

# Bradley Manning Wrongfully Sentenced: 35 years. Longest ever Punishment for Leaking Government Information.

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Global Research, August 22, 2013

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

*On July 30, he was wrongfully convicted on 20 of 22 charges. They included multiple Espionage Act violations. It's a WW I relic.*

*It belongs in history's dustbin. It's unrelated to exposing serious government wrongdoing.*

*Manning revealed what everyone needs to know. He disclosed grave war crimes. Perpetrators are free to kill again. Doing the right thing got Manning convicted.*

Judge Col. Denise Lind sentenced him to 35 years. It's by far the longest ever punishment for leaking government information.

Manning will be 26 years old in December. He'll be eligible for parole in around eight years. Chances appear slim to none. His conviction and sentencing sent a message. It warns other potential whistleblowers not to reveal what Washington wants suppressed.

Manning will serve hard time. Initially he's heading for Fort Leavenworth, KS incarceration. He faces potential Supermax harshness.

They're maximum security prisons. Authorities say they're for society's most incorrigible. They're for "the worst of the worst." Hyperbole substitutes for reality.

Inmates endure horrific conditions. Punishment substitutes for justice. They're isolated longterm. They monitored round-the-clock. It's done visually and by closed-circuit TV.

They're confined in windowless single cells. They're about 8 x 10 feet. They remain there 23 hours a day. Fluorescent lights stay on round-the-clock. Prisoners lack constructive activity. Visits are rare. Direct contact's denied.

Food's delivered twice daily through cell door slots. Central control booth guards control things. One prisoner at a time's permitted to shower.

Supermax confinement's the closest thing to hell on earth. It replicates some of the worst Guantanamo practices.

Torture is commonplace in many US prisons. Inmates are savaged by dogs, brutally shocked

with cattle prods, burned by toxic chemicals, harmed by stun guns, beaten, stripped naked and abused in various other ways.

It's standard practice. Manning's vulnerable. He may never again see the light of day. If so, he'll never be the same.

Judge Lind reduced Manning in rank. He went from private first class to E1. It's the lowest military status. He'll forfeit all pay, allowances and benefits. He'll be dishonorably discharged.

Manning stood while Lind read her sentence. He did so expressionless. Lawyer David Coombs represents him. He's submitting a presidential pardon application. He'll appeal. He'll do so up to the Supreme Court.

Chances of success are slim to none. Obama wanted his head. He pronounced guilt by accusation. He did so before proceedings began. Compassion isn't his long suit.

After pronouncing sentence, Lind left. Military guards escorted Manning out of court. Supporters shouted encouragement, saying:

"We'll keep fighting for you Bradley." "You are a hero." "We love you."

Manning's a 2013 Nobel Peace Prize nominee. Over 100,000 people support him. He stands no chance of winning.

Nobel Committee members reserve their award for notorious war criminals. Peace advocates have no chance. It's a Nobel tradition.

Manning's sentence is automatically reviewed. Major General Jeffrey Buchanan heads Washington's Military District. He's responsible for doing it. He can reduce Manning's sentence. He can't increase it.

His case automatically goes to the Army Court of Appeals. The entire process takes time. A full transcript of proceedings must be produced. Defense counsel, prosecutors and Judge Lind must approve it.

On August 21, the [Bradley Manning Support Network](#) headlined "Press conference: Bradley Manning's lawyer to address 35 year sentence," saying:

David Coombs represents him. He'll discuss legal avenues for redress. He'll take reporters' questions. He'll do so for the first time.

A "crowd-funded college trust is being established." It's to help Manning attend college on release.

His supporters held an early morning vigil. They'll rally tonight outside the White House. They'll do it again and again and again.

"The Bradley Manning Support Network will continue to be responsible for 100% of Manning's legal fees, as well as international education efforts."

“Funded by over 22,000 individuals, the Support Network has mustered \$1.4 million in Manning’s defense.”

Manning was confined for 1,294 days. They included 112 day sentencing credit. Judge Lind ordered it.

She said Manning was subjected to lawless pretrial harshness. Credit reduces his sentence to around thirty-one and a half years.

Coombs will petition General Buchanan for clemency. An Army clemency parole board can review his case after a year.

Coombs can petition for clemency annually. Manning must serve a third of his sentence for parole eligibility.

Good behavior credit’s possible. Whether it holds for Manning remains to be seen. Thirty-five years hard time for doing the right thing suggests not.

If granted, sentencing can be reduced as many as ten days for each month’s confinement.

On August 19, prosecutors argued for harshness. They said:

“There is value in deterrence, Your Honor. This court must send a message to any soldier contemplating stealing classified information.”

“National security crimes that undermine the entire system must be taken seriously. Punish Pfc. Manning’s actions, Your Honor.”

They urged 60 years. Chief prosecutor Capt. Joe Morrow said “(h)e’s been convicted of serious crimes.”

He “betrayed the United States and for that betrayal he deserves to spend the majority of his remaining life in confinement.”

David Coombs called Manning “a young man capable of being redeemed. We should not throw this man out for 60 years. We should not rob him of his youth.”

“The appropriate sentence would be (one) that takes into account all facts and circumstances that you’re aware of. (T)hat it gives Pfc. Manning an opportunity to be

restored to a productive place in society.”

That would give him “the opportunity, perhaps, to live the life he wants in the way that he would like, perhaps find love, maybe get married, maybe have children, to watch his children grow and perhaps have a relationship with his children’s children.”

He’s at the mercy of dark US forces. They want a message sent. They want Manning destroyed. They already administered cruel and unreasonable punishment.

Longterm hard time compounds it. Doing so sends a clear message. Whistleblowers aren’t tolerated. Obama targeted more than all his predecessors combined.

Potential ones are warned. Revealing what Washington wants suppressed risks replicating harsh Manning treatment.

Doing the right thing’s criminalized. War criminals go unpunished. US-style justice is none at all. Rogue states operate that way.

A Final Comment

The [Government Accountability Project](#) (GAP) calls itself “the nation’s leading whistleblower protection and advocacy organization.”

In response to Manning’s sentencing it headlined “Manning’s 35-Year Sentence Intended to be a Message to All Whistleblowers.” In part it said:

“It is the position of the Government Accountability Project (GAP) that this sentence, though not the 60+ year sentence that the prosecution had requested, is intended to be a message to all whistleblowers, present and future.”

“Further, the sentence is excessive and unjust for the following reasons:

“It has never been proven that Manning’s conduct did harm to the US.”

“Manning informed the public of clear wrongdoing.”

He “suffered egregious and unlawful pretrial detention.

“No individuals have been punished as a result of Manning’s revelations despite clear atrocities.”

“This was a show trial done largely in secret,” said GAP National Security & Human Rights Counsel Kathleen McClellan.

“This case is of public interest, but the public has been kept in the dark through severely limited media access. America is better than secret courts.”

“GAP champions government and corporate accountability and transparency by advancing occupational free speech, defending whistleblowers, and empowering citizen activists.”

“Since its founding in 1977, GAP has fought to make large bureaucratic institutions accountable through the effective exercise of conscience.”

America today represents heart of darkness harshness. It’s a hair’s breadth from full-blown tyranny. Manning’s fate can be anyone’s.

Dissent’s an endangered species. Freedom’s fast eroding. It’s disappearing in plain sight.

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at [lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net).

His new book is titled “Banker Occupation: Waging Financial War on Humanity.”

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanII.html>

Visit his blog site at [sjlendman.blogspot.com](http://sjlendman.blogspot.com).

Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network.

It airs Fridays at 10AM US Central time and Saturdays and Sundays at noon. All programs are archived for easy listening.

<http://www.progressiveradionetwork.com/the-progressive-news-hour>

The original source of this article is Global Research  
Copyright © [Stephen Lendman](#), Global Research, 2013

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

## **Become a Member of Global Research**

Articles by: **Stephen Lendman**

### **About the author:**

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at [lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net). His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at [sjlendman.blogspot.com](http://sjlendman.blogspot.com). Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)