

Bradley Manning Addresses Sentencing Hearing

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He's an American hero. He's no spy. He committed no crimes. He acted responsibly. He did the right thing. He deserves praise, not prosecution.

He exposed US war crimes. He fulfilled his legal obligation to do so. He's victimized unjustly. Police state injustice wants him imprisoned longterm. Systemic unfairness defines US policy.

Manning was convicted on 20 of 22 charges. They include six espionage counts. He potentially faces 90 years imprisonment. On August 14, he addressed his sentencing hearing. More on that below.

Manning's a 2013 Nobel Peace Prize nominee. Over 100,000 people worldwide support him. On August 12, [RootsAction](#) co-founder Norman Solomon delivered thousands of pages to Oslo's Nobel Committee.

They urge awarding this year's prize to a worthy nominee. A petition on his behalf says "(n)o individual has done more to push back against what Martin Luther King, Jr. called 'the madness of militarism' than Bradley Manning."

He acted above and beyond the call of duty. Earlier he said:

"If there's one thing to learn from the last ten years, it's that government secrecy and lies come at a very high price in blood and money."

His biographer Chase Madar wrote:

"And though information is powerless on its own, it is still a necessary precondition for any democratic state to function."

Solomon acknowledged Manning has little chance to win. He called doing so a "very long longshot." He said the award's "in dire need of rehabilitation. (I)n truth," (it) needs Bradley Manning much more than the other way around."

Obama deplores peace. He won while waging war. He's waging them without end. He's got new targets in mind.

"No one can doubt" Manning's dedication "to human rights and peace," said Solomon. On Oslo's Henrik Ibsen Street, "the office of the Nobel Committee is under a war cloud of its own making."

Nobel Committee research director Asle Toje said receiving a "large volume of supporting material for a candidate" isn't unprecedented. It'll "neither help nor hinder (Manning's) candidacy."

In other words, he doesn't have a chance. Obama supporters might have been counted on fingers of both hands. Maybe one hand. Maybe a single nomination with no additional support. A deplorable one for sure.

Peacemakers are automatically disqualified. Waging war's considered a Nobel attribute. Enough to make it worth honoring.

It's what Committee members most prefer. It shows in numerous past honorees chosen.

On October 11, this year's winner will be announced. According to Reuters, 259 individuals and groups were nominated. Likely none have Manning's stature. Peacemakers aren't welcome. They're systematically rejected. It's longstanding Nobel policy.

On August 14, Manning made a three-minute [statement](#). He did so unsworn. He did it to avoid prosecutorial cross-examination.

He apologized for the "unintended consequences of (his) actions." He "believed (he) was going to help people. (He's) sorry (his) actions hurt (them)."

He's "sorry (he) hurt the United States." He said he was dealing with personal problems. More on that below. He knows he has "to pay a price for (his) decisions and actions."

"How on Earth could I, a junior analyst, possibly believe I could change the world for the better over those with the proper authority," he said.

"I know that I can and will be a better person. I hope that you can give me the opportunity to prove, not through words but through conduct, that I can return to a productive place in society."

WikiLeaks issued a statement saying "(t)he only currency this military court will take is Bradley Manning's humiliation."

"In light of this, (his) forced decision to apologize to the US government in the hope of shaving a decade or more off of his sentence must be regarded with compassion and understanding."

His "apology is a statement extorted from him under the overbearing weight of the US military justice system."

"It took three years and millions of dollars to extract two minutes of tactical remorse from this brave soldier."

Doing so isn't Manning's shame. He's been through hell and then some. He knows US ruthlessness first hand.

He revealed what he knew honorably. He exposed unprincipled crimes of war and against humanity. America belongs in the dock, not him.

Prosecuting him turns justice on its head. It mocks judicial fairness. It perpetuates the lie about American humanitarian intervention. It masks its dark side.

It defends the indefensible. It permits perpetual war. It makes peace impossible. It assures millions more will die. It risks humanity's annihilation.

Bradley Manning Support Network director Jeff Paterson said:

His “brief statement today to Judge Lind apologizing for what happened in no way alters the fact that he took heroic action in the midst of an illegal war.”

Perhaps he “didn’t blow the whistle on the wrongs he saw in the correct military manner, but he did something while most did nothing.”

“That is why millions have been moved to support him, and why we will not relent until he is free.”

Dr. David Moulton testified as Manning’s forensic psychiatric expert. He called him “true to his principles.”

Clinical psychologist Dr. Michael Worsely diagnosed him with Gender-Identity Dysphoria (GID). He added unspecified anxiety-related personality disorder.

Manning’s gay. He felt isolated under great stress. He endured the effects of Don’t Ask Don’t Tell (DADT).

According to Worsely, he worked in an “almost openly hostile environment.” Doing so made life “extremely difficult.”

Admitting homosexually potentially risks court-martial. Administrative military separation may follow revealing a desire to be the opposite gender.

Concealing profound inner feelings subjects many people to great stress. Some handle it better than others. No one finds it easy.

Military life makes it harder. Pentagon policy’s openly hostile to gays. Manning lived under what Worsely called a “hyper-masculine environment.” Doing so made pressure “incredible,” he added.

He believed he should have been chaptered out of Army service. GID is longterm. It’s better handled outside military life.

Following Manning’s statement, the defense rested its sentencing case. Court resumes Friday. Government prosecutors may rebuttal. Sentencing may be next week.

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