

Julian Assange's Extradition Hearing: The Only Just Outcome Is His Freedom

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[Disinformation](#)

The testimony portion of the extradition hearing of Julian Assange, taking place in the United Kingdom, concluded after four weeks. Judge Vanessa Baraitser, who presided over the hearing, will not announce her decision until January. Until then, Assange will remain in detention in Belmarsh Prison.

Under conditions that violated Assange's rights and his ability to defend himself, his legal team made a clear case that for multiple reasons the only just solution is to free Assange. However, Judge Baraitser has not ruled favorably for him in her past decisions or even in this hearing.

At the start, Assange's lawyers requested a delay until January because they had not been able to meet adequately with him. Their request was denied. During the hearing, Assange was forced to sit in a glass box without access to his lawyers.

Over the past four weeks, people demonstrated their support for Julian Assange outside Old Bailey, where the hearing was held, and around the world. Almost 200 lawyers and politicians from 27 countries, including 13 past and present heads of state, [demanded](#) his immediate release. We must continue to raise awareness and public pressure to free Assange.

How to support Julian Assange and WikiLeaks

Take action to #ProtectJulian

INFORM
YOURSELF/
FAMILY/
FRIENDS/
WORK COLLEAGUES/
WITH FACTS
defend.wikileaks.org

MONITOR MEDIA
CORRECT
MISINFORMATION
WITH FACTS

CONTACT
POLITICIANS/
UNIONS/
FREE PRESS/HUMAN RIGHTS/
REFUGEE RIGHTS GROUPS/
BUSINESS GROUPS/
INFORM AND
URGE TO ACT

SIGN PETITIONS
Australian government bit.do/free-assange
UK government bit.do/free-assange-uk

RALLY
ORGANISE
RALLIES/VIGILS/
EVENTS/ACTIONS/
Resources bit.do/assange-designs
create
#FreeAssange art

PROMOTE AND SHARE WIKILEAKS PUBLICATIONS
wikileaks.org

WRITE TO JULIAN
SHORT PERSONAL NOTES
ALONG WITH AN ACTION
YOU'VE TAKEN TO
#ProtectJulian
MUST INCLUDE
YOUR NAME AND
ADDRESS ON BACK

Mr Julian Assange
DOB: 3/07/1971
HMP Belmarsh
Western Way
London SE28 0EJ
UK

DONATE
TO WIKILEAKS
OFFICIAL DEFENCE FUND
defend.wikileaks.org/donate

Press Freedom Under Attack

The persecution of Julian Assange matters to all of us because this is bigger than Assange. He is being targeted and tortured for doing what every honest journalist and publisher does – reporting the truth and informing the public about what is being done by their governments and corporations.

Many media outlets, especially if they conduct investigative journalism, provide tools and information for people to leak information to them. The difference with Assange is that he created a tool, Wikileaks, that could be used by everyone around the world to leak information anonymously and to read information that had been leaked. Wikileaks verified the information and redacted portions that could result in personal harm, but other than that the information was freely available to the public. Assange is a strong believer in transparency and our right to know.

This is what outraged the power structure. They could not control access to information. They could not stop people from learning about their war crimes and corruption. So they have been waging a war on Assange ever since in multiple nefarious ways and so far he has survived. But this is too much for one person to have to bear. That is why we need to rally around Assange. One way to do that is to [support the fund](#) created by his partner, Stella Morris.

Kevin Zeese, the now-deceased co-director of Popular Resistance, was a supporter of Julian Assange. He served as an adviser to the board of the [Courage Foundation](#), which runs [Defend Wikileaks](#). In this 2018 [interview](#) with Elizabeth Lea Vos, Kevin explains why Assange's case is critical:

“Julian Assange's case is the John Peter Zenger case of the twenty-first

century. John Peter Zenger was a publisher who was prosecuted before the American Revolution because he published articles that were critical of the British-appointed governor of New York. They weren't false, they were just critical. In those days, there was no defense to slander as far as telling the truth goes. You say something bad about the government or the king, you get punished for it. Zenger's lawyers decided to use a defense that had not been used before, which was to go right to the jury, avoid the judge and show that Zenger was publishing the truth. Zenger was found not guilty by the jury very quickly after having been held in jail for eight months and undergoing abuse. People see that case as where a lot of our freedom of the press rights come from and the concept that truth is a defense. Julian Assange is revisiting that issue now in the twenty-first century when we have a lot of different technology that allows for truth to be told. Wikileaks is a major breakthrough in how journalism works and what information we are allowed to see. It is unacceptable that the most important publisher in this century is silenced. Whether or not you like Assange personally, the work he has done is critical to our future."



Assange Supporters at the White House, June, 2018. Gateway Pundit.

Why Julian Assange Must be Freed

During the extradition hearing, multiple reasons for freeing Assange and dropping the charges against him were explained. Any one of them should be enough to stop this persecution, but taken together, they demonstrate undeniably that extradition to the United States would violate Assange's rights and that he has not committed a crime.

1. Julian Assange has been denied his right to [a fair trial](#). While in prison, Assange had limited access to his lawyers. They were only able to speak occasionally over the phone and with a bad connection. Assange's lawyer, Mark Summers, [argued that](#) Assange "alone has the knowledge to build a defense." And, Assange had not been able to read new charges made against him nor had his lawyers had time to prepare a defense to those new charges. And his hearing was structured so the public and press had extremely limited access. This is unacceptable for a case of such significance. Similarly, Assange [would not have a fair trial](#) if

he were extradited to the US.

2. Assange did not commit a crime. The United States argued that Assange was not a journalist and therefore not protected under the First Amendment, but [experts testified](#) that he was engaged in 'journalistic activity,' and that is what matters. Journalists routinely ask sources for access to private information and publish such information. This is all that Assange did. If he is found guilty, then other journalists and media outlets that published material from Wikileaks should also be found guilty. Finding Assange guilty of publishing the truth would have a chilling effect on the willingness of journalists anywhere in the world to similarly expose war crimes and corruption.

3. Assange's case is political, not criminal. Testimony exposed that the case against Assange is purely political. The judge [admitted it herself](#) by stating that she would issue her decision after the election. A witness revealed that [the Trump administration](#), acting through former Congressman Dana Rohrabacher and German Ambassador Richard Grenell, offered to not prosecute if Assange would reveal his sources. When Assange refused, the administration started the process of investigating and charging him. Also, the United States [directed](#) the Ecuadorian government to turn Assange over to police.

4. The United States violated Assange's privacy. In the final week of the hearing, employees from US Global, a Spanish security firm that was spying on Assange through video and audio while he was living in the Ecuadorian embassy in London and providing it to the CIA, testified that they were [pushed to do more](#). One witness said the company wanted to install live stream that would be fed directly to the CIA but [he stopped it](#). The witnesses added that their company was pushed by the CIA to leave a door open at the embassy so Assange could be kidnapped and to poison him.

5. Extradition to the United States puts Assange's health and safety at great risk. The United States has no regard for Julian Assange's life. Doctors and experts testified that Julian is in poor health and [suffers depression and suicidal thoughts](#). If he were extradited to the United States, where he faces 175 years in prison, not only would he have a unfair trial but he would be [held in torturous conditions](#), in a [tiny isolation cell](#), which would worsen his condition and risk his life. It is illegal to extradite a person to a place that endangers their life. That is why Assange originally sought asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy and it was granted by the Correa government.

The United States lawyers tried to [paint Assange](#) as a different person than what he is and bullied and degraded the defense witnesses. They did that because the facts are not on their side. A major argument by the US is that Assange helped Chelsea Manning get the data from a computer, but a cyber security expert [demonstrated](#) that was false. The only just solution is to free Julian Assange now.

The Fight to Free Assange Continues

The extradition hearing is over but the fight is not over. This is the time to escalate our pressure to free Assange. Public opinion matters and influences courts, whether they admit it or not.

We need to continue to raise awareness of the injustice and unconstitutionality of what the United States is doing to Assange, the illegality of risking his life and the impact this extradition and prosecution in the United States will have on press freedom and our right to

know around the world.

Continue to talk about this, write about this, speak about this, organize web forums, like [this one](#), write letters of solidarity, and protest for Julian Assange. Be creative. Check out the [Defend Wikileaks website](#) and the orange and gray graphic above for ideas. The only way we will surely lose is by not trying.

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