as soon as he leaves the embassy he'll be arrested because he violated the terms of his being detained. That's not very clear, and that could be worked out. But The Post is taking a very hard line against this fellow who they say is a small-time operative being helped now by a small-time South American autocrat, namely Correa, that the— the key here is how The Post ends up. This is their editorial this morning. It really shows their hand:

"If Mr. Correa," the head of Ecuador, "seeks to appoint himself America's chief Latin American enemy"— enemy— for giving Assange protection "between now and then, it's not hard to imagine the outcome," because "[a] **full third of Ecuadoran foreign sales (\$10 billion in 2011) go to the United States, supporting... 400,000 jobs in the country,**" and "it's not hard to imagine" what will happen if Julian Assange is allowed to go to Ecuador."

Pretty transparent, isn't it? Dictated just by the administration.

JAY: Yeah, these sort of threats are usually made behind the scenes, not so front-and-center. But I suppose U.S. foreign policy doesn't like the fact there are places on earth that don't already know better than to even test these kind of waters. And I guess Ecuador and some of the other Latin American countries, like Venezuela and Bolivia and others, are kind of outside that sphere so far, it appears. Assange's mother is quoted in the press today as saying she's heard of people that live in embassies for 15 years or more. And there is some precedent for that, is there?

MCGOVERN: Well, there is indeed. Those who are as old as I am remember Cardinal Mindszenty, who sought refuge in the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw during the Cold War, and he was there longer than 15 years, if memory serves. But it does look today as though Quito is going to move quickly— I think pronto is the right word here— because the longer this languishes, the more levers of— leverage the United States

and others will have and the more opportunity for real mischief.

JAY: But "move quickly" meaning what? As you just described, they can't — how do they get him from the embassy to the airport? The British have to agree to that. And given the mood in the United States, it's hard to see that the British would be amenable to that unless the U.S. said okay. And why would they say okay? I mean, maybe they want to — they'll let him sit there for a long time until people kind of forget about it.

MCGOVERN: Well, that may be an outcome. But if Correa approves his asylum request, there are ways to extradite people from embassies, as well as from countries. **Witness the fact that we were able to extradite, so to speak, hostages from our embassy, besieged as it was, in Tehran way back when.**

So what my fear really is is that with the potential for mischief in the next coming days, we have ways — "we have our ways of dealing vis zees folks", okay? Now, nobody's going to drop a hellfire missile from a drone on the Ecuadorian Embassy, but think of what happened to British biologist and UN inspector David Kelly. Now, he committed suicide right after he divulged very, very important secrets about the hoax that was represented as WMD in Iraq — very, very suspicious circumstances. Most British that I talk to believe he was assassinated by the CIA or FBI equivalent. Now, what is the potential that the car going to Heathrow or whatever could be messed with, or that in some other way Assange could be dealt with, so to speak, in a way that most civilized countries would not even contemplate? The potential is there.

JAY: Well, that's — I guess that's kind of speculative at this point.

MCGOVERN: Oh, it is, yeah. Well —

JAY: But the bottom line here is is that it's — Ecuador does not seem to be in a mood to concede on this. But they haven't made an official determination yet.

MCGOVERN: No, but it's supposed to come pronto. And if that means soon, then that will be a good thing, because, you know, the British are still holding their nose from the High Court decision. This is not the Great Britain of great democratic and legal tradition. **And it was clearly a political decision to surrender Assange to the tender mercies of the Swedes**, who, by the way, have no provision for bail, keep people in prison before they're tried, and could keep him there forever — worse still, extradite him to the United States, where we believe an indictment already exists.

Now, what happened to Bradley Manning, the so-called leaker to Assange? We know what treatment he got. If I were Assange, I certainly would be very worried about being extradited to the United States on the pretext of some sexual indiscretions, allegations of sexual harassment or whatever, brought by two women who decided after these encounters that they would move this way. **The CIA is very, very active in Stockholm, as well as in Quito**, and we'll have to see how this plays out. But it'll be very interesting to see if Correa stands up to this. And there's a lot of support in Latin America for a person who would....

DISCLAIMER: Please note that transcripts for The Real News Network are typed from a recording of the program. TRNN cannot guarantee their complete accuracy.

[Video](#)

Live Blog: Assange requests political asylum from Ecuador (Day 4)

WL Central
2012-06-22

[UPDATE: 17:40 BST] There is still no indication of when Ecuador will make it's decision on whether or not to grant Julian Assange political asylum. [Democracy Now!](#) and RT's [The Big Picture](#) reported on the latest:

@RTLONDONBureau and @SarahFirth_RT have been tweeting from outside the Ecuadorian Embassy. WikiLeaks spokesman Kristinn Hrafnsson visited again today, John Pilger, journalist and friend of Mr Assange. Supporters continue holding a vigil outside the embassy.

Many articles have been coming out in support of Mr Assange's decision to seek asylum. James McEnteer, an author who lives in Quito, says "[Come to Ecuador, Julian!](#)" while journalist Ron Ridenour at Dissident Voice tells his readers to "[Unite with Julian Assange](#)". And [an article in OpEdNews](#) explains "Why Americans Support Julian Assange and his Quest for Asylum in Ecuador".

While Mr Assange has been at the Embassy, the Progetto Winston Smith organisation awarded him "for his exceptional dedication to the promotion of transparency and public disclosure in the interest of civil society and human rights".

An [article at Washington Post](#) from the editorial board, insinuating that Ecuador would face dire economic difficulties were it to accept Mr Assange into asylum:

There is one potential check on Mr. Correa's ambitions. The U.S. "empire" he professes to despise happens to grant Ecuador (which uses the dollar as its currency) special trade preferences that allow it to export many goods duty-free. A full third of Ecuadoran foreign sales (\$10 billion in 2011) go to the United States, supporting some 400,000 jobs in a country of 14 million people. Those preferences come up for renewal by Congress early next year. If Mr. Correa seeks to appoint himself America's chief Latin American enemy and Julian Assange's protector between now and then, it's not hard to imagine the outcome.

[Why all the fuss if, as has been claimed, the U.S. is not interested in Assange? --A.B.]

Greens Senator Scott Ludlam [asked the Australian Government](#) to explain its statements denouncing WikiLeaks. Watch the video below.

[UPDATE: 06:45 BST] I4U News put out a [collection of photos](#) related to Julian Assange's application for asylum. The photos include pictures of WikiLeaks staff and supporters outside the Ecuadorian Embassy and a photo of activists in Ecuador demonstrating in Quito (pictured below).

Image

In the Washington Post poll about whether Julian Assange should receive asylum, the

percentage of "yes" voters has constantly gone up. It **currently stands that 85% of people believe Mr Assange should be allowed to leave Britain for asylum in Ecuador.**

[UPDATE: 05:30 BST] RT America went over the many [assassination threats](#) from U.S. political figures directed toward Julian Assange....

Professor of International Law Donald Rothwell [was interviewed](#) about Mr Assange's application for asylum, saying, if his application is granted, he may not have diplomatic status under the Vienna Convention that could get him to an airport in an Ecuadorian Embassy car....

[UPDATE: 03:10 BST] Lawyer and human rights activist Kellie Tranter [wrote an article](#) detailing why Julian Assange's decision to seek asylum from Ecuador shouldn't be so surprising. She gives reasons why Ecuador is a good choice and the effects that WikiLeaks cables have had on the country. She also comments on the lack of support Australia has provided to Mr Assange.

A letter written by Australian journalist Austin Mackell was read at the recent rally for Julian Assange in Sydney. Here is an excerpt:

I would like to start once more by saying how honoured I am that the organisers sought to include my sentiments in today's events, and for the continuous support I have received from so many of those who also fight for Assange and Wikileaks.

For those of you unfamiliar with my case, I am an Australian journalist who was arrested in Mahalla, a textile town outside of Cairo, while trying to interview a union leader. My colleagues and I were held for a total of 56 hours by the police, the state security services and military intelligence, as well as a few hours in the care of the general prosecutor's office, where we were charged with inciting vandalism. Specifically it is alleged we promised to give money to children if they threw rocks at a police station. The charges carry a maximum penalty of seven years in prison. Four months has passed without a decision about whether to set a trial date or let us go. While embassy staff have done all they can without leadership from Canberra, the Australian government is yet to speak out or act on my behalf.

It is my belief that one reason for their reluctance, is that by acting on my behalf, they would be setting their failure to act on Assange in too sharp a contrast. It is a reminder, one that should be heeded by the Australian press in particular, that giving up on the freedom of one, not only morally, but also practically, compromises the freedom of all.

The full letter is available at [Austin Mackell's website](#).

A public forum on "WikiLeaks, Assange, & Democracy" will be held at the Coombs Theatre, A.N.U., Canberra, June 27 at 7PM. Speakers include Christine Assange, Greens Senator Scott Ludlam, Crikey journalist Bernard Keane, historian Humphrey McQueen, former Guantanamo detainee David Hicks, and human rights & social justice advocate Aloysia Brooks. The event will be chaired by former SBS World News presenter Mary Kostakidis. A [live-stream will be available](#) via the Support Assange and WikiLeaks

Coalition.

[UPDATE: 01:58 BST] A statement of support by Phillip Adams was read at the Sydney rally for Julian Assange:

Rupert Murdoch used to be Australia's most famous/notorious media identity on the international stage. A little while ago, he was pushed off the pedestal by Julian Assange, with News Ltd eclipsed by WikiLeaks. We're dealing with two very different success stories and degrees of notoriety. Many of us find the situation amusing, if it wasn't so damned serious. Rupert, of course, can look after himself, but Assange needs our ongoing help and concern. How sad that Julian had to seek asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy. But then he'd find it hard to get any asylum in the Australian Embassy. Instead of an immense surge of Australian pride for Assange's contribution to what's left of democracy, we seem intent on aiding and abetting the U.S. in its attempts to ensnare him in their legal -- and I use the term 'legal' very loosely -- tentacles.

I first became aware of Julian's genius for creative subterfuge on Late Night Live many years ago when he was a most ingenious hacker. A little later he asked me to be the Australian representative on the advisory board of something called WikiLeaks and, impressed with the concept, I was delighted to agree. Over the years he's never asked me to advise him on anything, but let me advise him now, or at least repeat what I've said to him and about him on a number of recent programs. You, Julian Assange, are a remarkable person and your creation-- a sort of Freedom of Information service on a planetary scale -- has been of crucial importance in the endless struggle to keep our political leaders, and their military cohorts, under control. My advice to you? Keep you chin up. For every powerful enemy you have countless thousands of friends, as today's rally demonstrates.

A [petition \(in Spanish\)](#) has been created at Avaaz calling for Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa to accept Julian Assange's request for political asylum.

A massive rally in support of Julian Assange will be on the steps of the State Library in Melbourne, July 1 starting at 1PM. Speakers include Adam Bandt MP (deputy leader of the Australian Greens), Patrick O'Connor (SEP candidate), Lizzie O'Shea (human rights lawyer), Robbie Thorpe (indigenous activist), Mathew Daniels (founding member of WikiLeaks). Rap News will also be making a special live appearance.

RT covered [the latest news](#) in Julian Assange's request for asylum, with RT Web Producer Andrew Blake. Watch the segment below.

RT America also reported on [the latest events](#), with their London correspondent Sarah Firth:

[UPDATE: 00:50 BST] Gavin MacFadyen of the Bureau of Investigative Journalism gave an interview about Julian Assange's request for asylum in Ecuador. He mentions the good atmosphere he experienced at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, including the helpful staff. He contests claims that supporters are moving away from Mr Assange after his decision to seek asylum. He also discussed the hostile environment towards WikiLeaks and Mr Assange currently present in the U.S.

Read [the full interview](#) at Publica.

<http://wlcenral.org/asylum>



Supporters of Julian Assange demonstrated outside the Ecuadorian Embassy, where the Wikileaks founder has sought political asylum

Jemima Khan tells Julian Assange to stop hiding and face sex accusers

*Matt Blake
Mail Online (U.K.)
22 June 2012*

Jemima Khan has told Julian Assange to stop hiding from the Swedish authorities and face the sex allegations that await him. *[A very free rendition of what she actually said; see actual quote below, which includes an understanding of Assange's actions. —A.B.]*

The socialite and former wife of cricket star Imran Khan was among a host of wealthy supporters who put up tens of thousands of pounds to help the WikiLeaks founder meet his £240,000 bail following his arrest in 2010. But she now faces losing her money, which totaled £20,000, after he apparently breached his bail conditions by spending the past three nights holed up in London's Ecuadorian Embassy in an 11th-hour bid for political asylum.

Mr Assange, 40, is attempting to evade extradition to Sweden, where he faces accusations of raping a woman and sexually molesting and coercing another in Stockholm in 2010.

Khan said she thought Mr Assange should face the charges in Sweden against him 'I personally would like to see Assange confront the rape allegations in Sweden and the two women at the centre have a right to a response.'

However, she added: 'BUT there is no doubt that Assange has a real fear of being extradited to the US nor that the US gov is out to get WikiLeaks.'

Her plea came as Mr Assange accused Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard and the US ambassador to Australia of 'slimy rhetoric', and said he had received little consular assistance from his home country.

The authorities in Sweden want to extradite him to face trial on rape charges, which he has always denied.

He told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) that he had chosen against going to the Australian embassy after Australian Attorney-General Nicola Roxon refused 'reasonable requests' by his lawyer to be involved or intervene in his planned extradition to Sweden.

Branding it an 'effective declaration of abandonment', Mr Assange said: 'There is not a single matter of concern under which the Australian government, as represented by the Attorney-General, would ask other governments to be reasonable or just in this case.

'There are serious issues here, and they are being hidden by the slimy rhetoric coming out of the US ambassador to Australia, via Gillard and by the Foreign Minister— and that needs to stop.'

He walked into the Ecuadorian Embassy in London three nights ago, claiming political asylum and citing his human rights. Ecuador's President Rafael Correa said the South American nation would consider 'whether Julian Assange's life is at stake', before making the decision. It is expected to be made later today.

President Correa also said: 'We are analysing Julian Assange's asylum request in a very serious and responsible way. We can't give an official response until the analysis of his request is complete.'

There are currently no arrangements in place to provide him with safe passage out of the UK should he be granted asylum by the South American country.

Veteran journalist John Pilger said today that Mr Assange was hopeful that he will be able to leave Britain and start a new life in Ecuador. He has been given a 'comfortable room with a computer' and a TV inside the embassy where staff have been 'very hospitable', Mr Pilger said.

The journalist was speaking outside the Ecuadorian Embassy in Knightsbridge, where he spent over an hour with Mr Assange. He said that Mr Assange was 'in great spirits' and **busy preparing a document supporting his asylum bid, which he speculated could take up to a fortnight to prepare.**

He said: "He is in great spirits— he is in unusually good spirits. When I last saw him which was a few days ago he was not in such high spirits. He is very hopeful that this will resolve itself, that he will be granted political asylum in Ecuador and that he will be allowed to leave.

"What they are doing at the moment and what he is doing is putting together a major document of the threats against Julian Assange that have come mainly from the US. That is absolutely imperative for political asylum. The document will assess the threats

that have been made by major political figures in the US.”

Mr Pilger accused Ms Gillard of providing 'misinformation' about the support being provided to Mr Assange by his home country. He added: “I don't think he expects to face a breach of bail charge— this is an extraordinary situation. This is a man who has not been prosecuted with anything. He has not been charged or convicted of anything. He has spent more than 18 months under virtual house arrest, and he is a man who has the right to the presumption of innocence.

” don't know how long this will last. I think there is the expectation that something will happen in the next week or two.

“He has a room— the Ecuadorians have been very hospitable to him. He has a room, he is in there preparing these documents that are needed for the development of this political asylum case.

“It's not a big place— it's a fairly big room with a computer— it's a comfortable room. People are coming in and out. He looks pretty healthy to me.”

Mr Pilger would not confirm whether or not Assange has been given a bed in the embassy for his stay....

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2163098/Jemima-Khan-tells-Julian-Assange-stop-hiding-face-sex-accusers-Sweden.html>

Julian Assange asylum application may take time, says Ecuador president

Rafael Correa says officials will 'discuss with and seek the opinions of other countries' before decision is made

*Esther Addley
The Guardian
22 June 2012*

Ecuador's president has acknowledged the diplomatic and political minefield created by Julian Assange's application for asylum, and indicated that a decision on the WikiLeaks founder's appeal is likely to take longer than first thought.

Speaking to reporters in Quito, Rafael Correa said: "We are going to have to discuss with and seek the opinions of other countries. We don't wish to offend anyone, least of all a country we hold in such deep regard as the United Kingdom."

Once a decision is made, Correa said, "we can talk about safe passage and such things". The WikiLeaks founder requested asylum at the country's embassy in London on Tuesday, citing the UN declaration on human rights. He is on bail after losing the last of his appeals against extradition to Sweden to face allegations of sexual offences, but insists such a move could place him at greater risk of possible future prosecution by the United States over the WikiLeaks cable releases in 2010.

Ecuador's deputy foreign minister, Marco Albuja, said on Wednesday that the country would make a decision within 24 hours, but Correa said: "He [Assange] presented his reasons. We are going to verify them. **We will take the time necessary.** Ecuador is a country which defends the right to life. We have to see whether there is a threat to Julian Assange's life."

The president's comments are an acknowledgement of the scale of the problem with which lawyers, diplomats and government officials are grappling. While discussions between the country's ambassador, Ana Alban Mora, and Foreign Office officials on Wednesday were described as "cordial and constructive", British government sources have stressed that Assange, who is now in breach of his bail conditions, will be liable for immediate arrest should he step out of the front door of the embassy; **they know of no such protocols for negotiating "safe passage"**.

It has raised the prospect of a lengthy stay at the embassy for the Australian if he is offered asylum. Assange may for now have escaped a prison cell in Sweden (where, though he has not been charged, he can expect to be held on remand while under investigation over the alleged sex assaults), but for the time being, his home is a small office with makeshift sleeping facilities.

Ecuador's embassy consists only of the ambassador's office and a handful of other small rooms, according to those familiar with the layout. The WikiLeaks founder has supplied an approved list of associates who can visit him, according to the embassy; asked about his access to showers and food, a spokeswoman said: "We have everything for him here." **He is still wearing his electronic ankle tag.**

"He will stay until this matter is settled," said Kristinn Hrafnsson, WikiLeaks's spokesman, downplaying suggestions of an imminent judgment. "I don't get the feeling that they [embassy staff] are in a hurry to get rid of him," said Assange's Swedish lawyer, Per E Samuelsson. "He's welcome there." Both men have visited Assange, along with the journalist John Pilger and others.

In his interview on Thursday Assange told the Australian broadcaster ABC that he had sought asylum in London, rather than fighting any possible future extradition bid by the US from Sweden, because his remand status there would mean "my ability to exercise an asylum right would be at an end". No such application has been made or indicated by the US to date.

He accused the Crown Prosecution Service of "trying to cancel" the period of 14 days he understood he was entitled to, after the 28 June deadline for his extradition under British law, in which to appeal to the European court of human rights. **The CPS, which has acted on behalf of the Swedish prosecutor in the extradition proceedings, denied this.**

Vaughan Smith, Assange's former host and one of the suretors of his £240,000 bail payment, said even given the threat of arrest, there could be a way forward, with sufficient political pressure: "I believe that if he was to get political asylum there's a way out. We have to accept that we would then have a dissident. **Assange is a western dissident.**"

AB: 2012-06-22

Assange poängchans för president

Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assanges asylansökan ligger hos Ecuadors president Rafael Correa. Han anses *[av vem och på vilka grunder? --A.B.]* kunna ta politiska poänger genom att säga ja.

Ecuador tar sig den tid som behövs för att kontrollera Assanges uppgifter, betonade president Rafael Correa sent i onsdags från Brasilien, där han närvarar vid FN:s miljömöte Rio+20.

– Vi måste se om det föreligger ett hot mot Julian Assanges liv, sade Correa.

– Ecuador är ett land som förkastar förföljelse på ideologiska grunder.

I tisdags dök Assange, som Sverige har begärt överlämnad från Storbritannien, upp vid Ecuadors Londonambassad och sökte politisk asyl. Han hävdar att han riskerar att bli utlämnad till USA och där riskera dödsstraff.

– Asylansökan har inte med Sverige att göra. Detta handlar om en mycket allvarlig fråga i USA, säger Juian Assange via telefon till ABC (Australian Broadcasting).

Det är inte uteslutet att Ecuador beviljar honom en fristad, anser analytiker. Beslutet ligger hos presidenten Rafael Correa, som är starkt kritisk mot Washingtonregeringen. Fallet ger honom en möjlighet till nålstick mot USA. *[Ja, Correa är säkert ivrig att hitta på fler anledningar för USA att bli förbannat på honom. --A.B.]* Chansen att erbjuda skydd åt en person som många hyllar som en hjälte i det fria ordets tjänst kan också stärka korten för Correa, som själv anklagas för att inskränka pressfriheten i Ecuador genom sin kampanj mot oppositionsmedier. *[Han kan ju inte på allvar helt enkelt vilja erbjuda skydd. --A.B.]*

Skulle Assange få asyl i Ecuador blir det svårt för det svenska rättsväsendet att få tag på honom, då Sverige och Ecuador saknar utlämningsavtal. Ecuadors ambassadör i London, Ana Albán, signalerade dock vid ett möte med brittiska ministrar att landet inte avser att "störa de brittiska och svenska staternas rättsliga processer", skriver tidningen Hoy. Under fredagskvällen inväntade Ecuador information från de svenska myndigheterna, uppgav en talesperson för Wikileaks.

Det var i november 2010 som Julian Assange efterlystes av Sverige, misstänkt för en våldtäkt och sexuellt ofredande. Han greps *[han frivilligt anmälde sig--A.B.]* senare i Storbritannien där han sedan dess suttit i husarrest.

Efter en lång juridisk långbänk slog högsta instans i Storbritannien i juni 2012 slutgiltigt fast att Assange ska överlämnas till Sverige.

Den 19 juni 2012 tog sig Assange till Ecuadors ambassad i London och sökte politisk asyl.

• Carina Bergfeldt

Moore, Glover, Stone, Greenwald, Wolf Urge Correa to Grant Asylum to Assange

*Submitted by Megan Iorio
WL Central
22 June 2012*

Dear President Correa,

We are writing to urge you to grant political asylum to Julian Assange.

As you know, British courts recently struck down Mr. Assange's appeal against extradition to Sweden, where he is not wanted on criminal charges, but merely for questioning. Mr. Assange has repeatedly made clear he is willing to answer questions relating to accusations against him, but in the United Kingdom. But the Swedish government insists that he be brought to Sweden for questioning. This by itself, as Swedish legal expert and former Chief District Prosecutor for Stockholm Sven-Erik Alhem testified, is "unreasonable and unprofessional, as well as unfair and disproportionate."

We believe Mr. Assange has good reason to fear extradition to Sweden, as there is a strong likelihood that once in Sweden, he would be imprisoned, and then likely extradited to the United States.

As U.S. legal expert and commentator Glenn Greenwald recently noted, were Assange to be charged in Sweden, he would be imprisoned under "very oppressive conditions, where he could be held incommunicado," rather than released on bail. Pre-trial hearings for such a case in Sweden are held in secret, and so the media and wider public, Greenwald notes, would not know how the judicial decisions against Mr. Assange would be made and what information would be considered.

The Washington Post has reported that the U.S. Justice Department and Pentagon conducted a criminal investigation into "whether WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange violated criminal laws in the group's release of government documents, including possible charges under the Espionage Act." Many fear, based on documents released by Wikileaks, that the U.S. government has already prepared an indictment and is waiting for the opportunity to extradite Assange from Sweden.

The U.S. Justice Department has compelled other members of Wikileaks to testify before a grand jury in order to determine what charges might be brought against Mr. Assange. The U.S. government has made clear its open hostility to Wikileaks, with high-level officials even referring to Mr. Assange as a "high-tech terrorist," and seeking access to the Twitter account of Icelandic legislator Birgitta Jónsdóttir due to her past ties to Wikileaks.

Were he charged, and found guilty under the Espionage Act, Assange could face the death penalty.

Prior to that, the case of Pfc. Bradley Manning, the U.S. soldier accused of providing U.S. government documents to Wikileaks, provides an illustration of the treatment that

Assange might expect while in custody. Manning has been subjected to repeated and prolonged solitary confinement, harassment by guards, and humiliating treatment such as being forced to strip naked and stand at attention outside his cell. These are additional reasons that your government should grant Mr. Assange political asylum.

We also call on you to grant Mr. Assange political asylum because the “crime” that he has committed is that of practicing journalism. He has revealed important crimes against humanity committed by the U.S. government, most notably in releasing video footage from an Apache helicopter of a 2007 incident in which the U.S. military appears to have deliberately killed civilians, including two Reuters employees. Wikileaks’ release of thousands of U.S. State Department cables revealed important cases of U.S. officials acting to undermine democracy and human rights around the world.

Because this is a clear case of an attack on press freedom and on the public's right to know important truths about U.S. foreign policy, and because the threat to his health and well-being is serious, we urge you to grant Mr. Assange political asylum.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Michael Moore, Film Director

Danny Glover, Film Director

Oliver Stone, Film Director

Naomi Wolf, Author

Glenn Greenwald, Constitutional lawyer and columnist, Salon.com

Chris Hedges, Journalist

Coleen Rowley, retired FBI agent and former Minneapolis Division Legal Counsel, one of three “whistleblowers” named Time Magazine’s “Persons of the Year” in 2002

Ann Wright, US Army Colonel (Retired) and former US diplomat

Ray McGovern, Former U.S. Army officer and longtime senior CIA analyst (ret.)

Thomas Drake, NSA Whistleblower, Bill of Rights Activist

Linda Lewis, Board Member, Whistleblower Support Fund

Kent Spriggs, Guantanamo habeas counsel

Jesselyn Radack, National Security & Human Rights Director,
Government Accountability Project

Mark Weisbrot, Co-Director, Center for Economic and Policy Research

Medea Benjamin, Cofounder, Global Exchange

Kathy Kelly, Co-coordinator, Voices for Creative Nonviolence

Mark Johnson, Executive Director, Fellowship of Reconciliation

Denis J. Halliday, UN Assistant Secretary-General 1994-98. National of Ireland

Leslie Cagan, co-founder, United for Peace and Justice

Russ Wellen, Foreign Policy in Focus

James Early, Board Member, Institute for Policy Studies

Jim Naureckas, Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting

Sam Hussein, Director, Washington Office of the Institute for Public Accuracy

Robert Naiman, Policy Director, Just Foreign Policy

Jane Hirschmann Jews Say No! New York, organizer, U.S. Boat to Gaza

Richard Levy, lawyer, passenger, U.S. Boat to Gaza

Helaine Meisler, Orton-Gillingham Learning Specialist,

Helaine Meisler Learning Center, Woodstock, New York

Laurie Arbeiter, Artist/ Activist, WE WILL NOT BE SILENT

Mayo C. Toruño, Professor and Chair, Economics Department

California State University, San Bernardino
Julio Huato, Associate Professor of Economics, St. Francis College
Michael Brun, Visiting Assistant Professor, Dept. of Economics, Illinois State Univ.
Dana Frank, Professor, Department of History, University of California, Santa Cruz
Adrienne Pine, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, American University
Miguel Tinker Salas, Professor, Latin American History, Pomona College
Steve Ellner, Professor of Political Science, Johns Hopkins University /
Universidad de Oriente, Venezuela
Marc Becker, Professor of Latin American History, Truman State University
Dr Francisco Dominguez, Head of Centre for Brazilian and Latin American Studies,
Middlesex University, London, UK
Peter Hallward, Professor of Philosophy, Kingston University London
Doug Hertzler, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Eastern Mennonite University
Carolyn Eisenberg, Professor of US Foreign Policy, Hofstra University
Vijay Prashad, Professor of International Studies, Trinity College, USA
T.M. Scruggs, Professor Emeritus, University of Iowa
Ellen Schrecker, Professor of History, Yeshiva University
Antonia Darder, Leavey Endowed Chair of Ethics and Moral Leadership,
Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles
Demetra Evangelou, Professor, Purdue University
Gilbert G. Gonzalez, Professor Emeritus, University of California, Irvine
Renate Bridenthal, Professor (retired), City University of New York
A. Belden Fields, Professor Emeritus, Political Science, University of Illinois
C. G. Estabrook, Visiting Professor (retired), University of Illinois
Carol Murry, Doctor of Public Health, Hawaii
Ellen Barfield, Veterans For Peace
Libor Von Schönau, OccupyWallStreet Legal, New York
Gar W. Lipow, journalist, member of Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace,
author of Solving the Climate Crisis through Social Change

[list in formation]

<http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/node/1257>

Live Blog: Assange requests political asylum from Ecuador (Day 5)

WL Central
2012-06-23

[UPDATE: 16:20 BST] Ecuadorian Ambassador to Britain Anna Alban is due to fly back to Quito to discuss the matter of Julian Assange's political asylum.

With further discussion scheduled, it is unlikely we will see a decision from Ecuador on Mr Assange's application for asylum for at least a few days....

[UPDATE: 10:15 BST] Filmmaker John Pilger gave a very [brief comment](#) outside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London after visiting Julian Assange: "He's in great spirits... unusually good spirits."

Green Left Weekly published [an editorial](#): "Assange is right to seek asylum".

Graphic artist @SomersetBean has created series of posters in support of Julian Assange and his decision to seek asylum. One set, entitled "Not Running, Fighting", explains extradition facts of the U.S., Sweden, and Australia. He has also created a number of large placards with various slogans and the "Justice for Assange" website.

Vaughan Smith was [on CNN](#) discussing Mr Assange's decision to seek asylum, the criticism of Ecuador's free speech record, the campaign against Mr Assange, and his status as a Western dissident.

[UPDATE: 2012-06-23 02:32 BST] Ecuador recalled its ambassador to Britain to discuss what to do about WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange. President Rafael Correa stated, "We are calling our ambassador back for consultations because this is a very serious matter."

... Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa made the following statement in an interview published today: "In Ecuador, if someone had done one hundredth of what has been done to Assange, they would be called dictators and oppressors."

... Julian Assange is "Truthdigger of the Week". [The article](#) states: "Few people have so fully devoted their lives to exposing abuses of power as WikiLeaks' founder Julian Assange". Regarding his asylum application, it says the following:

Even though Assange has broken no international law in seeking asylum from Ecuador, some, including New Statesman columnist David Allen Green, have portrayed him as a fugitive on the run. Assange has inspired the hatred of many since he first became internationally known in 2010. **Much of that animosity has come from journalists and news organizations who have failed to do what Assange has done so spectacularly in the short time WikiLeaks has been operating: Make people and organizations who do bad things in secret think twice about doing them at all, because someone devoted to truth and transparency might expose them.**

Green Left Weekly [published "the real story"](#) behind Ecuador's support for media freedom.

When Julian Assange sought asylum on June 19, the question many WikiLeaks supporters asked was: "Why the Ecuadorian embassy?"

The simple answer is because the Ecuadorian government has been one of the strongest supporters of WikiLeaks, which reflects its strong stance in defence of media and information freedom.

Australian Greens Senator [Scott Ludlam says](#) Australia has given up on Julian Assange. He discusses the lack of assistance they have provided, while evidence builds of U.S. plans to prosecute him.

<http://wlcentral.org/asylum>

Assange in limbo with asylum decision still pending

Lisa Millar
ABC (Australia)
June 23, 2012

ELIZABETH JACKSON: Julian Assange's future is no clearer this morning with the WikiLeaks founder continuing to work on his asylum bid and Ecuador still silent on whether it'll approve it. But lawyers continue to debate what Assange's asylum bid means and what chance the 40-year-old Australian has of succeeding. Lisa Millar reports from London

LISA MILLAR: With Ecuador preparing to take its time on this request Julian Assange is heading into his fourth night within the embassy confines. One of his two lawyers in Sweden, Thomas Olsson, is concerned opponents there are using this asylum bid to their advantage.

THOMAS OLSSON: **And they try to use it to make the Swedish opinion hostile to Mr Assange because that kind of argument also has the assumption that he is guilty to the charges.**

LISA MILLAR: He's accused the Swedish media of being hostile to the WikiLeaks founder but doesn't think if he ends up in Sweden his chances of a fair hearing have been damaged.

THOMAS OLSSON: I'm very convinced that Mr Assange has the law on his side. If Mr Assange comes to Sweden I'm sure he will leave Sweden as a free man.

LISA MILLAR: Do you not share his concern that if comes to Sweden he may end up being extradited to the US?

THOMAS OLSSON: The risk that Americans will apply for an extradition sometimes in the future or substantial there are grand jury proceedings going on in the United States and several spokesman of the official United States has said that Mr Assange harmed the American security interests. **So obviously there are powerful forces in the United States that want him charged. And if it goes to that point they will also try to get him extradited. So I think Mr Assange has all reasons to fear that that would happen.**

LISA MILLAR: As the lawyers and media pore over the intricacies of international law, extradition expert Julian Knowles is convinced Julian Assange has made a bad call.

JULIAN KNOWLES: I think this is a publicity stunt really. I think that it's pretty obvious and always has been pretty obvious that this gambit will fail. And I think he has almost literally backed himself into a corner because it will be very difficult, as I say, for him even if the Ecuadorians grant him asylum. It will be very difficult if not impossible for him to actually leave the United Kingdom.

LISA MILLAR: Even if he is granted asylum Scotland Yard plans to arrest him for breaking bail conditions.

JULIAN KNOWLES: This case has really rather spun out of control and become rather surreal. He pursued his case up to the highest level, UK Supreme Court, as he was is

entitled to do because he raised quite important issues. He's lost now and the proper thing to do would be for him to return to Sweden and to face trial for the accusations of rape that have been made against him by two separate women.

Let's not lose sight of the fact this case is not about WikiLeaks, it's not about freedom of expression, it's not about rendition. It is about the fact that two women claim that Julian Assange raped them in hotel rooms on separate occasions. And one would imagine with those sorts of allegations having been made against him, like anybody else he would want to clear his name even if he is genuinely innocent of the allegation.

[Some expert: The Swedish case is not the reason for Assange's application for asylum; the sexual encounters were by invitation to the two women's apartments; there is only one charge of "minor" rape; the charges were made by the police "on behalf of" the women, the younger of which became so upset upon learning of those charges that she was unable to complete her interview with the police and left the station without approving the written record of what was said. --A.B.]

ELIZABETH JACKSON: Extradition legal specialist, Julian Knowles, ending that report from Lisa Millar

Audio at: <http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2012/s3531732.htm>

Are Assange's fears justified?

*Philip Dorling
Sydney Morning Herald
June 23, 2012*

THERE has been a predictable storm of media commentary following Julian Assange's dramatic bid to seek political asylum at Ecuador's London embassy. Many commentators have been dismissive of Assange's claims he is at risk of politically-motivated United States espionage charges.

It has been repeatedly claimed there is "no evidence" of any US prosecution and that the WikiLeaks founder is only engaged in a desperate bid to avoid extradition to Sweden to face questioning about sexual assault allegations.

Prominent among the hostile press is The Guardian, the British newspaper that profited handsomely from Assange's decision to share with it an enormous bounty of leaked US military and diplomatic documents.

Advertisement: Story continues below

James Ball, who briefly served as a WikiLeaks staffer before securing a job with The Guardian and emerging as one of Assange's persistent critics, wrote of the WikiLeaks publisher this week: "Is the US really trying to extradite him? . . . There's been no evidence to support this theory, despite it being the basis of Assange's bid for asylum."

According to Ball: "Assange has spent so long conflating allegations centred around his private life on a few days in Sweden with WikiLeaks' wider battles he's come to believe his own spin."

This criticism is supported by the repeated statements of the Australian government — Prime Minister Julia Gillard, Foreign Minister Bob Carr and Attorney-General Nicola Roxon— that they have seen "no evidence" the US government has or intends to charge Assange with any offence.

Against this background it is reasonable to ask just what evidence there is of a US desire and indeed intention to prosecute Assange.

The short answer is, a great deal of evidence — from the public statements of the US government, Australian diplomatic reports released to Fairfax Media under freedom-of-information laws, and disclosures in the pre-court martial proceedings concerning US Army private Bradley Manning who faces 22 charges, including the most serious one of "aiding the enemy" by disclosing classified military information. There has never been that much secrecy about the US government's determination to pursue WikiLeaks.

On November 29, 2010, the day after WikiLeaks and its media partners began releasing more than 250,000 State Department cables, US Attorney-General Eric Holder told a Washington press conference that the Justice Department was pursuing "an active, ongoing criminal investigation" into WikiLeaks. **"This is not saber-rattling," Mr Holder said. "To the extent that we can find anybody who was involved in the breaking of American law . . . they will be held responsible."**

It is now a matter of public record that the FBI's WikiLeaks probe commenced with the arrest of Private Manning in May 2010 after he had allegedly confessed to former computer hacker turned FBI informant Adrian Lamo that he had leaked classified documents.

The Manning-Lamo online chat transcripts published by Wired magazine include Manning's alleged disclosure that he was "uploading [classified US military information] to a crazy white-haired aussie who can't seem to stay in one country very long . . . crazy white haired dude = Julian Assange."

There has been strong bipartisan support in the US for action against Assange. On December 2, 2010, the chair and deputy chair of the US Senate Intelligence Committee, Democrat Dianne Feinstein and Republican Christopher Bond, wrote to Mr Holder to declare "Mr Assange's conduct is espionage . . . we urge that he be prosecuted under the Espionage Act".

Australian diplomatic cables released to Fairfax Media have revealed that as early as December 7, 2010, the Washington embassy confirmed the Justice Department was conducting an "active and vigorous inquiry into whether Julian Assange can be charged under US law, most likely the 1917 Espionage Act".

US officials told the Australian embassy "the WikiLeaks case was unprecedented both in its scale and nature".

After working contacts inside and outside the US government, the embassy reported on December 22, 2010, that media reports that a secret grand jury had been convened in Alexandria, Virginia, to consider evidence arising from the WikiLeaks investigation were "likely true". The embassy provided Canberra with regular updates through 2011

including reporting on the issuing of subpoenas to compel WikiLeaks associates to appear before the grand jury and Justice Department efforts to access Twitter and other internet accounts as "casting the net beyond Assange to see if any intermediaries had been involved in communications between Assange and Manning".

In December last year, the embassy sent a representative to attend all seven days of Private Manning's pre-trial hearing. The embassy's report focused on the prosecution's assertions that Manning had leaked to WikiLeaks "and, specifically, to Julian Assange". These allegations included that Manning "indiscriminately and systematically" data-mined classified US databases using WikiLeaks' "Most Wanted List" as a guide, that there was direct contact between Manning and Assange, and that Assange may have actively assisted Manning's efforts to extract data.

Manning is alleged to have unsuccessfully tried to delete chat logs recording exchanges between himself and an interlocutor using a chat address the prosecution claims was associated with Assange. On March 8, 2010, Manning allegedly asked the interlocutor's help in cracking a password so that he could log onto a classified computer anonymously.

Manning: "Any good at IM-Hash cracking?"

Interlocutor: "Yes . . . We have rainbow tables for LM [referring to a tool used to decipher passwords]."

Manning then sent a string of numbers to the interlocutor who replied: "Passed it to our guys."

Later Manning also allegedly told the interlocutor that: "I'm throwing everything I got on JTF-GTMO [Joint Task Force — Guantanamo Bay] at you now . . . Should take a while to get up though."

The interlocutor allegedly replied: "OK, great . . . ETA?"

Other information revealed in Manning's pre-trial proceedings indicates that the FBI WikiLeaks investigation has targeted at least seven civilians including the "founders, owners, or managers of WikiLeaks" for alleged offences including espionage.

Lead prosecution counsel Major Ashden Fein recently confirmed to the military court that the Manning case is only a small part of a much larger FBI investigation. The FBI's file, Major Fein said, was "42,135 pages or 3475 documents" not including grand jury testimony. Private Manning, according to the prosecution, accounts for only 8741 pages or 636 different documents in the FBI's investigation file — most of which is classified.

Some commentators this week have asserted that a successful prosecution of Assange is "impossible" and that his fears are "quite unjustified" because the First Amendment free speech protections of the US Constitution would protect him as a journalist engaged in publication.

However, many US legal experts have concluded a prosecution case could at least be constructed and pressed in spite of strong First Amendment arguments.

Here it is important to understand that the likely issue would not be WikiLeaks act of publication, but rather the circumstances of WikiLeaks' receipt of classified information and any advice or assistance Assange allegedly provided to Manning.

If the US does eventually seek Assange's extradition and proceed to prosecute him, such an action will have its political downside.

Philip Crowley, who resigned as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's spokesman after publicly questioning the harsh conditions of Manning's imprisonment, observed last December that "[a] prosecution of Julian Assange would come at a tremendous cost to the interests and values that [Americans] hold dear" and "carry some serious reputational costs" for the US government's image.

This may well be something President Barack Obama's administration would prefer to be held over until after the November presidential election. The Justice Department has probably been content to let Assange's Swedish legal issues play themselves out, before taking a final decision on whether and in what circumstances to seek the WikiLeaks publisher's extradition.

A US prosecution would also come at some political cost to the Australian government. It's said there's no smoke without fire. There's a lot of smoke. The Gillard government says they see no evidence of any fire. **It is hard to avoid the conclusion that they are wilfully blind.**

But for the moment, both Washington and Canberra, are probably not that unhappy to have Assange holed up in the tiny Ecuadorian embassy in London.

Confronted with very limited choices, Assange has highlighted the danger that he may be subject to a politically-motivated US prosecution. However, this appears to have come at some cost in public perceptions of his reputation and credibility.

And Assange is unlikely to travel to Ecuador — for many an incongruous haven for a free press advocate *[a glib comment in an otherwise accurate article --A.B.]*. The British police will remain ready to arrest him if he steps out of the embassy doors. Sweden and indeed the United States remain more likely ultimate destinations.

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/are-assanges-fears-justified-20120622-20u6i.html>

DN: 2012-06-23

Svenskt möte med Ecuador om Assange

Ecuadors ambassadör i Stockholm har träffat två tjänstemän från justitiedepartementet för att informera sig om det svenska rättsläget i fallet Julian Assange.

I tisdags dök Wikileaksgrundaren upp på Ecuadors ambassad i London och sökte politisk asyl. Där är han utom räckhåll för den brittiska polisen och kan inte heller utlämnas till Sverige som efterlyst honom som misstänkt för våldtäkt och sexuellt ofredande.

Assange förklarar sin asylansökan med att han fruktar att bli överlämnad från Sverige till USA. Wikileaks avslöjade hundratusentals amerikanska militär- och diplomatrapporter.

Hans nya krumbukt kom sedan Storbritanniens högsta domstol den 14 juni avslog ett överklagande om utlämning till Sverige.

Redan 2010 erbjöd Ecuadors regering Assange en tillflyktsort och talade uppskattande om Wikileaks. Nu, med Assange på halsen, är tonfallet mjukare.

– Vi vill inte förolämpa någon, säger landets vänsterpresident Rafael Correa.

Före beslutet om Assange beviljas asyl eller inte, har Ecuador begärt information från Sverige, Storbritannien och USA.

I Stockholm hölls ett möte i torsdags **på den ecuadorianska ambassadens initiativ**, bekräftar Anna Erhardt, pressekreterare hos justitieminister Beatrice Ask, för TT:

– Vi har förklarat hur det svenska rättsväsendet fungerar och hur en europeisk arresteringsorder fungerar.

Närmare vad som avhandlades på mötet vill Anna Erhardt inte kommentera, till exempel om Ecuador frågat om risken för en svensk överlämning till USA. Juridiska experter har hittills bedömt det scenariot som praktiskt taget uteslutet. *[Inte alla -- och de "uteslutande" har grundat sina resonemang på lagens bokstav, utan att ta hänsyn till den viktiga politiska dimensionen. --A.B.]*

För Sveriges utrikesminister Carl Bildt kommer mötet som en överraskning, enligt Aftonbladet på nätet. När tidningen talade med honom på lördagen kände han inte till att det ägt rum.

– Det finns ju ingenting att diskutera i den frågan från min utgångspunkt, säger Bildt till aftonbladet.se.

På frågan om Sverige kontaktat Ecuador i ärendet svarar han:

– Nej, varför skulle vi göra det?

Först hette det att Ecuador skulle fatta asylbeslutet inom ett dygn. Men läget är tydligen skarpare än så. Nu har Ecuador kallat hem sin Londonambassadör för konsultation.

– Det här är en mycket allvarlig sak, konstaterar president Correa.

• *Lars Pedersen/TT*

JULIAN ASSANGES ASYLANSÖKAN

Ecuador kallade till möte med Sverige

► **Assange-fallet.** Ecuadors ambassadör i Stockholm träffade personal från justitiedepartementet för att få information om svenska rättsväsendet.

”Har ingenting att göra med Sverige”

► **Vill ha asyl i Ecuador.** Allt handlar om att Wikileaksgrundaren fruktar dödsstraff i USA, säger säger han i en australisk radiointervju.



Foto: AP

► **Presidenten avvaktande.** Kan plocka politiska poänger.

► **Polisen i Storbritannien:** Julian Assange kommer att gripas.  84

Assange, Ecuador, Rape, and Sweden — 1

Oscar Swartz
June 21, 2012

It was a huge surprise that Julian Assange suddenly checked into the Embassy of República del Ecuador in London. The twitter reaction from leading Swedish media personalities, in the midst of a football match, was predictably myopic— and as nationalistic as football.

The picture that came into their minds was that of an Australian brute who was invited to Sweden, raped a couple Swedish women and now applied yet another stunt tried to escape those allegations.

There are so many misunderstandings in the Assange case that someone must put the picture straight. I will divide this in 2 or maybe 3 blog postings to argue a few important points:

- 1) Julian Assange is regarded as an enemy of the United States. The Swedish case is a nuisance compared to that.
- 2) No Swedish woman has actually claimed that she was raped by Julian Assange.
- 3) Even if Assange would be convicted in Sweden he would not serve any time.

With that knowledge I think it would be logical that the Ecuador strategy has to do with the U.S., not Sweden per se. I develop point 1 in this posting. The others will follow.

1) Assange is regarded as an enemy of the United States of America.

Don't make any mistake about it. The United States of America is ruthless when it comes to "national security", as defined by themselves. The revenge will come. They collect information from all the internet companies they can, they pressure Bradley Manning with absolutely inhuman methods. There is a Grand Jury.

Could the US ask the UK to have Julian Assange extradited now? Sure, if they have built the case already, which is not certain. But that would complicate things. Sweden wants him also. The United States are very patient. **I would think that the easiest way to proceed from a US perspective is to let the Swedish case have its course first. As long as Julian Assange is nailed later in order to send a message to the world: Don't mess with the USA!**

So what about the legal arguments that the UK would have to consent to an extradition to the US if he is transferred to Sweden? I have not researched this in detail but this is an irrelevant consideration. Maybe it applies formally to some limited time period when Assange is held by Swedish authorities as a consequence of an extradition from the UK. I will show in a follow-up posting that Julian Assange would be very quickly set free in Sweden, no matter if he is convicted or not even prosecuted. Even if convicted he would immediately be released. **He would then be a free man on Swedish ground. I don't see that the UK could possibly have any influence on Swedish-US bilateral dealings at that time.**

Sweden has delivered what the US wants earlier. Indeed, Sweden has instituted general wiretapping of all internet and phone traffic that pass Sweden's borders, in order to give that intelligence data to the US for something else, maybe a promise to intervene if the Russians come once again. Sweden is the country for Russian transit data since a vast proportion of their communications cables pass Sweden. We hardly have any military at home anymore. Our few troops are in Afghanistan to show that we are a reliable ally of the US without being a member of NATO.

Sweden raided the Pirate Bay at the request of USA. The mode was clear: Swedish authorities were flown to Washington, where they clearly stated that Sweden will obviously not break its own laws in Sweden to help the US. Instead they gave out very detailed instructions on what Sweden needed from American firms in order to initiate a big crack-down on The Pirate Bay. Wikileaks #cablegate cables later showed how Sweden consistently bows to demands from the USA. That piece was written by Pirate Party founder Rick Falkvinge.

Sweden is actually known and criticized for extra-judicial deportations when the concern is US national security.

I want to remind everyone of Rop Gonggrijp, the Dutch internet freedom activist. He held a keynote at the Chaos Communications Conference in Berlin in December 2010. **He was involved for some time in Wikileaks but opted out when he realized that he would become an enemy of the American state:**

I could have stuck around helping WikiLeaks also. They could probably have used me when they released the war diaries or these cables.

That did not happen. I guess I could make up all sorts of stories about how I disagreed with people or decisions, but the truth is that in the period that I helped out, the possible ramifications of WikiLeaks managed to scare the bejezus out of me. Courage is contagious, my ass.

I wish Julian and his people well, but I can't live a life out of a backpack while on the run. Not to mention the fact that Julian has better hair and does much better soundbites.

I [wrote about it](#) in detail a long time ago. Focus on the Swedish sex case obfuscates the bigger issues here.

<http://swartz.typepad.com/texplorer/2012/06/assange-ecuador-rape-and-sweden-1.html>

Assange, Ecuador, Rape, and Sweden — 2

*Oscar Swartz
June 23, 2012*

I continue my posting on the misunderstandings of the Assange case. In my preceding posting I argued that the Ecuador strategy is not an attempt to avoid the Swedish sex case. Swedish media is myopic and self-obsessed. Anyone who reads my fresh and well-researched book *A Brief History of Swedish Sex* will understand how any sexual act involves a high amount of politics in today's Sweden and how the Swedish state, based on an extremist view of sexuality, can spin out of control.

Tragically, Swedish media is not a mitigating force. It willingly participates in creating scandals and injuring people, based on such views on sexuality, as is clear from my book....

No Swedish woman has claimed that she was raped by Julian Assange.

If you read the police protocols you will see that the two Swedish women (AA = the Social Democrat that Assange stayed with, SW = the one-night stand admirer) wanted Assange to commit to tests for HIV and STDs, since they realized he was sleeping around a lot when they learned about each other.

There are witnesses who talked to AA and say the demand was that Assange take an HIV test. Otherwise they would go to the police and try to force him to. He said he didn't have time but seems to have realized that they meant it. When he consented they had however already gone to the police. Not to report rape but to simply tell their stories. None of them has ever claimed to have been raped by Julian Assange. *[They may have changed their stories under the pressure of events. --A.B.]*

So how could this become a national obsession for Sweden?

Once you tell a story of sexual behavior to the police they look for Sex Offences. As I show in my book there was a connection to Swedish domestic politics with an election

campaign. Based on the story that SW told the interrogating police officer (who was a party comrade and radical feminist friend of AA), the police notified the on-call Prosecutor. Based on a purely oral briefing by the police via phone she decided to seek Julian Assange for rape.

It seems that SW was quite shocked by this decision by the police and prosecutor. She had participated in sex play that ended with unprotected sex, and not objected according to her own account, but she was panically scared by sexually transmitted diseases and HIV. She never claimed to be raped but she wanted Assange to be tested. Suddenly the State sought him for a crime that normally carries a two year imprisonment as a minimum sentence. **As "the victim" there is nothing you can do. The State sees it as an important task to enforce its own view of sexual encounters,** independently of the people involved.

One day later a higher Chief Prosecutor read the interrogation protocol. She states that in the description of the sexual encounter where the police and a lower prosecutor found one count of "rape" there was no crime whatsoever committed. She says she believes the story that was told: "But the content of the interrogation does not support any claim that a crime has been committed"

Enter Claes Borgström. In Sweden virtually anyone who claims that someone else has committed some sexual offence gets a payed-for legal counsel by the state. S/he is supposed to help you go after the other party. The reverse of a defense attorney. Claes Borgström was a party comrade of AA, heavily involved in the election campaign, since he was the Gender Equality Spokesperson for the Social Democratic party. He would get a Ministerial post in the Government if they won. He applied to serve as the state-payd legal counsel for the two women and started running his own show. Borgström is a notorious radical feminist in Swedish politics, despised by many, loved by some. He has been running a war against men for years in Sweden and consistently picked fights, denouncing Swedish men as Taliban etc..

Borgström is the one who demanded that the Assange rape case be reopened after the Chief Prosecutor closed it. He appealed to a Head Prosecutor. Borgström himself seemed unsure whether what the women described could be seen as anything else than the weakest sexual offence category. I requested his application from the Court and I believe my book is the first and only place this document has been cited. **He wrote:**

"According to my evaluation the abuse of the injured parties have suffered should at least be labelled as sexual molestation, maybe also as graver sex crimes"

One of Borgström's ever repeated views on sexuality is that people don't understand when they are sexually abused. They have sex in ways that the state must take care of, against their wishes. Borgström commented to a newspaper when they pointed out that SW did not consider herself raped: "She is not a lawyer".

Borgström has demanded state propaganda campaigns to teach people when they have been subjected to a sex crime. In my book *A Brief History of Swedish Sex*, Borgström appears a lot. There are mindboggling citations from this man's writings. You will not believe your eyes!

So with Borgström at the rudder the case was turned into politics and became an important principle for the Swedish state. Sex is much more harmful to Swedes than

violence. In my book I show that some brief sexual touching is seen as a worse crime than kidnapping someone, keeping him locked-up and tortured for hours until he is unrecognizable to his own girlfriend, with injuries taking months to heal. Borgström is a co-architect behind this.

Assange is now wanted for questioning concerning "less aggravated rape" of SW— although she has never claimed that she was raped. There are also some lesser sexual offences that the Head Prosectuor picked out when she read the description of sexual encounters between AA and Assange. One of them concerns rubbing a penis against the backside of a person you previously had sex with.

My book does not go into details of the sex case. Rather, it puts the case in a context of vitriolic Swedish sexual politics.

Personally, when I read the interrogation protocols I see a man who is not particularly responsive to his sex partners and wants it his own way. This is not equivalent to being a rapist however, and no woman has claimed she was actually raped. **But I think it is quite likely Assange will be convicted of some offence in Sweden.**

There will be one more posting where I argue that Assange would not serve any time in Sweden, even if convicted of the most serious of his alleged sex offences, "less aggravated rape"..

<http://swartz.typepad.com/texplorer/2012/06/assange-ecuador-rape-and-sweden-2.html>

Bob Carr, in full flight from the facts on Assange

*Bernard Keane
Crikey
June 24, 2012*

Bob Carr appeared in *Insiders* this morning and discussed the Assange case. His words are worth examining closely. The transcript of his remarks is [here](#).

Carr makes some highly dubious or simply false assertions. One is that "there's a view that it would be easier for the US to extradite him from the UK than it would be from Sweden." Some do hold that view— I've encountered it on Twitter from angry opponents of Assange. But it's not a view held by anyone with credibility. The fact is that the temporary surrender mechanism that exists in a treaty between Sweden and United States is the key. The concern in the Assange camp has always been that temporary surrender may allow a rapid transfer of Assange from Sweden to the US with no due process or appeal rights. **That can't happen under the extradition agreements between the US and the UK.**

So if Carr is suggesting that it is credible to maintain that Assange may be safer from extradition to the US in Sweden than the UK, he's simply wrong. If he'd said that there's a view that temporary surrender comes with the same appeal rights and due process that regular extradition has, then he'd have been on far safer ground, because some credible lawyers do maintain (and I understand it's the DFAT view as well) that there's nothing special about temporary surrender compared to ordinary extradition

processes. **The only problem has been, Assange would be gambling on that issue with his life if he went to Sweden.**

Another of Carr's assertions (and it's one frequently made by WikiLeaks critics) is that WikiLeaks' release of American diplomatic material "is not like Daniel Ellsberg's Pentagon Papers which revealed huge American deception, huge deception by the American government of the American public. There's an amorality about what's been at work here; secrets being released for the sake of being released without inherent justification."

Well Minister, **Daniel Ellsberg would beg to differ. He has specifically rejected that claim: "That's just a cover for people who don't want to admit that they oppose any and all exposure of even the most misguided, secretive foreign policy. The truth is that EVERY attack now made on WikiLeaks and Julian Assange was made against me and the release of the Pentagon Papers at the time."**

Elsewhere, Ellsberg has said there are "fundamental similarities" between what Bradley Manning is alleged to have done and what he did. **And apparently Carr thinks the diplomatic cables and the Iraq and Afghan warlogs don't reveal deception by the US government. To take but two of the most egregious examples,** that must come as a shock to Americans and Australians who learnt their governments were privately far more pessimistic about the Afghan conflict than they were in public, and to Americans who didn't realise they were engaged in a military conflict in Yemen that had been conducted entirely in secret.

In any event, we now have a new line from the Gillard government on Wikileaks: it is "amoral" as well as "illegal". You'll recall that Julia Gillard called WikiLeaks "illegal" in 2010, only for the Australian Federal Police to directly contradict her mere days later. **The Prime Minister, however, has never retracted the claim.**

The substance of Carr's position, however, is the careful insistence that the Americans have not told the Australian government that they have any plans to extradite or otherwise harm Julian Assange and that therefore the only issue is consular support for Assange in his efforts to avoid extradition on sexual assault allegations to Sweden (the irony of course is that Carr was speaking after returning from Libya and his personal mission to try to extract an Australian lawyer from custody). **There's some very careful rhetoric here from the government, designed to give itself maximum cover.** "When I've raised it," Carr says, "and I think I have raised it on two occasions with US officials, I've received no hint that they've got a plan to extradite him to the US." **Carr even disputes the existence of a sealed indictment:**

"Barrie, there's **not the remotest evidence** that that's the case. There was one allegation that appeared somewhere of something called a sealed indictment. No US figure has confirmed that to us. I suppose you could argue that they wouldn't confirm it to us til the last moment."

This fiction can be maintained as long as the Obama Administration, or an incoming Romney Administration, does nothing publicly about Assange.

As Assange laid out carefully in his interview with the ABC on Friday morning, there is copious evidence on the public record of a US investigation into Assange. The evidence has emerged during the trial of Bradley Manning, evidence has come from

witnesses like David House who have been subpoenaed to testify before the grand jury pursuing Assange, evidence has come from the efforts of Twitter and Twitter account holders to fight subpoenas relating to the investigation.

The investigation is not specifically targeted at Bradley Manning, who is the defendant in a separate military trial process. It is not targeted at Swedish sexual assault allegations. It is targeted at WikiLeaks's, and Assange's, journalism.

The question for Bob Carr is not whether he has asked the Americans about a sealed indictment (which is not publicly confirmed, but the subject of extensive and corroborated reports, including from WikiLeaks's opponents) but whether he has demanded to know why an Australian journalist (and found to be a journalist by sources as varied as the UK Supreme Court, the Walkley Foundation in Australia and the Martha Gellhorn trust in the UK) is the target of a US investigation simply for that journalism.

If the Minister doesn't want to ask about that, there are plenty of other questions he could ask his American counterparts based on what is on the public record:

- why is the Obama Administration stopping and interrogating activists who have been in contact with Assange when they attempt to travel internationally?
- why is the Obama Administration orchestrating a financial blockade by major international financial intermediaries of WikiLeaks?
- why did the Vice-President describe Assange as a terrorist?
- why did the State Department, with no evidence, insist Assange is not entitled to protections under the First Amendment?

Rather than ask questions about matters that are on the public record, Carr prefers to hew to the narrow government line that this is all about consular support for Assange re Sweden and the Americans have no interest in him.

It's gutless and feeble stuff from a government that has repeatedly shown itself eager to do anything to keep the US happy.

[Another consequence, if not an intent, is to demonstrate that Assange is "paranoid". --A.B.]

<http://blogs.crikey.com.au/thestump/2012/06/24/bob-carr-in-full-flight-from-the-facts-on-assange/>

SvD: 24 juni 2012

Carr: USA bryr sig inte om Assange

Det finns inga tecken på att USA försöker få tag på Julian Assange. Det säger Australiens utrikesminister Bob Carr om turerna kring Wikileaksgrundaren. Assange utanför domstolen i London.

- Jag har inte fått minsta antydning om att de har planer på att få honom utlämnad, säger Carr till ABC, efter att ha haft kontakter med USA.

Assange är efterlyst av Sverige, men befinner sig på Ecuadors ambassad i London, där australiern söker asyl.

Om USA velat ha Assange skulle de för länge sedan ha vänt sig till Storbritannien, tror Carr.

- I deras svar fanns ingenting om några planer på utlämning. De har inte kunnat utesluta att något hörn av den amerikanska administrationen kan överväga det, men min bedömning är att USA inte vill ha med detta att göra, säger Carr i tv-intervjun med ABC (Australian Broadcasting).

Hans bedömning görs på basis dels av egna kontakter med USA, dels att Washingtons makthavare inte lyft ett finger sedan Assange greps i Storbritannien 2010.

- Om USA velat få honom utlämnad hade de ordnat det under de två år han funnits tillgänglig för dem i Storbritannien, som USA har ett stabilt utlämningsavtal med, säger Carr i ABC-programmet Insiders.

I Sverige söks Assange för sexbrott, medan USA antas vilja ställa honom inför rätta för att via Wikileaks har avslöjat statshemligheter.

Assange själv befarar att USA vill döma honom till döden. Soldaten Bradley Manning, som misstänks ha förmedlat hemligheterna till Wikileaks, riskerar dock "bara" livstids fängelse i den rättegång som pågår i en militärdomstol.

TT

Aftonbladet: 2012-06-24

Carr: USA bryr sig inte om Assange

STOCKHOLM. Det finns inga tecken på att USA försöker få tag på Julian Assange. Det säger Australiens utrikesminister Bob Carr om turerna kring Wikileaksgrundaren.

– Jag har inte fått minsta antydning om att de har planer på att få honom utlämnad, säger Carr till ABC, efter att ha haft kontakter med USA.

Assange är efterlyst av Sverige, men befinner sig på Ecuadors ambassad i London, där australiern söker asyl. Om USA velat ha Assange skulle de för länge sedan ha vänt sig till Storbritannien, tror Carr.

– I deras svar fanns ingenting om några planer på utlämning. De har inte kunnat utesluta att något hörn av den amerikanska administrationen kan överväga det, men min bedömning är att USA inte vill ha med detta att göra, säger Carr i tv-intervjun med ABC (Australian Broadcasting).

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TT

Subject: Bob Carrs okommenterade förnekande
Date: 24 Jun 2012 11:48
From: Al Burke <editor@nnn.se>
To: TT <redaktionen@tt.se>

Hej!

Se gärna artikeln här ovan [av Bernard Keane] beträffande Bob Carrs förnekande av USA:s intresse i Assange som ni okommenterat har spridit vidare.

Med vänlig hälsning,
Al Burke

P.S. Claude Cockburns bevingade ord: "Don't believe anything until it is officially denied."

[Obs! Inget svar från TT. --A.B.]

Ecuador is no hurry over Julian Assange as ambassador leaves London for talks on political asylum bid

*Jerome Taylor
The Independent
24 June 2012*

Ecuador has signalled that it is in no hurry to decide whether or not to give Julian Assange asylum after it today emerged that their ambassador to London has flown home for talks on the fate of the WikiLeaks founder.

Initial signs coming out of the country last week suggested a decision over Mr Assange's request for sanctuary would be made swiftly with both president Rafael Correa and the a foreign minister Ricardo Patino making positive comments in public about the Australian-born campaigner's plight.

But according to a statement posted on the London embassy's website yesterday talks look set to drag on. Ambassador Anna Alban flew back to Quito over the weekend for

talks with foreign ministry officials and the president as the Latin America country weighs up the diplomatic pros and cons of supporting Mr Assange's request at the risk of angering Britain, Sweden and the United States.

"Ecuador presently finds itself in a unique situation and it is important that those responsible making the final decision on Mr Assange's application are fully briefed on all aspects of the present situation," the statement read.

The WikiLeaks founder is currently wanted for questioning in Sweden over allegations that he sexually assaulted two women in the summer of 2010. He denies the charges, saying they are politically motivated, but has so far refused to travel to Sweden to clear his name. Instead he has fought extradition proceedings brought by prosecutors in Oslo [*Stockholm, presumably --A.B.*] through the British courts. Last Tuesday, shortly after the Supreme Court dismissed his final appeal to halt the extradition, Mr Assange walked into the Ecuadorian embassy in Knightsbridge and claimed asylum.

He insists that his decision to take such a drastic step was not motivated by a desire to avoid prosecution in Sweden, but over the fear that the United States might seek to extradite him because of the sensitive government data WikiLeaks has published. No extradition request has been made by Washington but a grand jury has been convened to see whether any chances could be brought.

Assange, Diplomacy, and Duplicity

*Submitted by Simon
WL Central
2012-06-25*

We are all forced by logic to respect this dichotomy: Either the US threatens Julian Assange's freedom, or it does not.

However, the Washington Post editorial board, reflecting the US diplomatic position, prefer to have it both ways in the same article.

First, in current political circumstances, the US is no threat to his freedom:

"The WikiLeaks man claims, after all, that he is resisting extradition to Sweden because he believes he will be subsequently turned over to the United States and exposed to the death penalty. That no US charges or extradition case are open against him is irrelevant to this fantasy."

Second, in current political circumstances, the US will severely punish anyone who guarantees his freedom:

"There is one potential check on Mr Correa's ambitions. The US "empire" he professes to despise happens to grant Ecuador (which uses the dollar as its currency) special trade preferences that allow it to export many goods duty-free. A full third of Ecuadoran foreign sales (\$10 billion in 2011) go to the United States, supporting some 400,000 jobs in a country of 14 million people. Those preferences come up for renewal by Congress early next year. If Mr Correa seeks to appoint himself America's chief Latin American enemy and Julian Assange's protector between now and then, it's not

hard to imagine the outcome."

Unfortunately for the Washington Post and all it speaks for, the consistency of its menacing contempt is no cover for that glaringly equivocal logic. The US would like to:

- 1) Pretend that Assange is not threatened by it; and
- 2) Crush everything to do with him, by all local and offshore means.

In the temporally, conceptually, and territorially boundless "war on terror" the US indefinitely imprisons and tortures innocents in obscurity, unless they happen to be whistleblowers like Bradley Manning, who has the honour of being a public example, receiving this treatment for years as the alleged source of Assange's publications.

So there is nothing trivial about US Vice President Biden and Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell speaking of Assange as a "high-tech terrorist".

Nor can it be insignificant that recent presidential candidate Newt Gingrich declared Assange as engaged in warfare and terrorism, and specifically to be treated as an enemy combatant.

We cannot dismiss it as a minor coincidence that Assange's supporters are often detained, questioned, and harassed by US officials due to their association with him.

It would only be obtuse to call it incidental that prominent figures in the US including Mike Huckabee, Sarah Palin, Rush Limbaugh, and Bill Kristol have publicly advocated Assange's assassination.

So Assange has all these crystal clear objective reasons to fear for his freedom at the hands of the US.

What is perhaps most frightening is the chilling diplomatic pretence of the US, **without tangible assurances**, that Assange has nothing to fear from it regarding politically motivated harm.

This cynical posture distresses all who value the right of freedom from fear, mentioned in the Atlantic Charter. Antithetical to respect for that right is the disingenuous bullying approach on display.

The US can easily change from producing fear to dispelling it simply by providing a diplomatic guarantee that it will not prosecute Assange on charges of espionage or conspiracy. If we are to take it that the US has no such interest in prosecution, then nothing should be easier, more natural, or appropriate than provision of such a guarantee.

Countless millions, who fear this war on terror increasingly tramples human rights and the flow of accurate information, are as desirous and deserving of this one effortless gesture as Mr Assange.

Nor should there be any diplomatic frictions if the head of state of Ecuador, Australia, Sweden, or the UK would provide any guarantee precluding extradition to face such charges, since that would not preclude anything the US is interested in.

So let's have no more of the mannequin-stiff diplomatic postures and gestures. Let's have some worthy statesmanship.

Whoever moves first to break the duplicitous spell will earn the most respect.

Though it would take a radical pivot, like millions of Australians including Assange, I wish it would be Julia Gillard, though Rafael Correa seems hard to beat.

[Note: The Washington Post is a standard channel for convening official and, presumably this case, unofficial government positions. --A.B.]

Assange seeking US legal guarantee

*Philip Dorling
June 25, 2012*

JULIAN Assange hopes his bid for political asylum at the Ecuadorian embassy in London will elicit diplomatic guarantees that he will not be prosecuted by the United States on espionage and conspiracy charges.

However, Foreign Minister Bob Carr yesterday renewed the Australian government's strong criticism of WikiLeaks and indicated support for Mr Assange will remain limited to routine consular assistance in the absence of confirmation of US extradition moves.

In an interview with The Age Mr Assange argued that his circumstances were "a serious political matter ... [that] the Australian Government should treat with the seriousness it requires.

"I have been attacked by the US, from the Vice-President down, as a high-tech terrorist, and by the Swedish Prime Minister and Foreign Minister— surely that requires some direct response from the Gillard government."

Mr Assange acknowledged that if granted political asylum, he could still be unable to leave the Ecuadorian embassy without risk of immediate arrest and extradition to Sweden to face questioning about sexual assault allegations.

Mr Assange, who recently failed to persuade the British Supreme Court to reopen his appeal against extradition to Sweden, fears a hostile political climate in Stockholm will assist in his ultimate extradition to the US in retaliation for WikiLeaks' publication of secret US military and diplomatic documents. **He has repeatedly said he is prepared to be questioned in Sweden if there were guarantees he will not then be extradited to the US.**

"Ultimately it may be a matter of what guarantees the United Kingdom, the United States and Sweden are willing to provide," Mr Assange said.

"For example, if the US were to guarantee [it would] drop the grand jury investigation and any further investigation of WikiLeaks publishing activity, that would be an important guarantee... diplomatic commitments do have some weight."

Ecuador is considering Mr Assange's asylum application made when he presented himself at the Latin American country's London embassy last Tuesday. The Ecuadorian ambassador in London has been recalled for consultations and President Rafael Correa has indicated his government will consult other governments.

Mr Assange told The Age he was present when the Ecuadorian ambassador was telephoned by the high commission and that "the Australians had nothing of substance to say— [it was] just an information-gathering exercise." "

Foreign Minister Carr told the ABC Insiders program yesterday that he had received no indication from discussions with two unnamed American officials that the US intends to seek Mr Assange's extradition. "There is not the remotest evidence that is the case," he said.

Senator Carr added that US officials "haven't been able to rule out that one corner of the American administration is considering [extradition], but I would expect the US wouldn't want to touch this." [*The U.S. government doesn't know what all its "corners" are doing in relation to this matter? --A.B.*]

Diplomatic cables released under freedom of information legislation show that in December 2010 the Australian embassy in Washington reported to Canberra that WikiLeaks was the target of an "unprecedented" US criminal investigation focussed on possible espionage charges.

Senator Carr said yesterday that the government would make representations in Washington if it appeared the US was moving to extradite Mr Assange.

"That would be a position we'd take when we heard that the US had the remotest interest in touching him. They know we're concerned about it," he said.

Senator Carr renewed the government's criticism of WikiLeaks, saying "releasing a whole batch of secret material without assessment and without justification raises profound moral questions."

"There's an amorality about what's been at work here— secrets being released for the sake of being released without inherent justification. But, that said, we will take a position to defend an Australian citizen if faced with an extradition request that hasn't got justification." [*What is the "inherent justification" of keeping secrets from the governed? --A.B.*]

Mr Assange observed that it was "fascinating to note that the government is at odds with popular opinion; it's not acting in its electoral interests— which makes one wonder what interests it's really serving."

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/assange-seeking-us-legal-guarantee-20120624-20wfi.html>

Sweden 'can't offer Assange guarantees'

The Local
25 June 2012

Sweden would not be able to offer Julian Assange a diplomatic guarantee against being extradited to the United States should the WikiLeaks founder end up back in Sweden to face sex crime accusations, according to a justice ministry official.

On Monday, it emerged that Assange may be ready to return to Sweden to face questioning over claims by two women that he raped and sexually assaulted them in August 2010.

However, he would only consider giving up his lengthy battle to avoid extradition to Sweden if officials in Stockholm guaranteed that he wouldn't be turned over to the United States to face espionage and conspiracy charges over secret US documents previously published by WikiLeaks.

But an official with Sweden's Ministry of Justice said that, according to current legislation, Sweden couldn't provide Assange with the guarantees he's currently seeking.

"Any such guarantee doesn't exist," Cecilia Riddselius, a staff member with the ministry's Division for Criminal Cases and International Judicial Cooperation, told the Dagens Nyheter (DN) newspaper. "After having worked on these issues for ten years, I can't see how it could become reality."

Riddselius emphasized that the matter remained hypothetical and that her assessment was restricted to that of a government civil servant.

Currently, there is no formal request or indication that the United States is interested in extraditing Assange, who has been holed up in the Ecuadorian embassy in London since last Wednesday waiting for the South American country to process his request for political asylum.

At the weekend, Australian foreign minister Bob Carr rejected claims that Washington is keen to get Assange, saying there was "no hint" of a plan to extradite the 40-year-old former computer hacker to the United States.

According to Riddselius, countries can ask for different sorts of guarantees related to extradition cases, but the guarantees are restricted to covering the sort of treatment someone might receive once extradited, such as guarantees the person wouldn't be tortured or sentenced to the death penalty.

But, she said, Sweden couldn't guarantee Assange that he wouldn't be extradited to the United States ahead of his possible arrival in Sweden.

For the moment, officials in Sweden are standing by awaiting further developments in the case.

"We're waiting to see how Ecuador acts," Riddselius told DN.

"Sverige kan inte ge Assange diplomatisk garanti"

Julian Assange kommer inte kunna få någon diplomatisk garanti från Sverige om att inte utlämnas till USA. Det menar Cecilia Riddselius, tjänsteman på justitiedepartementet, och hänvisar till rådande lagstiftning.

Julian Assange har befunnit sig på Ecuadors ambassad i London i en dryg vecka för att försöka söka politisk asyl i landet. Nu går Assange ut med att han kan tänka sig att återvända till Sverige för att ställas inför rätta. Men för att han ska göra det vill han ha en garanti om att inte bli utlämnad.

Assange vill ha garantier från Storbritannien, USA och Sverige. Men någon sådan garanti kommer han troligen inte att få, menar Cecilia Riddselius, på justitiedepartementets enhet för brottmålsärenden och internationellt rättsligt samarbete.

– Inte som jag ser det med tanke på rådande lagstiftning, säger hon.

Det finns möjligheter för länder att begära olika typer av garantier i samband med utlämningsärenden. Men det gäller saker som inte den utlämnade personen får bli utsatt för. Sverige kan begära att en utlämnad person inte ska få dödsstraff, att han ska slippa tortyr, inte åtalas på andra punkter än de som han utlämnats för och inte ska åtalas inför en specialdomstol. Men Sverige kan inte i förväg garantera att han inte kommer att lämnas ut.

– Någon sådan garanti förekommer inte. Jag kan bara svara på tjänstemannanivå. Men efter att ha jobbat med de här frågorna i tio år kan jag inte se hur det skulle kunna bli verklighet, säger Cecilia Riddselius.

Hon menar dock att frågan i nuläget är högst hypotetisk. Det finns ännu ingen begäran från USA om att Julian Assange ska utlämnas. Det har även höjts röster som menar att det inte ens är troligt att någon sådan ansökan kommer att lämnas in.

Om Assange skulle återvända till Sverige och en sådan begäran trots allt skulle komma in återstår en lång process, som ska gå genom riksåklagare till högsta domstolen och riksdagen. Det behövs även ett samtycke från Storbritannien för att Julian Assange ska kunna utlämnas.

– Det är en lång process. Det här även ett väldigt speciellt fall. Det är ovanligt mediebevakat och det har varit många turer. Arresteringsordersamarbetet mellan länderna brukar gå väldigt smidigt, men det har det inte gjort i det här fallet, säger Cecilia Riddselius.

Sverige kan just nu bara vänta och se hur situationen utvecklas.

– Vi får avvakta hur Ecuador agerar, säger Cecilia Riddselius.

• *Linnea Johansson*

AB: 2012-06-25



Headline from the tabloid Aftonbladet, Sweden's largest circulation daily:
"Assange can flee the country in a diplomatic pouch"

Gladiatorial Interviewing is Ersatz Journalism

Vaughan Smith
Frontline
June 26, 2012

Here is a grumble about gladiatorial interviewing which is practiced to entertain rather than inform in my view...

Name [i.e. Smith chooses not to disclose name of correspondent],
do you feel that what you promised in your email below is close to what happened during the live with Max Foster last night? Though it was inconvenient, I came to CNN because as a journalist I feel a responsibility to address issues of public concern when asked to do so. I know Julian Assange well and it is right that he has some support in the western media. But that doesn't make it appropriate to beat me up as a token disbursement towards balanced journalism on Julian's bid for political asylum.

I was grateful for the opportunity to get one full answer out, but how was it reasonable for Max to keep interrupting me before I could get out a response to his question on whether the Swedish girls were being denied justice? I wasn't being evasive. It is an important question and I was clearly trying to answer it.

Interrupting in this way is meant to distract and seeks to disrupt a respondents ability to deliver a useful answer. It is aggressive and in this case favoured contest over enquiry. Do you, or Max, or your team at CNN think that this indulgent use of gladiatorial journalism was really the best way to inform your viewers? Or are you comfortable with the illusion of dashing journalistic attendance it delivers?

Well in truth it takes no courage to reinforce public sentiment against a man who believes that he is running for his life.

Regards,
Vaughan

[Video](#)

> Hi Vaughan

>

> So, after a chat with my producer, we are very keen to accommodate your request to talk about the wider political issues in Julian's case. Although we will need to start off the interview asking about Julian's asylum case and your relationship with him— to set the scene for our viewers— we will then move the discussion to talking about the wider political issues. On a day when Ai Weiwei is back in the headlines and due to give CNN his first on screen interview since his detention tonight, it will be an interesting comparison to make, raising issues about the concept of the western dissident (as you said) and whether they are recognised / tolerated. We would also like to discuss the change in Julian's public image: how he has gone from a champion of free speech to a fugitive in the public eye and whether this image reflects the majority opinion of his work (particularly outside the 'Western' world).

>

> Although time will be tight as ever, I will make sure Max gives you at least one question on this wider context at the end of the interview, to give you the opportunity to share your views on this.

>

> How does this sound? If you're still concerned I can get you on the phone to Max briefly this afternoon so you can explain directly to him what point you would like to make.

>

> In terms of timings we would ideally like to do this live as we are expecting news from the Ecuador government later in the day, which might date any interview we do with you earlier. We would need you here for 8.50pm— I think if you can leave the Frontline Club by 8.30pm the Bakerloo line might be the quickest way to get down here. I'm happy to get you a car for afterwards if needs be.

>

> Let me know your thoughts.

>

> Many thanks

> *Name (CNN)*

Otto Reich, who served as a senior official in the Bush Jr., Bush Sr., and Reagan administrations, wrote [an Op-Ed](#) stating that the U.S. should not sign any new trade agreements with Ecuador were they to accept Julian Assange into political asylum. In the article he labels Mr Assange as an "accused sex-criminal" and vehemently attacks Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa.

— *WL Central*, 2012-06-26

Sweden is owed justice and respect over the Assange affair

Marten Schultz
ABC (Australian public radio)
26 Jun 2012

The caricature of Sweden's legal system perpetrated by Assange and his loyal supporters affects the country's democratic reputation, and has been allowed to dominate impressions of Sweden.

The caricature of Sweden's legal system perpetrated by Assange and his loyal supporters affects the country's democratic reputation, and has been allowed to dominate impressions of Sweden.

Julian Assange's bizarre bid for political asylum in Ecuador's embassy in London has claimed headlines everywhere, but it has obscured an important truth: last month's decision by the United Kingdom's Supreme Court that Assange should be extradited to Sweden to face allegations of sexual crimes was the only possible outcome.

The alternative— to reject the European Arrest Warrant issued by Swedish authorities— would have signalled distrust of Sweden's legal system, which would have been unfair.

Whatever one's sentiments about Assange and the claims that he has made in trying to secure asylum in Ecuador, let's be very clear: Sweden is a *Rechtstaat*— a state governed by the rule of law— in every sense. The Swedish court system is characterized by foreseeability, fairness, humanism and high professional quality. These are facts.

Yet this description fits poorly with the image of the Swedish legal system that has dominated the debate since the allegations against Assange became public. Indeed, Assange and his supporters have portrayed Sweden's legal system as a wilderness of injustice and political corruption.

This caricature has become a problem for Sweden. When influential people— filmmaker Michael Moore, feminist Naomi Wolf, journalist John Pilger and many others— launch attacks on the Swedish legal system, it affects the country's democratic reputation. And, unfortunately, the caricature has been allowed to dominate impressions of Sweden, because representatives of its legal system and other Swedish experts have failed to provide a more accurate picture.

When I travel abroad and meet lawyers interested in the Assange case (and they are many), I get asked the most incredible questions about Sweden's legal system. Is it true that men are convicted of rape in Sweden on the sole basis of a woman's allegations? Is it rape in Sweden when a condom breaks? Is it correct that Swedish judges contact the United States Justice Department before passing judgment in politically sensitive cases?

The list goes on. Did the Swedish Prosecutor-General meet with representatives of the United States Embassy before the European Arrest Warrant in the Assange case was issued? Are judges selected by political appointment? Is it true that official Sweden is steeped in feminist ideology, and that Swedish public servants are taught that women

never lie? Will the Swedish police put Assange on a plane to Guantanamo Bay as soon as he arrives?

The answer to all of these questions is "no," though a couple of them point to half-truths. Let me return to these momentarily. But first, let us recall what actually happened in the Assange case.

Assange came to Sweden in 2010 as a spokesperson for WikiLeaks. Ironically, one of the reasons for his visit was Sweden's good legal reputation; he came to investigate whether WikiLeaks could benefit from the unique protection afforded to information under our constitutional free-speech guarantees.

During Assange's stay, two events occurred that led to accusations against him for sexual assault of two women. Before Assange was interrogated, he left the country. He then refused to return to Sweden, starting an almost two-year process to extradite him.

The UK Supreme Court's decision means only that Assange will be transferred to Sweden for interrogation. It does not mean that he will be tried, or even charged. It is entirely possible that he will be transferred to Sweden, questioned and released if the Swedish authorities find that there are insufficient grounds for prosecution. It is impossible— as it should be— to predict how the case will unfold.

What we do know is that Assange will receive fair treatment by Swedish legal institutions. And, yes, their respect for the rule of law extends to accusations of sexual offenses. As recently as a few years ago, the Swedish Supreme Court explicitly ruled that the same high standard of proof applied to other criminal allegations are to be applied in cases of suspected rape.

Similar criticisms of the Swedish legal system are based largely on myths and misconceptions. The framework of Sweden's criminal law with respect to sexual offenses is no different from that in most other countries. I will not be sentenced for rape if my condom breaks during a sexual act. But, like in many other countries, I can be convicted of rape if I have sex with a sleeping or unconscious person.

The Swedish judges who may preside if Assange is brought to trial will not take orders from any government agencies, and will not be influenced by pressure from elsewhere. Corruption in the Swedish judiciary is extremely low. We do have politically appointed laypersons as judges (similar to jurors)— a system about which I am critical— but they do not act as politicians in their judicial function, and studies suggest that their political beliefs do not influence their judgments at all.

Finally, no, the Swedish police did not place Assange on a CIA-chartered plane as soon as he arrived at Stockholm airport. They, like all other Swedish authorities, discharged their duties according to the law.

- Marten Schultz is Professor of Law at Stockholm University

[Note: A Swedish-language version of this article was published in Svenska Dagbladet on 30 May 2012; see above.]

Pursuit of Assange a bad look for the Swedish justice system

*Greg Barns
ABC (Australian public radio)
26 Jun 2012*

Marten Schultz paints a glowing picture of the Swedish criminal justice system in which Wikileaks founder Julian Assange is entangled. But this is not the whole story.

While it is fair to say that Sweden is a democratic country which subscribes to the rule of law, the criticisms that Assange and his supporters make of the criminal justice system that operates are valid because the Assange case has revealed some disturbing aspects of this system in operation.

The first issue that gives cause for concern has been the conduct of the chief prosecutor in Assange's case, Marianne Ny. She has pursued Assange with unusual vigour. For instance, in September 2010 she overruled another senior prosecutor who had determined that Assange should not be arrested for questioning in relation to allegations by two women with whom it is said he slept. Then the New York Times reported on 14 December 2010 that Ny "asked British authorities to detain Mr. Assange and send him to Sweden for questioning about possible sex crimes, discussed the possibility of sending him to the United States."

In 2007 Thomas Hammarberg, the Council of Europe's Human Rights Commissioner, noted that the "prosecutor represents the public interest, which means that he or she should promote the Rule of Law. With Rule of Law we mean something deeper than just the rule by law. The term includes a dimension of substantive justice, qualitative justice."

It is arguable that Ny has not met this standard in the Assange case because of her background in what might be termed the sexual politics in Sweden. Ny is a long time campaigner for reforming sexual assault laws in Sweden so that they are more "pro women." The lawyer who represents the woman Assange is alleged to have had sex with, Claes Borgstrom is on the same page as Ny when it comes to reforming the law in this area.

Perhaps this also explains why Ny has resorted to the horrendously expensive and heavy handed tool of an international arrest warrant in a case where the charges are, at best, quite a long way down the scale of sexual assault charges. **If Julian Assange were Bill Smith, an Australian backpacker with no profile, would Marianne Ny be hunting him with such relish?**

Then there is the fact that Ny has refused to interview Assange by telephone from the UK, despite his lawyers offering their client's consent numerous times. This is extraordinary given that the Swedish government is a signatory to European Union's rules on mutual legal assistance and has its own domestic law. The Swedish government's own justice website affirms that a "Swedish prosecutor or court can then request legal assistance regarding a hearing by telephone if an agreement has been concluded regarding such legal assistance under an international agreement with the other country or if that country otherwise provides such assistance."

A legitimate question to ask of the Swedish criminal justice system, then, is this: how appropriate is it that the lead prosecutor in the Assange case is a political campaigner for sexual assault law reform? In matters such as this, the perception of objectivity and upholding prosecutorial standards is as important as the reality.

Interestingly, many Swedish lawyers are unhappy with the legal system in which they practice. According to a May 2011 report in *The Local*, a Swedish English language newspaper, a survey carried out by a legal publication in Sweden shows that 32% of Swedish lawyers answered "Yes" when asked if they agreed with criticisms made by Assange about the legal system in that country.

When Assange complained that suspects are denied access to information about the case against them, author and criminal defence lawyer Jens Lapidus agreed. Lapidus and his colleague John Akermark also endorsed Assange's view about secret trials and the use of lay judges, many of whom are ex politicians. Lapidus and Akermark said that "proceedings are held behind closed doors more often in Sweden [than] in many other states governed by the rule of law."

Marten Schultz observes that the "Swedish court system is characterized by foreseeability, fairness, humanism and high professional quality." He may be right that this is so in many cases, although secret trials and preventing accused persons from knowing the case against them until they go to court is hardly fair or professional.

But in the case of Julian Assange, it is fair to say that the prosecution has looked, to the reasonable outsider, to be driven by a law reform or political agenda and a seemingly unhealthy desire to pursue a high profile individual on what are relatively minor charges. This is not a good advertisement for the Swedish justice system.

- *Greg Barns is a criminal barrister and National President of the Australian Lawyers Alliance.*

<http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2012/06/26/3533558.htm>

Asylum for Julian Assange — Former Awardee for Integrity

Ray McGovern
OpEd News
26 June 2012

Holed up at the Ecuadorian embassy in London seeking political asylum sits Julian Assange, founder of WikiLeaks, who has been responsible for spreading more truth around than any single journalist in recent memory. This, basically, is why he has been labeled all manner of things, including a terrorist, by several senior U.S. officials and others with acute allergies to the ground truth revealed in the WikiLeaks disclosures.

And that, basically, is why the U.S. government has been lusting to get its hands on Assange and prosecute him, stretching the provisions of the Espionage Act of 1917 well beyond its breaking point. Assange faced imminent extradition from the U.K. to Sweden and, he feared (with ample justification), on to the U.S. to face the tender mercies of what has become of American justice. Ecuador has given him sanctuary, pending a decision on his request for asylum.

Not many are aware (because the corporate media, for some reason, missed it) that at a large press conference in London on October 15, 2010, Daniel Ellsberg presented Julian Assange with the 8th annual Award for Integrity from The Sam Adams Associates for Integrity in Intelligence (SAAII). Last year's award was given, *ex aequo*, to former NSA official Thomas Drake and Jesselyn Radack, Director of National Security and Human Rights at the Government Accountability Project.

On Sunday, June 24, 2012, Sam Adams Associates delivered to the embassy of Ecuador in Washington a letter to the Hon. Nathalie Cely Suarez, Ambassadors of Ecuador to the United States, conveying an appeal to her government to approve Julian Assange's request for political asylum. The letter is posted below....

* * *

Sam Adams Associates for Integrity in Intelligence

June 24, 2012

Hon. Nathalie Cely Suarez
Ambassadors of Ecuador to the United States of America

Dear Ms. Ambassadors:

This is an urgent request from Sam Adams Associates for Integrity in Intelligence (SAAII) that the government of Ecuador grant political asylum to Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks.

By publishing on the WikiLeaks Website key material normally hidden from public view, Julian Assange has contributed immeasurably to real history at this time of unprecedented government secrecy and hunts after those who dare spread truth around. As you are no doubt aware, much good has come from WikiLeaks disclosures. The benefits run from the light they shine on manipulation of media, police, and intelligence forces and the atrocities of war, to the inspiration that helped catalyze the Arab spring in Tunisia and Egypt.

Two of our SAAII members have made a persuasive case that the seminal event of our times— the attacks of September 11, 2001— might have been prevented had WikiLeaks been available to whistleblowers at the time. Coleen Rowley (an attorney with the FBI) and Bogdan Dzakovic of the Federal Aviation Administration, in a little-noticed *Los Angeles Times* op-ed of October 15, 2010, make that sad but telling point. **The authors write that FBI and FAA agents, frustrated by their ossified bureaucracies, might well have used WikiLeaks to make public their anxious warnings about missed opportunities for investigation, and serious vulnerabilities at airports to impending attack.**

Digesting the WikiLeaks disclosures at a time when so-called "mainstream" media have largely abdicated their watchdog role as the Fourth Estate, and knowing first-hand the courage it took on Julian Assange's and WikiLeaks' part to expose the dishonesty and crimes of the powerful, the SAAII nominating committee selected Julian Assange for our annual award for integrity in 2010. SAAII member Daniel Ellsberg presented the award to him in London on October 15, 2010.

Except for Julian Assange, only one of the other nine annual award recipients to date was imprisoned as a result of disclosures— in this case, about bogus intelligence before the attack on Iraq in 2003. He is Danish Army Major Frank Grevil, an intelligence analyst who was jailed for giving the Danish press documents showing that then-Denmark's Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen disregarded Danish intelligence warnings that there was no authentic evidence of WMD in Iraq. Aping former-Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld just before the war, **Rasmussen declared: "Iraq has WMDs. It is not something we think; it is something we know."** (Yes, this is the same Rasmussen who is now Secretary General of NATO.)

That Dane was performing tricks taught by Washington. Truth-teller Grevil blew the whistle and paid the price. It appears that the U.S. expects President Correa to roll over in a similar way. This could be seen in a long editorial on June 20 in the Establishment's mouthpiece, the *Washington Post*. The editors made an undisguised threat of serious economic retaliation: "If Mr. Correa seeks to appoint himself America's chief Latin American enemy and Julian Assange's protector [before Congress decides on trade preferences], it's not hard to imagine the outcome."

It is an open secret that Establishment Washington is lusting to get Julian Assange to the U.S. and try him for espionage, no less. What a wonderful boon that would be for the re-election prospects of President Barack Obama, who is trying hard to appear tough. First taking out Osama bin-Laden— and now Julian Assange! An automatic four more years, is the way White House strategists would see it. And, if he were sent to Sweden, there is every reason to expect the Swedes, based on recent past performance, to hand him over to Washington.

Little attention has been given to Assange's repeated offers to make himself available for questioning during almost five weeks in Sweden and at the Swedish embassy in London and Scotland Yard under conditions foreseen and set down for such cases in a treaty between Sweden and the UK.

We believe it reasonable to assume that Assange would similarly be willing to submit himself to such questioning at your embassy in London. **Why the Swedes have resisted questioning him, either in Sweden or in London, but rather insisted he be extradited, before even being questioned, much less charged, feeds suspicion that they are dancing to Washington's baton.**

For many of us, Monsenor Romero put it correctly in reminding us to speak out for Justice: "Ser cristiano hoy en dia significa no temer, no callar por miedo."

And so we choose not to remain silent. We are convinced not only that your President and his advisers will know the right thing to do, but that they will have the courage to do it.

Thank you for your help in passing this along to your government.

Respectfully,

Raymond L. McGovern
For Sam Adams Associates for Integrity in Intelligence

• *Ray McGovern was an Army infantry/intelligence officer and then a CIA analyst for 27 years.*

[Source](#)

Hounding Julian Assange

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has taken refuge in Ecuador's embassy in London rather than be extradited to Sweden to face sex-abuse accusations. But Assange's ordeal reflects a larger and more troubling American hostility to truth-tellers who point the finger at Washington, says Lawrence Davidson.

*Lawrence Davidson
Consortium News
June 26, 2012*

In 2006, Julian Assange and associates founded the WikiLeaks website with a noble and necessary goal. WikiLeaks aimed at forcing the world's governments to act with greater transparency and therefore possibly rule more justly.

It was Assange's opinion that if governments were less able to lie and keep secrets, they would be less prone to break their own and international laws, or at least more likely to adhere to a general rule of decency allegedly shared by their citizenry.

This was a truly heroic undertaking. What did WikiLeaks do to accomplish this task? It created a web-based non-governmental window on government activity through which it made public those official lies and secrets. This information was supplied to it by whistle blowers the world over.

Soon WikiLeaks was telling the world about "extrajudicial killings in Kenya ... toxic waste dumping on the coast of Cote d'Ivoire ... material involving large banks ... among other documents." None of this got Assange into great trouble. The simple fact is that the ability of states such as Kenya and the Ivory Coast to reach out and crush an organization like WikiLeaks is limited.

However, in 2010 the website started publishing massive amounts of U.S. diplomatic and military documents, including damaging information on procedures at the Guantanamo Bay prison camp and a video documenting lethal attacks on civilians in Iraq.

It was at this point that Assange, as the editor-in-chief of Wikileaks, became a criminal in the eyes of the U.S. government. The hero, ferreting out facts about official wrongdoing, now became the hunted. Rep. Peter King, R-New York, an Islamophobe who unfortunately chairs the House Homeland Security Committee, labeled WikiLeaks a "terrorist organization" and said that Assange ought to be "prosecuted under the Espionage Act of 1917."

On the Democratic side of the aisle, Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California, chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, claimed that Assange had harmed the national interest and "put innocent lives at risk" and therefore should be prosecuted for espionage.

Actually, a good argument can be made that the stupid and corrupt policies of American politicians have done much greater harm to objectively defined national interest, particularly in the Middle East. In addition, there is no evidence that any of WikiLeaks' actions have resulted in any loss of "innocent lives." However, none of this can save Assange.

One of the serious questions raised by the case of WikiLeaks and Julian Assange is

just who is a criminal? If an organized crime syndicate commits illegal acts and some outside party reveals its activity, the syndicate might mark the witness for punishment. However, which one is the real criminal?

Lots of governments act like organized crime syndicates. If you ask Rep. King or Sen. Feinstein what they think about the behavior of, say, Russia in Chechnya or China in Tibet, they are likely to describe that behavior as criminal. And, **if Assange had just exposed the sins of Russia or China, he would be praised within the halls of Congress.**

But what happens when the U.S. government behaves like an organized gang of criminals? After all, a very good case can be made that the leaders of the United States are systematically violating their own Constitution with policies like indefinite detention.

In recent decades, the government's behavior has violated more moral precepts than one cares to count, from the Vietnam War through the invasion and occupation of Iraq, resulting in millions of deaths. Then there is the practice of torturing suspected, but not actually convicted, terrorists, and the current use of drone attacks which kill more civilians than targeted enemies.

Along comes WikiLeaks and Assange to bear witness against some of these acts. Washington marks him for punishment. But just who is the real criminal? **It is to the enduring shame of most of the U.S. media that they did not, and still can't, manage a straight answer to that question.** The establishment press has always kept its distance from Assange, asserting that he was not a "real" journalist. This no doubt reflects the attitudes of its basically conservative owners and editors.

For instance, the New York Times executive editor, Bill Keller, once called Assange a "smelly, dirty, bombastic ... believer in unproven conspiracy theories." He did this even while his own paper selectively dipped into the 391,832 Pentagon documents that WikiLeaks had divulged.

Even then the information was used in the most innocuous fashion. I think it is fair to say that investigative journalism at a local (city or state) level still goes on in the U.S., but at the national level it has become an increasingly rare phenomenon.

Though a noble and necessary effort, Assange's WikiLeaks experiment always faced very high odds, particularly in the U.S. This is because its revelations play themselves out within the context of an establishment culture that has long ago turned the great majority of people into subservient true believers.

True believers in what? In the essential goodness of their nation as it operates in the world beyond its borders. Therefore, transparency might be acceptable for one's local political environment where the mayor turns out to be corrupt, but foreign policy is something else again.

For Americans in the post-9/11 age, foreign policy boils down to promoting democracy and development on the one hand, and protecting the citizenry from terrorists on the other. **Within that frame of reference, it is nearly impossible for Americans to conceive of their national government as purposefully acting like a criminal organization. They just refuse to believe it.**

Particularly in the context of the so-called "war on terror," most Americans see nothing

noble or necessary about exposing the government's clandestine operations. Thus, when Julian Assange points out the criminal behavior of those supposedly defending the nation, most citizens are going to feel indignant and rally around the flag. The messenger is soon the one who is seen as criminal and dangerous because he is undermining national security.

There are no greater adherents to this point of view than the political and military leaders who claim to be defenders of the nation. For them the old Barry Goldwater saying, "extremism in defense of liberty is no vice" excuses all excesses. WikiLeaks both challenged and embarrassed them by making their innumerable excesses public. Thus, be they Democrats or Republicans, the so-called champions of homeland security are determined to silence him.

U.S. authorities have latched onto an exaggerated sex scandal in Sweden in which Assange is sought for questioning (though as yet not charged with any crime). They have pressured the Swedes [*a reasonable assumption for which has yet to be confirmed -- A.B.*] to extradite Assange from his present UK residence when it would be much easier and efficient (as Assange has offered) for Stockholm to send court representatives to England to perform the questioning.

So why do it the hard way? Because, once in Sweden, the head of WikiLeaks could be given over to the Americans (something the British will not do — *not as readily --A.B.*). Assange will not cooperate in this game. As Glenn Greenwald has pointed out, "as a foreign national accused of harming U.S. national security, he has every reason to want to avoid ending up in the travesty known as the American judicial system."

When he recently lost his UK court battle against extradition [*and Swedish prosecutors announced that he would be jailed immediately upon arrival --A.B.*], he sought asylum in the embassy of Ecuador, a country whose leaders are sympathetic to Assange's plight. **True to form, American media comment on Assange's appeal for asylum has been disparaging.**

Julian Assange is now a hero on the run. And, he is probably going to stay that way for the foreseeable future. Even if he makes it to Ecuador, he will need bodyguards to protect him from kidnapping or worse. As one Pentagon spokesman put it, "If doing the right thing is not good enough for [Assange] then we will figure out what other alternatives we have to compel [him] to do the right thing."

And what do America's leaders regard as the "right thing" in this case? Obviously, keeping silent about Washington's doing the wrong thing. That is the nature of our world.

Submerged in a culture defined by the educational and informational dictates of our leaders and their interests, many of us cannot recognize when we are being lied to or misled. And, if someone tries to tell us what is happening, they sound so odd, so out of place, that we are made anxious and annoyed. So much so that, in the end, we don't raise a finger when the messenger is hounded into silence.

• *Lawrence Davidson is a history professor at West Chester University in Pennsylvania. He is the author of Foreign Policy Inc.: Privatizing America's National Interest; America's Palestine: Popular and Official Perceptions from Balfour to Israeli Statehood; and Islamic Fundamentalism.*

Julian Assange Interviews Noam Chomsky & Tariq Ali

The revolts in the Middle East, and protests across the world are all stemming from a profound economic disparity and the feeling of being oppressed by their respective governments, Chomsky and Ali agree.

"We are witnessing that democracy is becoming more and more denuded of content. It's like an empty shell, and this is what is angering young people, who feel 'Whatever we do, whatever we vote for, nothing changes', hence all these protests," Ali said.

Video at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4iJtEMamjc&feature=player_embedded

Flood of email support for Assange asylum bid

The Local
27 June 2012

The Ecuadorian embassies in the United States and Britain have received over 10,000 messages in support of political asylum for Wikileaks founder Julian Assange, Ecuadorian authorities announced Tuesday.

"More than 10,000 emails have been received at the moment," Ecuador's Minister of Foreign Affairs said in a public statement from Quito. "Thousands of people asking the Ecuadorian government to accord asylum to Julian Assange, founder of Wikileaks, sent a **steady stream of messages saying why they support him**," the statement added.

Quito received a demand for asylum from the Australian national, who took refuge in London's Ecuadorian embassy on June 19, escaping extradition to Sweden, where he has been charged with two cases of sexual assault.

Assange worries that from Sweden, he will be extradited to the United States to face possible espionage charges, after releasing more than 250,000 American diplomatic cables on the Wikileaks whistleblowing site.

A letter in favour of the request for asylum was also addressed to Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa by the organization Just Foreign Policy, a US group advocating for civil liberties. Among the signatures on the petition were those of film directors Michael Moore and Oliver Stone, actor Danny Glover and philosopher Noam Chomsky.

Maintaining that Assange's only crime was journalism, the authors of the letter denounced what they believe to be an attack on freedom of the press and the public's right to know the truth about American foreign policy.

Correa responded to the call for asylum Tuesday, saying that Quito must first "analyze the judicial process in Sweden" and that "these things take time. It's not that simple." That same day, Correa met with his ambassador to Britain, Anna Alban, and Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino to discuss Assange's request.

Correa, a leftist leader critical of Washington, has already expressed sympathy for the Wikileaks founder and said that his country will not accept instances of "political persecution."

Incinerating Assange — The Liberal Media Go To Work

*David Edwards
Media Lens
June 27, 2012*

On June 19, in a final bid to avoid extradition to Sweden, WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange requested asylum in the Ecuadorian embassy in London. Credible commentators argue that Assange has good reason to fear extradition to the United States from Sweden. Ray McGovern, who was a CIA analyst for 30 years, commented:

'Not only is Julian Assange within his rights to seek asylum, he is also in his right mind. Consider this: he was about to be sent to *faux-neutral* Sweden, which has a recent history of bowing to U.S. demands in dealing with those that Washington says are some kind of threat to U.S. security.'

Former US constitutional and civil rights lawyer Glenn Greenwald supplied some detail: 'The evidence that the US seeks to prosecute and extradite Assange is substantial. There is no question that the Obama justice department has convened an active grand jury to investigate whether WikiLeaks violated the draconian Espionage Act of 1917. Key senators from President Obama's party, including Senate intelligence committee chairwoman Dianne Feinstein, have publicly called for his prosecution under that statute. A leaked email from the security firm Stratfor—hardly a dispositive source, but still probative—indicated that a sealed indictment has already been obtained against him. Prominent American figures in both parties have demanded Assange's lifelong imprisonment, called him a terrorist, and even advocated his assassination.'

Greenwald argued that smaller countries like Sweden are more vulnerable to American manipulation. Moreover, Sweden 'has a disturbing history of lawlessly handing over suspects to the US. A 2006 UN ruling found Sweden in violation of the global ban on torture for helping the CIA render two suspected terrorists to Egypt, where they were brutally tortured.'

Greenwald concluded that Assange's 'fear of ending up in the clutches of the US is plainly rational and well-grounded'.

Michael Ratner, president emeritus of the Center for Constitutional Rights and attorney for Julian Assange and WikiLeaks, explained the risks associated with extradition to Sweden:

'Sweden does not have bail. Now, these are on allegations of sex charges — allegations, no charges — and they're to interrogate Julian Assange. But despite that, he would

have been in prison in Sweden. At that point, our view is that there was a substantial chance that the U.S. would ask for his extradition to the United States.

‘So here you have him walking the streets in London— sure, under bail conditions— going to a jail in Sweden, where he’s in prison, almost an incommunicado prison; U.S. files extradition; he remains in prison; and the next thing that happens is whatever time it takes him to fight the extradition in Sweden, he’s taken to the United States. There’s no chance then to make political asylum application any longer. In addition, once he comes to the United States— we just hold up Bradley Manning as example one of what will happen to Julian Assange: a underground cell, essentially abuse, torture, no ability to communicate with anybody, facing certainly good chance of a life sentence, with a possibility, of course, of one of these charges being a death penalty charge... So, he was in an impossible situation... This is what Julian Assange was facing: never to see the light of day again, in my view, had he gone to Sweden.’

Journalist Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked the Pentagon Papers, stated: ‘Political asylum was made for cases like this. Freedom for Julian in Ecuador would serve the cause of freedom of speech and of the press worldwide. It would be good for us all; and it would be cause to honor, respect and thank Ecuador.’

In considering Assange’s plight, it is also worth considering the tremendous good he has done at extreme personal risk. **Coleen Rowley, a former FBI Special Agent and Division Counsel, commented:**

‘WikiLeaks’ efforts combating undue secrecy, exposing illegal cover-ups and championing transparency in government have already benefited the world. And I’m convinced, more than ever, that if that type of anti-secrecy publication had existed and enabled the proper information sharing in early 2001, it could have not only prevented the 9/11 attacks but it could have exposed the fabricating of intelligence and deceptive propaganda which enabled the Bush Administration to unjustifiably launch war on Iraq.’

Newsweek recently placed Assange first in its list of ‘digital revolutionaries’.

Consideration of the hideous suffering inflicted on Bradley Manning, who is alleged to have leaked information to WikiLeaks, should generate further concern for Assange’s plight. A UN investigation found that Manning’s pre-trial conditions of severe solitary confinement were ‘cruel, inhuman and degrading’.

As a serving US soldier, rather than a journalist, Manning was certainly more vulnerable to this type of punishment. But consider the ferocity with which US elites are pursuing Assange. A leading article in the Washington Post commented of Ecuador’s president Rafael Correa:

‘There is one potential check on Mr. Correa’s ambitions. The U.S. “empire” he professes to despise happens to grant Ecuador (which uses the dollar as its currency) special trade preferences that allow it to export many goods duty-free. A full third of Ecuadoran foreign sales (\$10 billion in 2011) go to the United States, supporting some 400,000 jobs in a country of 14 million people. Those preferences come up for renewal by Congress early next year. If Mr. Correa seeks to appoint himself America’s chief

Latin American enemy and Julian Assange's protector between now and then, it's not hard to imagine the outcome.'

On Fox News, Roger Noriega, US Ambassador to the Organization of American States from 2001-2003 and Assistant Secretary of State from 2003-2005, observed:

'It remains to be seen whether Correa will grant Assange asylum in Ecuador. If he does, it will put his country on a collision course with Britain, Sweden, and the United States, which has spoken publicly of charging Assange with crimes for publishing classified government documents.'

The evidence, then, that Assange has plenty to fear is overwhelming. But not for the great and the good of liberal journalism. The Guardian's Suzanne Moore set the tone on Twitter on June 19:

'Seems like Assange's supporters did not expect him to skip bail? Really? Who has this guy not let down?' She added: 'I bet Assange is stuffing himself full of flattened guinea pigs. **He really is the most massive turd.'**

Moore later complained that, after writing articles about Assange, she had suffered 'vile abuse'. We wrote to her:

'That's a real shame, sorry to hear that. But how would you describe calling someone "the most massive turd"? Vile abuse?'

Moore replied: 'no I wouldnt call that vile abuse. I mean nasty threats etc.'

She added: 'also I would advise you to stop sounding so bloody patronising'.

Moore later commented to Deborah Orr of the Guardian and 'Victoria Peckham' (Janice Turner) of The Times: 'I never met him [Assange]. Did you?'

Journalists found Assange's predicament endlessly amusing. The Guardian's Luke Harding commented: 'Assange's plight seems reminiscent of the scene in Monty Python where the knights think to storm the castle using a giant badger.' [???]

Christina Patterson of the Independent wrote: 'Quite a feat to move from Messiah to Monty Python, but good old Julian Assange seems to have managed it. Next Timbuktu?' She wrote again: 'Meanwhile, the latest on Assange: he's hiding up a tree. Or in a ditch. Or in an embassy.'

Twitter quickly filled up with this curiously insipid form of comedic sludge. The Guardian's Technology editor Charles Arthur tweeted: 'It is absolutely not true that Julian Assange got twitter to fall over so that he could sneak out of the Ecuadorean embassy for a latte.'

David Aaronovitch of The Times wrote: 'When the embassy stunt fails expect Assange, slung over the shoulders of muscular friend, to be swung into St Paul's shouting "thanctuary!"'

The Times' home news reporter, John Simpson, tweeted: 'There are now signs offering a free #assange at the Ecuadorian embassy. Apparently nobody wants him. #occupyknightbridge'

Charlie Beckett, Guardian contributor and director of Polis at the London School of Economics, wrote: 'Fly Me To Cuba! (Or Ecaudaor) [sic] Julian Assange hijacks WikiLeaks'

The Deputy Editor of the Guardian US, Stuart Millar, tittered: 'I like to think that Assange chose the Ecuadorean embassy because it's so convenient for Harrods bit.ly/LcMsNd'

Millar posted a link to a map showing the proximity of the Ecuadorian embassy to **Harrods. Indeed this was a popular theme among senior liberal journalists.**

The Independent's Joan Smith wrote a piece under the title: 'Why do we buy Julian Assange's one-man psychodrama?... 'The news that the increasingly eccentric founder of WikiLeaks had sought political asylum in Knightsbridge, of all places, was greeted with equal measures of disbelief and hilarity. The London embassy of Ecuador is convenient for Harrods, although I don't imagine that was a major consideration when Assange walked into the building on Tuesday afternoon.'

Indeed not— Harrods was, of course, a total irrelevance. But anyway Smith concluded with these words: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I give you this superb vignette: the people's champion, shopping for human rights near Harrods.'

But it wasn't a 'superb vignette'; it made no sense at all. Smith also joked on Twitter: 'Some people will go to any lengths to avoid the Olympics.'

In the Financial Times, Robert Shrimmsley wrote a spoof of Assange's 'imagined embassy diary': 'Hour 1: Have to say **Harrods** is looking very faded. Not what I expected at all. Have given police the slip and smuggled myself into the store where I intend to hide out in the Food Hall till I can request political asylum from the Qataris.'

In the Guardian, Tim Dowling offered 'five escape routes from the Ecuadorean embassy', including: 'Ascend to embassy roof. Fire cable-loaded crossbow (all embassies have these; ask at reception) across the street to Harrod's roof. Secure and tighten the cable, then slide across, flying-fox style, using your belt as a handle. Make your way to the **Harrod's** helipad.'

BBC World Affairs correspondent, Caroline Hawley, enjoyed Dowling's piece, sending the link to her followers on Twitter: 'Advice for #Assange escape: order a pizza and escape as delivery boy via @guardian guardian.co.uk/media/2012/jun...'

Ian Dunt, Editor of politics.co.uk. wrote: 'Julian Assange, Chris Brown and Mike Tyson are party of the same depressing tapestry of hatred towards women bit.ly/LjSKZI'

Chris Brown and Mike Tyson have both been convicted of serious crimes against women— assault and rape, respectively. Assange has not been charged with any crime.

Aaronovitch tweeted on the same theme: 'Don't you think that many Assange supporters are misogynistic?'

On the Reuters website, John Lloyd, a contributing editor to the Financial Times, took the prize for crazed comparisons: 'When we talk of fallen angels, we invoke the original fallen angel, Satan or Lucifer, once beloved of God, the highest in his closest council, whose pride impelled him to challenge for heaven's rule— and came before his fall to Hell. Assange was an angel of a sort, at least to many.'

Contributor to the Guardian and Gay Times, Patrick Strudwick, commented: 'Does anyone think Julian Assange isn't enjoying all this?'

Stephen Glover wrote in the Daily Mail: 'The story of Julian Assange would be hilarious if he had not caused so much damage.' Glover added: 'If Julian Assange comes out, he shouldn't be given free passage to anywhere. If he stays put, I suggest we happily leave him for 15 or even 30 years in the Ecuadorean embassy, where his hosts can furnish him with a computer so that he can continue to hack away. **Female embassy staff, however, should probably tread warily.**'

On and on, journalists poured scorn on Assange. The Guardian's Deborah Orr tweeted: 'I think we can safely say that **Julian Assange's bid to run the world** has faltered. A bit.'

Orr added in the Guardian: 'It's hard to believe that, until fairly recently, Julian Assange was hailed not just as a radical thinker, but as a radical achiever, too.' The sub-heading above Orr's article read: 'Of course Assange should face the charges brought against him in Sweden.'

We, and others, asked her: 'What "charges"?'

Orr replied: 'I've informed the Guardian's reader's editor of the Assange inaccuracy. They'll follow it up. Thanks to all who pointed it out, and sorry.' The gaffe, corrected here, but not in the original sub-heading, was widespread across the media.

The Guardian's Stuart Millar commented: 'The serious downside of the #Assange situation is having to watch his risible Russia Today show for research purposes'

The Economist's International editor Edward Lucas quipped: 'my short piece on Assange: Leaker unplugged. I wonder if he's really in the embassy at all.'

Lucas's piece was surprisingly balanced and restrained, until the final paragraph: 'The choice of Ecuador is not as odd as it seems. Mr Assange recently interviewed Ecuador's president, Rafael Correa, for Russia Today, a Kremlin-backed television channel. The men got on splendidly, sharing splenetic anti-American views. Both also come across as thin-skinned, narcissistic and selective when it comes to media freedom. Mr Assange wanted to cancel [???] his own biography. Mr Correa has built up a state media empire [???] while threatening private outlets. Ecuador says it is now weighing the fugitive Australian's request, though its options seem limited. So do his.'

George Monbiot asked on Twitter: 'Can anyone point me to persuasive piece on why Sweden would be more likely to extradite #Assange to US than UK? Genuine inquiry.'

Monbiot's judgement was duly delivered two hours later: 'OK, having read strongest cases tweeps cld find, not convinced that Sweden more likely to extradite #Assange than UK.'

We tweeted: 'Now that's what I call professional journalism! Research begins (on Twitter!) 4:54 and ends 6:55 — done and dusted! :o)'

David Allen Green, legal correspondent for the New Statesman, wrote: 'Wonder what those well-meaning sorts who stood #Assange bail now think of his latest ploy to evade due process.' He added: 'And @Jemima_Khan, on hook for #Assange's bail, *not* told of his flight to Ecuador embassy, see bit.ly/LCoIT0. Shameful.'

A Guardian piece also focused on Khan, concluding with these words: 'Jemima Khan, socialite and associate editor at the New Statesman, was a high-profile donor to the fund — to the tune of £20,000 — but has called for Assange to face the allegations made against him in Sweden.'

"For the record, in response to those asking about Assange and bail money ..." she wrote on her Twitter page, "I personally would like to see Assange confront the rape allegations in Sweden and the two women at the centre have a right to a response."

Rod Liddle made the same point in a Sunday Times article about 'the WikiLeaks weirdo'. (Liddle, 'Leaking cash, WikiMugs?', Sunday Times, June 24)

But in fact Jemima Khan had said rather more than these reports suggested. She tweeted: 'Annoyed by journos quoting only half my tweet about Assange & deliberately ignoring other half.' And: 'My tweet misinterpreted. Obvs I'd like Assange to answer allegations & clear his name but I understand why he's taken such drastic action.'

Khan also retweeted a letter signed by Glenn Greenwald, Noam Chomsky, Michael Moore, Oliver Stone and many others calling for Ecuador to grant Assange asylum.

The media response to Assange's asylum request tells us much about the default brutality and reflexive herdthink of elite corporate journalism. We witnessed a rush to be seen to revile Assange as a 'turd', 'weirdo', 'narcissist' and joke. The crucial importance of his achievements, of his cause, was deemed utterly irrelevant beside his allegedly unbearable personal failings.

Almost as disturbing as the tsunami of mindless vitriol is the lack of dissent. **US analyst Glenn Greenwald has so far been the sole high-profile political commentator willing to take on the UK's hard-right 'liberals'. By contrast, the Guardian and Independent's dissident figleaves, and the many aspirational leftists who long to join them, have kept their heads down, saying nothing in support of a man who has risked his freedom and life to expose vast crimes of state.**

It is yet more evidence, if any were needed, that political 'convergence'— the empty 'choice' between Old Tories and New Tories— has brought with it a dramatic and dangerous narrowing of 'mainstream' thought and dissent. We seem to be at the dawn of a brave new world: a high-tech Dark Age dominated by a kind of corporate feudalism.

(Special thanks to filmmaker and activist Gabriele Zamparini who posted many of the above tweets and quotes on the Media Lens message board, archived here by the FiveFilters website.)

http://www.medialens.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=686:incinerating-assange-the-liberal-media-go-to-work&catid=25:alerts-2012&Itemid=69

Video of yesterday's forum on "WikiLeaks, Assange, and Democracy" is available online. The speakers were Christine Assange, Senator Scott Ludlam, Bernard Keane, Humphrey McQueen, David Hicks, Aloysia Brooks, and Mary Kostakidis.

<http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/23596479/highlight/272880>

Julian Assange, Pursued for the Crime of Practicing Journalism

*Kevin Gosztola
Firedog Lake
June 27, 2012*

Ecuador continues to review WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange's request for political asylum. Ana Albán, Ecuador's ambassador to the United Kingdom, met with President Rafael Correa and other heads of state to discuss the potential implications of granting asylum to Mr. Assange. In the meantime, he remains in the Ecuadorean embassy in the United Kingdom. The Ecuadorian foreign minister Ricardo Patino has said people can be holed up in embassies for a day, three weeks or five years waiting for a decision on asylum requests.

Ecuador has received a steady stream of messages supporting Assange's request for asylum. The country's Minister of Foreign Affairs recently stated, "More than 10,000 emails have been received at the moment...Thousands of people asking the Ecuadorian government to accord asylum to Julian Assange."

Part of this stream includes a letter of support for Assange that was recently hand-delivered to the Ecuadorian embassy in the UK. More than four thousand people signed the letter. And over eighty prominent people, including filmmaker Michael Moore, actor Danny Glover, filmmaker Oliver Stone, comedian Bill Maher, Salon writer Glenn Greenwald, Guardian contributor Naomi Wolf, Vietnam war whistle-blower Daniel Ellsberg, journalist Chris Hedges, writer Noam Chomsky, historian and filmmaker Tariq Ali, Patch Adams, MD, NSA whistleblower Thomas Drake, FBI whistleblower Coleen Rowley, FBI whistleblower Sibel Edmonds, Guantanamo habeas counsel Kent Spriggs, etc, signed a version of the letter. (I signed it as well.)

The letter declares, "We believe Mr. Assange has good reason to fear extradition to Sweden, as there is a strong likelihood that once in Sweden, he would be imprisoned, and then likely extradited to the United States." It warns of what might happen to Assange if he was extradited and subsequently charged for any crimes in Sweden and

highlights the US Justice Department's criminal investigation into founders, managers, and staffers of WikiLeaks including an empaneled grand jury. The letter also calls attention to the fact that the US is pursuing him because he committed an act of journalism:

We also call on you to grant Mr. Assange political asylum because the "crime" that he has committed is that of practicing journalism. He has revealed important crimes against humanity committed by the U.S. government, most notably in releasing video footage from an Apache helicopter of a 2007 incident in which the U.S. military appears to have deliberately killed civilians, including two Reuters employees. Wikileaks' release of thousands of U.S. State Department cables revealed important cases of U.S. officials acting to undermine democracy and human rights around the world.

The show of support stands in stark contrast to commentators and pundits in the media in the UK and US, who have cast Assange's decision to seek asylum as something lunatic and preposterous. They've sneered at him for seeking asylum to "postpone" legal proceedings. They've scorned him for wanting to go to a Latin American country that they perceive to be "anti-press." They've ridiculed him for engaging in this act that they see as just another one of his "narcissistic exploits" and even expanded **their bewildered exercises in punditry** to include taking aim at his supporters....

Additionally, there's Nick Cohen of The Observer (UK) who argued, "The right does not have a monopoly on paranoia, as the conspiratorial fantasies of supporters of Julian Assange show" and lays into Glenn Greenwald for promoting a "'leftist' defense of an alleged rapist." [Cohen is a rabid warmonger. --A.B.] Janet Albrechtsen of The Australian lambasts supporters, too, in this column where she recycles prior criticisms levied against WikiLeaks and stated, "Julian Assange, a class-A narcissist, has collected quite an entourage of adoring, useful idiots around him." Ian Dunt of Politics.Co.UK accused Assange and supporters of dismissing sex crimes charges (that do not exist) and believing that "being an activist who challenges American imperialism somehow exempts" him "from criminal responsibility." An editor for The Economist jeered at the request, suggesting both Assange and Correa are "thin-skinned, narcissistic and selective when it comes to media freedom." And Charlie Beckett of the London School of Economics and Political Science concluded Assange is "forsaking the due process of law. He is also abandoning his supporters. He is running from the fight. He really must feel that his case is scuppered. Perhaps he has fallen victim to the conspiracy fantasies of his supporters."

John Lloyd used the platform that Reuters affords him to delusionally compare Assange to Satan:

...When we talk of fallen angels, we invoke the original fallen angel, Satan or Lucifer, once beloved of God, the highest in his closest council, whose pride impelled him to challenge for heaven's rule— and came before his fall to Hell. Assange was an angel of a sort, at least to many. They saw his role as founder of WikiLeaks and leaker of thousands of pages of cables on Iraq and Afghanistan, and then from U.S. embassies all over the world, as the act of a liberator, a rebel with a cause, one who could poke the U.S. in the eye in a new way, with only a laptop at his disposal...

A friend of Assange, Vaughan Smith of the Frontline Club, went on CNN International and was subjected to what Smith called a “gladiatorial” interview by anchor Max Foster, who appeared to “beat” him up as “a token disbursement towards balanced journalism.” Foster kept interrupting Smith. Perhaps, the most revealing exchange in the segment was this:

FOSTER: Explain that, because certainly people look at this situation and think at the very least it’s rather odd that he’s just gone into an embassy in London and he’s hiding.

SMITH: Well, I mean, he’s not hiding, he’s seeking political asylum. You know, maybe in the west we just can’t get used to the idea that there are western dissidents as well as Chinese and other dissidents. And I think you know Julian has clearly, you know, run out of other options to keep himself from going to Sweden. And I’m 100 percent convinced, I know you know better than most — you know, he feels that if he gets sent to Sweden, he’ll get sent to America and what faces him is life imprisonment or perhaps even death.

FOSTER: Yeah, but that’s your argument and his argument. Another argument is he’s a bit of a coward. He won’t face his day in court. He’s a legal system coward — Britain, Sweden, America, they have respected legal systems and independent groups all regard them as quality systems. What’s he afraid of? Why can’t he go in and have his day in court and address the allegations?

SMITH: Well, I mean coward isn’t the word I think is reasonable to somebody who has taken on, you know, the strongest forces in the world. I mean, I don’t think even his detractors think he’s actually a coward.

Media consensus appears to be that, as Liberal Conspiracy blogger Sunny Hundal wrote, Assange’s request is “morally repugnant because he is avoiding answering to serious rape allegations.” Aside from the fact that it is within his legal right to seek asylum (which Hundal admits), Swedish prosecutors could have questioned Assange by now and decided whether there was enough of a case to actually charge Assange with rape or sexual assault. However, a French non-profit, Liberté-info, that is dedicated to promoting digital freedom and freedom of expression, described in a letter to the Ecuadorian embassy:

The Swedish prosecutor behind the case, Marianne Ny, has consistently refused to interview him through standard Mutual Legal Assistance protocols agreed between Sweden and the UK such as using video-conferencing or even interviewing him inside the Swedish embassy in London. She insists on extraditing him although he has not been charged with any crime, in Sweden or elsewhere. An extradition in this case would consequently not be proportional and would violate Mr Assange’s basic rights, knowing that he has already been under virtual house arrest for 560 days without charge. **Such obstinacy strongly suggests that the case built against him has nothing but a political motivation behind it, and mixing politics with justice often results in human rights violations.**

It seems if any party involved in this matter is unnecessarily complicating matters and undermining the cause of the women seeking justice, it is the Swedish authorities.

Then, there's the simple-minded yet condescending assertion that Assange and his supporters believe in conspiracy theories and it is highly improbable that the US would try to extradite him from Sweden. If Assange supporters are such crackpots, why won't Sweden offer "diplomatic guarantees" that he will not be extradited to the United States if he stopped fighting extradition to Sweden? The answer is there's a widespread US Justice Department investigation and agents or officials involved don't want to be "boxed in" by foreign diplomats.

One journalist, Philip Dorling, did what few of these sneering commentators seem to have done: he looked into whether Assange should be afraid. What did he find? That Assange was justified to be afraid:

[There is] a great deal of evidence — from the public statements of the US government, Australian diplomatic reports released to Fairfax Media under freedom-of-information laws, and disclosures in the pre-court martial proceedings concerning US Army private Bradley Manning who faces 22 charges, including the most serious one of "aiding the enemy" by disclosing classified military information. There has never been that much secrecy about the US government's determination to pursue WikiLeaks.

Foreign Policy published a post on Assange's "legal calculus." If he ended up in Sweden, according to Cherif Bassiouni, a professor at DePaul College of Law and an expert on international law, "the lack of judicial precedent in Sweden regarding extradition requests from the U.S., probably means that the Swedish courts" would "look to their most established case law on the matter of extraditions. Bassiouni, who "has argued extradition cases between involving Sweden and the U.S., adds that this would likely mean "Swedish courts" would "look to their experience with their Nordic neighbors with whom Sweden has had fairly low extradition requirements."

To the argument that it is easier to extradite Assange from the UK: Assange is wanted for questioning by Swedish prosecutors. The US would be interfering in this case if they put in a request to extradite Assange from the UK right now. Why not wait until he is in Sweden facing allegations and then pressure Sweden for his extradition?

For the past years the media has done nothing but concoct and lob smears at Assange. The truth is, to most in media he is not one of them. These commentators and reporters that sneer at him do not think he is a journalist. He is an "agitator" with an "ego." Former New York Times executive editor never considered him a journalist when he partnered with the Times. To Keller, he was a "source." Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press' Lucy Dalglish has said she doesn't think Assange vets information, takes responsibility, or does anything original with the material so he is not a journalist (Judith Miller, known for her role in pushing claims of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq prior to the US invasion in 2003, argued this as well but actually conceded he is a journalist.)

Roy Greenslade of The Guardian succinctly explained in January 2011 why journalists, especially American journalists, would not speak up for him as politicians and government officials called for his prosecution in December 2010. One, they refuse to engage in advocacy and are committed to so-called objectivity and nonpartisanship. Petition-signing is "verboden." Two, they oppose Assange's purpose. The "notion of

objectivity” makes them “suspicious of WikiLeaks’s journalistic *bona fides*.” Assange’s interest in disrupting the “functioning of governments” is seen as “advocacy,” which they find bothersome. And finally, they do not like his “methods” or “approach.” They consider his publication of material to have been “reckless.”

What this refusal to stick up for Assange and WikiLeaks has meant is the US government has been able to pursue Assange without much challenge. The US government has been able to enjoy a public that perceives Assange and WikiLeaks as a threat to order, as actors who wish to sow chaos and create anarchy. The State Department even contends Assange’s “political objectives” disqualify him from being able to be called a “journalist,” leaving the door open for any possible effort to prosecute him.

The smug reluctance has not meant the media does not cover him. Smith told Foster on CNN International Assange is accused of “taking the limelight,” but, “if you do a Google search on the most British newspaper sites, there’s about seven times as much interest in Julian Assange as in the leaks. If you go to AP, or Reuters, the wholesalers in this industry you’ll find that it’s more like three times.”

The press want it both ways: they want the benefit of scoops that this revolutionary’s organization has managed to uncover by obtaining secret information the United States would have withheld for decades if someone hadn’t provided it to WikiLeaks. They want the clicks and views that come from writing about “WikiLeaks documents” and the hits and traffic that come from articles that sensationalize the story of an Aussie “hacker,” who has embarrassed American superpower. Yet they do not want to speak out for him nor inform the public of what the implications might be if the US successfully pursues and convicts him for engaging in journalism. That leaves the door open for persecution of Assange, which greatly undermines freedom of the press....

Update

Denver Nicks, author of *Private: Bradley Manning, WikiLeaks and the Biggest Exposure of Official Secrets in American History* notes, unlike American reporters or journalists, American journalism school faculty have been supportive. The Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism sent a letter in December 2010 to President Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder that asserted Assange had engaged in First Amendment-protected activity and should not be prosecuted.

<http://dissenter.firedoglake.com/2012/06/27/julian-assange-pursued-for-the-crime-of-practicing-journalism/>

New evidence of US operation against Julian Assange

Richard Phillips
World Socialist Web Site
27 June 2012

While the Obama administration and its allies continue to deny the existence of a sealed US grand jury indictment against Julian Assange, further information has come

to light about the extent of Washington's operation against the founder of the WikiLeaks web site.

Assange, who is fighting extradition to Sweden on dubious sexual assault allegations, is seeking political asylum in Ecuador and remains inside its embassy in London. He has good reason to fear that if he is extradited to Sweden, Washington will intervene, extraditing him to face a trial on espionage charges.

According to WikiLeaks, special task forces have been established by US intelligence agencies, and subpoenas have been issued compelling WikiLeaks associates to appear before a grand jury. The US Justice Department has served subpoenas on ISPs and online services for the Twitter accounts and other private data of WikiLeaks staff and supporters.

Further preparations emerged at recent pre-trial hearings of Army Private Bradley Manning, who is accused of disclosing classified military data— later published on WikiLeaks as Cablegate, the Afghan War Diaries, the Iraq War Logs and the Collateral Murder video footage. Manning has been incarcerated for more than 760 days without facing trial.

Recent prosecution testimony indicates that the case against Manning is only a small element in a massive FBI investigation. US Army Major Ashden Fein, the lead prosecution counsel, told hearings this month that the FBI file on the case, most of it classified, totalled 42,135 pages or 3,475 documents. "Manning is a piece of the FBI file," Fein said, and only accounted for "8,741 pages or 636 different documents."

US Army Computer Crime Investigative Unit special agent Mark Mander also told the pre-trial hearings that the FBI was targeting seven civilians, including "the founders, owners or managers of WikiLeaks," for criminal activity and espionage. He said a US military investigation into WikiLeaks began in early June 2010, a few days after Manning was arrested.

Significantly, Mander revealed that the investigation was receiving legal advice from Neil McBride, US Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia. McBride is in charge of the grand jury empanelled in Alexandria, Virginia, according to WikiLeaks Central editor and journalist Alexa O'Brien, who has been reporting on the Manning case.

WikiLeaks also reported that US officials have divulged that the Diplomatic Security Service, Department of State, the CIA, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Office of the National Counterintelligence Executive are involved in the investigation, as well as the Department of Justice, the FBI and the military.

This evidence further exposes the Australian government's repeated insistence that it has "no evidence" of US preparations to indict Assange, who is an Australian citizen. Equally bogus are its claims to be providing Assange with full consular assistance (see: "Christine Assange, mother of WikiLeaks' founder, speaks with the WSWS").

In fact, the Labor government in Canberra has aided and abetted Washington's vendetta from the outset. Prime Minister Julia Gillard set the tone when she asserted in December 2010, without any justification, that WikiLeaks's activities were "illegal."

Assange decided to seek sanctuary in Ecuador because he had been “abandoned” by the Australian government.

Several thousand Americans have now signed an on-line petition calling on the Ecuadorian government to grant Assange political asylum. The signatories include Vietnam War whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg, and filmmakers Michael Moore, Danny Glover and Oliver Stone, as well as lawyers, journalists, authors, academics and former US government officials.

A letter accompanying the petitions states that Assange faces the real danger of being extradited to the US. “His crime,” the letter says, was exposing “crimes against humanity committed by the US government” and “important cases of US officials acting to undermine democracy and human rights around the world.”

The widespread support, in the US and internationally, for the stand taken by Assange, is no doubt provoking concern within the American political establishment. There are indications that the Obama administration will seek to strong-arm the Ecuador government to stop it granting asylum to Assange. A June 21 editorial in the Washington Post pointed to the sort of discussion underway behind the scenes in the White House and US military and intelligence circles.

The newspaper denounced Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa as a “small-time South American autocrat” who had “wallowed” with Assange in “anti-American slanders and paranoia.” It proposed that extreme economic pressure—via the termination of special trade preferences—be applied to convince Correa to reject Assange’s application.

“A full third of Ecuadoran foreign sales (\$10 billion in 2011) go to the United States, supporting some 400,000 jobs in a country of 14 million people,” the editorial stated. “Those preferences come up for renewal by Congress early next year. If Mr. Correa seeks to appoint himself America’s chief Latin American enemy and Julian Assange’s protector between now and then it’s not hard to imagine the outcome.”

An obvious question arises. If Assange’s conflict is purely with the Swedish government, then why is his asylum application of such concern in Washington? In its own way, the editorial confirms that behind the mask of the Swedish allegations, Assange faces the real prospect of being shipped off to the US, where he could spend the rest of his life behind bars.

If this US-led operation were to succeed it would strike a deep blow against the most basic democratic rights, including to document and lay bare the criminal actions and machinations of Washington and its allies. Workers and youth internationally must mobilise to defend Assange and Manning, guided by the understanding that this requires a direct political struggle against the governments involved, and the capitalist profit system itself, which is the root source of the mounting assault on fundamental democratic rights.

<http://www.wsws.org/articles/2012/jun2012/jass-j27.shtml>

Francisco Carrión ex-minister of Foreign Affairs: "Ecuador should grant asylum because Assange's life is at stake"

Submitted by FuturePress
WL Centrao
2012-06-28

We interviewed Francisco Carrión, Ecuadorian diplomat and political analyst. He is the former Foreign Affairs minister of Ecuador, having worked in embassies in Paris, Madrid, and London. After resigning as head of mission at the United Nations, he now teaches at FLACSO University.

The delay in Ecuador's answer points at deep thinking caused by the issue's complexity. What do you think are the key points in the debate?

It's normal that in a case like this, with multilateral implications and big powers as actors, that Ecuador is taking its time to answer. I think that it is fundamental to take into account the bilateral relations between the UK and Ecuador in these procedures. And the fact is, they are not written down formally in any covenant. The only thing that can be invoked is international agreements on Human Rights. But at the same time, the case is even more peculiar because there are three other countries involved. First there's Australia, Mr. Assange's home country. Second there's Sweden, which is formally requiring his extradition to testify for the allegations weighing over him. Finally there is the US, which has been very cautious but is probably the most important one, as their representatives on various levels have declared that they are waiting to judge him for revealing confidential documents.

On top of this, along with the asylum bid, the UK has to allow Mr. Assange to leave the country for him to reach Quito, which is a completely different story. Because even though Ecuador is in its full sovereign right to grant political protection, the UK, making use of its own internal normative code, can deny allowing him to leave. The case is very complicated.

For Ecuador, what type of consequences could take place if the asylum request is granted?

We have to consider two important elements. The first one is regarding Ecuador's interests. The other one, which is not so obvious, has to do with the principles of International Law. According to tradition and convention, Ecuador can grant asylum if Mr. Assange's life or physical integrity are in danger, and the accusations against him are political in nature. **I personally believe that in this case these prerequisites are fulfilled, and that Ecuador should grant asylum to Mr. Assange as his life is at stake.**

But do you think that there can be a backlash against Ecuador on behalf of one of the countries involved in the affair?

In legal terms no, because Ecuador is making fair use of its sovereign right while granting this protection. Of course, in practical terms we have to admit, without being naïve, that these countries could abstain from certain agreements in other areas such as cooperation or commercial endeavors. But I insist, from the legal point of view, there is no reason for this situation to bring Ecuador any sort of retaliation.

How can this process affect the international image of the country?

As I said, if the asylum based on human rights claims is finally granted, then Ecuador would certainly get international recognition. However, the huge public campaign surrounding Mr. Assange's figure and his work with WikiLeaks can have unforeseen consequences in the future.

If the UK denies letting Mr. Assange leave the country and he decides to remain in the Embassy, do you think Ecuador's sovereignty would be respected? Are there any precedents of violations of this protocol?

I find it very difficult for something like this to happen. The UK and its institutions are very solid, enough so as to respect the Vienna Convention which establishes the inviolability of diplomatic headquarters, correspondence, and vehicles. It would be a risky step and I don't think the UK will take it.

How does the Ecuadorian population regard this issue? How is the debate going on in the media and general public?

The press has given an ample coverage of the affair, but it's my impression that the Ecuadorian people have other worries and needs at the time, so the average citizen has not given it the recognition it deserves. Apart from the political and academical discourse, where there has been some reticence by the opposition, there have been some expressions of support from human right advocates.

<http://wlcentral.org/node/2695>

Correa in the catbird seat

*Submitted by GMason
WL Central
2012-06-28*

"Catbird seat", noun: "an advantageous situation or condition"; "sitting pretty". This North American idiom readily applies to the current position of Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa, who was hoisted into the international spotlight when he recently became host to Julian Assange. As a result Correa has raised the global profile of his small nation of 14 million, and the tens of thousands of letters received by his embassy in the past ten days indicate that granting Assange asylum would instantly make him a global hero. With little economic dependence on the U.S., and with Assange at his disposal, Correa potentially holds significant leverage over Washington.

Ten days after Julian Assange first presented himself to Ecuador's London embassy to ask for political asylum in the South American nation, President Rafael Correa has yet to announce his decision regarding Assange's request. Last weekend Ana Alban, Ecuador's ambassador to Britain, reportedly returned to Quito to brief Correa and

Ecuador's Foreign Minister on the matter, and the country's top lawyers are now reviewing the case. Vowing to "proceed cautiously, responsibly and seriously," Correa has stated his intention to discuss the situation with the UK, the U.S., and Sweden before making a final determination. Numerous insiders have signaled that processing Assange's asylum request could take quite some time.

So why the delay? By many accounts, the UK sees the Assange case as a "hot potato" that it would be relieved to be rid of. And the consensus remains that, in the event of Assange's extradition to Sweden, the Scandinavian country would serve merely as a way station before handing him over to the U.S. for prosecution over the WikiLeaks disclosures. Therefore, Correa's deliberations most likely revolve around considerations of the potential impact that granting Assange asylum might have on U.S.-Ecuador relations. Debate swirls around the issue, with pundits publicly weighing the pros and cons of Correa's options.

Some U.S. hawks have warned that choosing to harbor Assange could damage Ecuador's trade relations with the U.S.; a Washington Post op-ed threatened that, if Correa grants Assange asylum, the U.S. might retaliate by revoking Ecuador's special trade preferences. Cynthia Arnson, Latin Director of the Woodrow Wilson Centre, agreed that Ecuador "could basically forget about any renewal of the trade preferences if it granted safe haven to Assange."

A closer look, however, reveals little Ecuadorean vulnerability to such measures. Unlike many other South American countries, Ecuador does not receive significant financial backing from the U.S., and Washington has limited influence on the nation. Additionally, the small, South American country has in the independent-minded Correa a leader who has spent his five-year reign alternately defying and cultivating his contacts in Washington, and who gained massive popular support while demonstrating little fear of the consequences of U.S. disapproval.

Like many other South American countries, Ecuador has a history of enduring CIA-backed assassinations and military coups that toppled popular presidents who dared defy Washington. According to a recent book by William Blum, for the past several generations, "in virtually every department of the Ecuadorean government could be found men occupying positions, high and low, who collaborated with the CIA for money and/or their own particular motivation." **Former CIA agent [Philip Agee](#) also described and deplored the CIA's program for corrupting police officers to win their "goodwill."** Those leaders resisting U.S. pressure risked overthrow, forced resignation, or death at the hands of the military.

Correa, however, has governed undaunted, even though such threats remain. A 2008 report showed the persistence of systematic corruption tactics that target Ecuador's police and military services. **Issued by Defense Minister Javier Ponce, the document revealed that, due to CIA infiltration of the Ecuadorean police force, many officers came to "maintain informal economic dependence on the United States,"** in order to "pay for informants, training, equipment and operations."

The report followed a crisis in which Colombia sent its military over Ecuador's borders in a raid against guerrillas in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC); in the aftermath, **evidence surfaced that not only had the CIA facilitated the attack, but also U.S. intelligence services had infiltrated Ecuador's police, intelligence, and military agencies. According to the report, one unit of the country's police force was "practically financed and controlled by the U.S. Embassy."**

Although his government stated that it would not sever its Washington ties over the CIA's alleged infiltration, President Correa publicly voiced his displeasure, purged his military, implemented sanctions against police agents collaborating with the U.S., and closed a US\$70 million U.S. Air Force base at Manta on Ecuador's coast. He retorted, "if they [the U.S.] want, we won't close the base in 2009, but the United States would have to allow us to have an Ecuadoran base in Miami in return."

With Correa, national sovereignty and respect are serious political issues. Despite his professed love for his neighbors in North America (where he earned his master's and doctoral degrees), during his tenure Correa has expelled three U.S. diplomats who appeared to threaten Ecuadorean sovereignty. The latest incident occurred last year, after embassy cables released by WikiLeaks revealed that U.S. ambassador to Ecuador Heather Hodges suggested Correa had deliberately turned a blind eye to high-level corruption in his police force. This disclosure and Hodges's "arrogance" caused Correa to give Hodges the boot; Ecuador was the only country to expel its U.S. ambassador over WikiLeaks cable disclosures.

Repeatedly, President Rafael Correa has shown that he is not cowed by powerful U.S. interests. He took on Texaco for ruining the Ecuadorean Amazon, and leveled restrictions against big oil companies-- which, according to a WikiLeaks cable, then complained about Ecuador's "rigid labor rules" and "a large increase in the minimum wage." Correa has also systematically decreased his country's economic reliance on North America, in some cases forging alliances with U.S. enemies. He has extended financial and oil diplomacy to Iran, and in January hosted Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Moreover, Ecuador has joined the Bolivarian Alliance of the Americas (ALBA), an initiative dedicated to creating a new currency that would serve as an alternative to the U.S. dollar. Correa has further displeased the U.S. by exporting oil to China, extending a hand to Russia, and courting the Castros; he boycotted a Summit of the Americas to protest Washington's snubbing of Cuba.

During the Bush years, Correa famously commented that Hugo Chávez's description of George W. Bush as Satan was unfair to the Devil. A strong WikiLeaks supporter, Ecuador's president has applauded Assange's project for putting Washington in "check." "Rafael Correa," one journalist wrote last week, "is not likely to be easily intimidated." Nor is the political gain from these initiatives likely lost on Ecuador's savvy President. **In a region where U.S. hegemony is resented and Washington is reviled, these moves have only boosted Correa's already-soaring popularity.**

In fact, Washington appears to understand that it may need Ecuador more than Ecuador needs the U.S. Not only do the two countries have a strong trading relationship, but Ecuador is one of the few allies [*despite all of the above? --A.B.*] the U.S. has left among the nations of South America, which have rebelled against U.S. interventionism. In 2010 the Obama administration sent Secretary of Hillary Clinton to Ecuador, in the hopes of thawing relations that had grown chilly during the last Bush administration. Although it has reportedly pressured Ecuador to hand over Assange, in public the U.S. government's reaction has been uncharacteristically muted, describing the Assange affair as "a UK-Ecuador-Sweden issue." Some specialists opine that the U.S. will not punish Ecuador for giving Assange asylum.

Whatever Washington's reaction, Correa no doubt realizes that, by granting Julian Assange's asylum request, he could instantly "make himself a hero with the global anti-

American left" [and all those who are not "anti-American" but offended by U.S. behaviour -- A.B.]; burnish his free-press credentials (which had been tarnished somewhat after a crackdown against a banker-backed media campaign that attacked his presidency); improve Ecuador's tourism industry; and boost his populist image at home, thereby ensuring his victory in next year's presidential elections.

Meanwhile, as Assange reportedly remains holed up in an embassy office, the tens of thousands of messages that have poured in supporting the Australian's asylum request may mean that Correa can wring concessions from Washington by using the WikiLeaks leader as a bargaining chip.

Considering the potential political benefits and Correa's consistent diversification of global alliances, El Tiempo's observation that "the Correa administration doesn't care if the Assange affair tarnishes diplomatic relations with the U.S. or Great Britain" may well be true.

<http://wcentral.org/node/2693>



Statement made by Susan Benn on 29 June in front of the Ecuadorian Embassy in London:

Thank you for coming. My name is Susan Benn from the Julian Assange Defense Fund. I have spoken to Julian today and he is in good spirits. He is grateful for the support shown to him by the people of Ecuador and so many others from around the world.

Yesterday Mr. Assange was served with a letter from the Metropolitan police service requesting that he surrender himself to the Belgravia police station at 11.30 this morning.

Mr Assange has been advised that he should decline to comply with the police request. This should not be considered any sign of disrespect. Under both international and domestic UK law asylum assessments take priority over extradition claims.

The issues faced by Mr. Assange are serious. His life and liberty and the life and liberty of his organization and those associated with it are at stake.

The United States Government has instigated a grand jury investigation against Julian Assange and other “founders or managers” of Wikileaks. Australian diplomats have described this investigation as being of “unprecedented scale and nature”. There is irrefutable evidence in the public record of subpoenas being issued and witnesses being compelled to testify against Mr. Assange. WikiLeaks, the ACLU, the Center for Constitutional Rights and other groups have been fighting these subpoenas and other issues arising from the investigation in multiple US courts. US officials have said in open court that the FBI file about the investigation has now reached 42,135 pages.

The US department of justice admitted yesterday that its investigation into WikiLeaks proceeds. It is only a matter of time before US authorities begin extradition proceedings against Julian and other leading members of WikiLeaks on various charges including conspiracy to commit espionage. There are credible reports that a sealed indictment has already been made against Mr. Assange. Under US law a sealed indictment can only be made public once Mr. Assange is in custody. For a US official to otherwise acknowledge the existence of a sealed indictment is a criminal offense. The Independent newspaper’s diplomatic correspondent reported that informal talks between the US and Sweden have been conducted.

It should be made clear what would happen if Julian was extradited to the USA. The United Nations special rapporteur for torture, Juan Mendez has formally found that the United States has subjected Julian Assange’s alleged source in this matter, the young soldier Bradley Manning, to conditions amounting to torture. The UN found that the United States subjected Bradley Manning to “cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment”. Mr. Manning has been charged by the US government with the capital offense of “aiding the enemy” in relation to his alleged interaction with Mr. Assange. Bradley Manning has been detained without trial for two years and was placed into solitary confinement for 9 months in his cell for 23 hours a day, stripped naked and woken every 5 minutes. His lawyer and support team say these harsh measures were to coerce him into implicating Julian Assange.

So it is clear that there is a legal process in place which will result in taking Julian to the US, which if allowed to succeed would violate his basic rights.

It is accepted by the UK Supreme Court that Julian Assange has not been charged with any criminal offence in Sweden. It is also accepted that he was by told by Swedish authorities that he was free to leave Sweden. And it is also accepted that he has continuously offered to be interviewed by the Swedish authorities here in the UK, should they wish to do so. Although it is normal procedure, Swedish authorities have refused, without reason, to make the 3 hour trip to London and to interview Julian causing him to be trapped in the UK under virtual house arrest for 561 days and an additional 10 days in solitary confinement— all without charge. Instead they have issued an INTERPOL Red notice and extradition requests.

Julian and his legal team have previously sought assurances from both the UK government and the Swedish government that they will guarantee safe passage after the completion of legal interviews with Mr Assange and both have previously refused, although we are hopeful they will look at the matter again. **The Swedish executive [prosecution authority --A.B.] publicly announced on June 14 that it would detain Mr. Assange in prison without charge.**

Once in Sweden under such grave restrictions it would be impossible for Mr. Assange to exercise his asylum rights.

Mr. Assange did not feel safe from US extradition in the UK. We are all too aware of the abuses of the US-UK extradition treaty. Although Mr. Assange has been trapped in the UK, under dangerous circumstances, he at least has had the freedom to apply for political asylum.

It is in this context that Julian has made the difficult decision to seek refuge inside the Ecuadorian Embassy to ask for asylum. Julian will remain in the Embassy under the protection of the Ecuadorian government while evidence for his application is being assembled and processed.

For further accurate information about these issues, please see:
www.justice4assange.com

Thank you.

<http://wikileaks.org/Press-Statement-By-Julian-Assange.html>

Video: <http://www.rt.com/news/assange-statement-ecuador-wikileaks-085>

After a few weeks discussion, the OpenLeaks Wikipedia page has been [removed and merged](#) with that of Daniel Domscheit-Berg, as no announcements from OpenLeaks have been made since January 2011.

— *WikiLeaks News*, 2012-06-29

Britain Refuses to Extradite U.S. Sex Crimes Suspect on Human Rights Grounds

An American wanted for alleged sex-crime offenses won't be extradited from the U.K. after a court ruled that a Minnesota sex-offender treatment program would violate his human rights.

*Justin Bergman
Time
June 29, 2012*

Julian Assange's extradition case isn't the only one generating headlines— and outrage— in the U.K.: On Thursday, the British High Court blocked an attempt by the U.S. government to extradite an American citizen wanted in Minnesota for alleged child sex crimes. **The reason? The court ruled that if Shawn Sullivan were to be committed to Minnesota's controversial sex offender treatment program, it would represent a "flagrant denial" of his human rights.**

The 43-year-old Sullivan, described by the media in the U.K. and Ireland as "one of America's most-wanted pedophiles," is accused of raping a 14-year-old girl and sexually molesting two 11-year-olds in Minnesota in the 1990s. As prosecutors were preparing to file charges against him, Sullivan fled to Ireland where he holds dual citizenship. **While there, he was convicted of sexually assaulting two 12-year-old Irish girls, and received a suspended sentence.**

He later moved to London on his Irish passport and was arrested two years ago. He **married his girlfriend, a U.K. Ministry of Justice official**, while being held in London's Wandsworth Prison. He was eventually released on bail, though he had to wear an electronic device.

The U.S. was understandably irked by the High Court ruling. "We strongly disagree with the decision of the court that he should not be extradited to face trial in the U.S.," said a spokesman for the U.S. Embassy, according to the Telegraph. An attorney representing the alleged victims in Minnesota said the only recourse left to them was a lawsuit in U.S. civil court.

At issue for the High Court was the Minnesota sex offender treatment program, which is considered one of the harshest in the U.S. If a judge decides that a person is sexually dangerous or sexually psychopathic, he or she can be incarcerated at one of the program's treatment facilities indefinitely — regardless of how long ago the offenses were committed or even if the individual was convicted of a crime. **Since the program was launched in 1988, only two people have reportedly been released. There are currently more than 600 people in the program.**

In the court's ruling, the U.K. justices were unflagging in their criticism. "Civil commitment is unknown to European law, but is a process available in 20 states in the United States. Minnesota's law is said to be more draconian than many others," Lord Justice Alan Moses wrote. The other judge on the panel, David Eady, concurred, saying "there is a more than fanciful risk that the appellant would become subject to the civil commitment process."

Meanwhile, as Sullivan goes free, the Assange drama continues to play out at the Ecuadorean embassy across town. The divisive Wikileaks founder, wanted for questioning in Sweden about sex-crime allegations, has been ordered to leave the embassy and report to a London police station as part of his extradition process.

Assange, however, remains defiant. Asked by the BBC whether he'll obey the order as he awaits Ecuador's decision over whether to grant him political asylum, he responded: "Our advice is that asylum law both internationally and domestically in the UK takes precedence to extradition law, so the answer is almost certainly not."

<http://newsfeed.time.com/2012/06/29/britain-refuses-to-extradite-u-s-sex-crimes-suspect-on-human-rights-grounds/>

Two men, two Expressen newsbills: Julian Assange vs. Percy Barnevik

The Swedish tabloid Expressen has provided an instructive demonstration of its selective editorial policy regarding sex-crime accusations against famous men -- in today's case Percy Barnevik, the former titan of Swedish industry, whose treatment by Expressen contrasts notably with that meted out to Julian Assange; see next page.

— Al Burke



Expressen, 21 August 2010

**WikiLeaks Julian Asange
HUNTED
Suspected of
RAPE
IN SWEDEN**



Expressen, 29 June 2012

**PERCY
Barnevik
ARRESTED
DENIES
SEX CRIME
"It is a woman who
is persecuting me"**

WikiLeaks founder Assange faced tough choice: lawyer

*Dan De Luce
AFP
2012-06-30*

WASHINGTON — WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange faced a "difficult choice" in defying a British police order for extradition to Sweden, one of his lawyers said Friday.

Assange was confronted with risks no matter which path he took and is gambling that Ecuador will look sympathetically at his request for political asylum, said Michael Ratner, a human rights attorney who is on Assange's legal defense team.

The 40-year-old Australian refused to comply with a British police order to turn himself in for extradition to Sweden and instead walked into the Ecuadoran embassy in London on June 19, asking for asylum.

"He had two very difficult choices. I think he would go to Sweden immediately if he got assurances from the United States that there was not going to be a prosecution," Ratner told AFP.

But the US government would have to provide a clear guarantee with no "minced words," he said.

The United States has said it has no role in the extradition dispute.

Assange faces questioning in Sweden over sexual assault allegations but he denies the allegations and insists it is part of a politically-motivated effort to get him extradited to the United States, where he fears he could be put on trial for espionage or other crimes.

Confronted with the option of being transferred to a Swedish prison without the possibility of seeking political asylum, Assange made an understandable decision, Ratner said.

"Neither (option) is very palatable," said Ratner, president emeritus of the Center of Constitutional Rights who has represented detainees at the US-run prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. "He made a very difficult choice for himself."

Assange's concerns that he could be prosecuted in a US court for serious crimes were well-founded, given details that have emerged about a grand jury investigation, public warnings from top US officials and reported questioning of WikiLeaks associates, according to Ratner.

US officials have refrained from making strident public comments about Assange in recent months, he said.

"I think they're quiet now because there's a grand jury or an indictment and they don't want to prejudice any ultimate trial. That would be my best guess."

Ratner said Assange could face difficult conditions in any "pre-trial confinement" in the United States, similar to those imposed on Army private Bradley Manning, charged with handing over a trove of secret files to Assange's WikiLeaks website.

WikiLeaks enraged Washington by publishing a flood of secret information about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as more than 250,000 confidential US diplomatic cables. His supporters paint him as a whistle-blowing hero but his critics denounce him as a traitorous anarchist.

His defense lawyer expressed cautious optimism that Ecuador would approve Assange's request for asylum.

"I'm very hopeful about it, I'll put it that way. They have the ability and the president and the country have the guts to stand up to the United States," said Ratner, citing Ecuador's decision to close a US military base in 2008. He added: "Of all the countries that would be one of the most favorable (to Assange's

request), it would be Ecuador."

Assange is beyond the reach of the police as long as he stays inside Ecuador's embassy on diplomatic territory.

Ecuador's leftist President Rafael Correa, who has often been at odds with Washington and offered Assange asylum in 2010, has said that the South American country will take its time considering the application.

'Without asylum Assange heading straight to US for torture'

RussiaToday
30 June 2012

With his life and liberty at stake, WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is to stay under the protection of the Ecuadorian government while his asylum appeal is considered, says lawyer Susan Benn from the Julian Assange Defense Fund.

Ray McGovern, a former CIA analyst, talks to RT. He says unless Assange is granted asylum, US prosecutors getting their hands on him is a done deal. And considering the "draconian espionage act of 1917" under which he would be tried, getting to Ecuador becomes a life and death matter for the WikiLeaks founder.

Video at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHVoe-jTg6Q&feature=youtu.be>

Does the US have a case against Julian Assange?

Dan De Luce
AFP
30 June 2012

WASHINGTON — If WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange ever ends up in a US courtroom, prosecutors could face an uphill struggle trying to convict him, given America's legal safeguards for publishers, analysts say.

Citing fears of prosecution in the United States, Assange remained holed up at Ecuador's embassy in London on Saturday, defying a British police order to turn himself in for extradition to Sweden.

Assange faces sexual assault allegations in Sweden but has refused to set foot there, saying he runs the risk of extradition to the United States, which he insists is intent on charging him with espionage or other serious crimes for releasing troves of once-secret files to the public.

Assange's lawyers and supporters say his concerns are justified and not driven by paranoia. They cite tough statements from senior US officials, interrogations of Assange's colleagues and a grand jury investigation that has reportedly questioned associates of Bradley Manning, the soldier accused of passing hundreds of classified

documents to WikiLeaks.

"The grand jury is a serious business," said Michael Ratner, a human rights lawyer advising Assange. referring to the discussions to determine whether a criminal indictment will be issued.

Some with links to Assange have reportedly faced questioning when trying to travel outside the United States and federal authorities at one point demanded Twitter open the accounts of WikiLeaks figures. **"They're all over this case," Ratner told AFP.**

The US Justice Department will not comment on the grand jury probe and says it has no role in the extradition proceedings in London. **But spokesman Dean Boyd said: "There continues to be an investigation into the WikiLeaks matter."**

Some US lawmakers and commentators have called for Assange to be charged with espionage or for conspiracy to obtain secret documents, arguing that he intended to sabotage America's foreign policy and endangered lives by revealing the identities of informants.

Charging Assange under the Espionage Act -- a vaguely worded World War I-era law-- would be a difficult challenge, as it requires the government to show the accused intended to harm the US government or aid a foreign power, analysts said.

Without knowing the evidence held by US investigators, it's difficult to predict how the government will pursue Assange's case, said Charles Stimson, a former federal prosecutor.

"It's a very open question as to whether you could try him for espionage," said Stimson, a legal fellow at The Heritage Foundation think-tank who oversaw detainee policies at the Pentagon under ex-president George W. Bush.

A better option for prosecutors may be "to see whether or not they could charge him with something like conspiracy to disclose classified documents," he said. But such an approach would be breaking new legal ground, experts said. *[U.S. governments have long been "breaking new legal ground" by ignoring and trampling on the law. --A.B.]*

Unlike Manning, charged with handing over a massive cache of secret State Department cables and military intelligence logs to WikiLeaks, Assange is not a US government employee obliged to withhold classified documents.

The United States has "never really successfully prosecuted a non-government official for taking documents that were classified," Ratner said. *[Until recently it had not done a lot of things, such as assassinating its own citizens by order of the president. --A.B.]*

His defense attorneys portray him as a publisher, who merely came into possession of sensitive information. But US investigators would likely try to paint Assange as a plotter who helped Manning spill secrets, with the aim of tarnishing Washington.

Assange's supporters can take comfort from a recent case against two pro-Israel lobbyists accused of passing on classified information to Israel, the first time civilians were charged under the Espionage Act. After a long legal battle, prosecutors eventually dropped the charges in 2009. *[That involved Israel. --A.B.]*

The seminal case that proved the limits of government authority over publishing secrets came in 1971 over the Pentagon Papers, when President Richard Nixon tried to

stop The New York Times from publishing classified documents on the Vietnam War. The bid failed, with the courts citing the free speech rights enshrined in the First Amendment of the US Constitution. *[It is doubtful that the same ruling would be made by the present court in the present climate. --A.B.]*

Renowned First Amendment lawyer Floyd Abrams, who worked on the Pentagon Papers case, said Assange's website raises questions about the limits of freedom of expression, including the publishing of names of Afghans cooperating with the US government.

Some of Assange's public comments have seemed to suggest a desire to undermine US foreign policy *[only the destructive and illegal elements of that policy, which are many --A.B.]*, comments that could backfire on him in court, Abrams said.

"WikiLeaks has a First Amendment argument, and it is a serious First Amendment argument, if it is ever charged," Abrams said on C-Span television in 2010. "At the same time, the government has a genuine and serious national security argument to be made with respect to the behavior, often the misbehavior, of WikiLeaks." *[An argument need not be "genuine and serious" to be justified by "national security". --A.B.]*

Michael Moore har faktiskt en poäng

Ledare Paulina Neuding
Svenska Dagbladet
30 juni 2012

I veckan tog Ecuadors Londonambassad emot ett upprop till förmån för Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange, undertecknat av en lång rad kändisar. Kravet är att Assange ska ges politisk asyl i landet för att undgå utlämning till Sverige. Bland undertecknarna finns namn som vänsterextremisten [???] Noam Chomsky och dokumentär-filmaren Michael Moore (som tidigare hävdade att anklagelserna mot Assange är en bluff orkestrerad av USA — vilket kanske kan få recensenter som hållt klappor, solar och getingar över hans filmer att fundera på hans inställning till fakta).

För Sveriges del finns en besvärande aspekt av uppropet i dess kritik mot svensk häktningsslagstiftning och -praxis: "[Assange skulle], om han blev åtalad i Sverige, bli fängslad under 'väldigt svåra omständigheter, och skulle kunna hållas isolerad från omvärlden, istället för att släppas mot borgen'."

Kritiken stämmer. Flera internationella organ — däribland Europarådets antitortyrkommitté — har kritiserat Sverige för att våra rättsvårdande myndigheter är snabba att besluta om så kallade restriktioner vid häktning. (Adam Tiwe granskar denna praxis i ett reportage i Neo.) **Att häktas med restriktioner innebär att den misstänktes post får granskas av åklagare, att han inte får ringa eller ta emot telefonsamtal, nekas tillgång till tv och tidningar och inte får ha kontakt med andra fångar eller sina anhöriga.**

De vittnesmål som med jämna mellanrum når oss från svenska häkten är oroväckande. Som exempelvis detta, från barnläkaren vid Astrid Lindgrens barnsjukhus, som häktades med restriktioner misstänkt för dråp på en liten flicka förra året: "Sista natten så var det en polis som tittade till mig. Han sparkade med sina stålhättor på dörren varje gång och skrek att jag skulle ställa mig upp, så att han skulle

se att jag levde. Till slut när han hade gjort det varje halvtimme så orkade jag inte. Då kom han in i cellen och sa att jag var tvungen att ställa mig upp. Jag sa att jag ska på förhandling i morgon, jag måste få sova, jag förstår inte varför du ska ha mig att stå upp varje halvtimme här på natten. Då slängde han ner mig på britsen, in i väggen...” (Läkartidningen 21/12 2011).

När jag nyligen granskade ett åtal mot en ung sexbrottsmisstänkt man berättade han för mig att han inte fått ta med sig sina glasögon när han greps, och att han inte kunde se förhørsledaren tvärs över bordet. Under de dagar han satt häktad med restriktioner visste hans familj inte vart han hade tagit vägen, berättade han. Liksom barnläkaren friades han senare från alla misstankar.

Detta är de misstänkta versioner, som inte behöver vara sanna. De är också bara anekdoter, som kanske inte alls är typiska för hur häktningar fungerar i stort. Men det störande i detta är att när historier av det här slaget når oss, **kommer vittnesmålen från medelklasspersoner som har kunnat redogöra för sina upplevelser på ett verbalt sätt för skribenter i Läkartidningen och SvD, efter att de har friats från misstankar. Hur många sådana vittnesmål når oss inte?**

- *Paulina Neuding jurist och chefredaktör för det liberala samhällsmagasinet Neo*

[Kommentarer](#)

Links to other parts of the series

Documents in PDF format

Require Adobe Reader or similar program

Part 1: 14 August 2010 – 16 December 2010
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case1.pdf

Part 2: 17 December 2011– 17 February 2011
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case2.pdf

Part 3: 20 February 2011 – 17 July 2011
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf

Part 5: 1 July 2012 – 28 October 2012
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case5.pdf

For more and better-organized information:
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange.htm

Other resources

<http://wlcentral.org>

<http://justice4assange.com>

<http://rixstep.com/1>

<http://www.samtycke.nu>