

That We Live Under a Dictatorship Is Now Unquestionable: The Assange Case

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What else can we call it when a publisher does what the New York Times did when it published the Pentagon Papers and was ruled by the Supreme Court in 1971 (New York Times Co. v. United States) to have been protected by the First Amendment.

But the publisher this time has been kept for years in various types of imprisonment without trial, and by now has been so destroyed that, in this, his first court appearance to defend himself, he seems to have been drugged, but for whatever reason “When asked to give his name and date of birth, he struggled visibly over several seconds to recall both.” “It was a real struggle for him to articulate the words and focus his train of thought.” The event occurred on October 21st.

Here (with boldface being used by me only to highlight especially the **names of the principal persons** at the hearing) are more highlights from the account that was provided on October 22nd by the whistleblowing former UK Ambassador Craig Murray, under the headline [“Assange in Court”](#):

“Having attended the trials in Uzbekistan of several victims of extreme torture, and having worked with survivors from Sierra Leone and elsewhere, I can tell you that yesterday changed my mind entirely and Julian exhibited exactly the symptoms of a torture victim brought blinking into the light, particularly in terms of disorientation, confusion, and the real struggle to assert free will through the fog of learned helplessness.”

“Everybody in that court yesterday saw that one of the greatest journalists and most important dissidents of our times is being tortured to death by the state, before our eyes. To see my friend, the most articulate man, the fastest thinker, I have ever known, reduced to that shambling and incoherent wreck, was unbearable. Yet the agents of the state, particularly the callous **magistrate Vanessa Baraitser**, were not just prepared but eager to be a part of this bloodsport.”

“The charge against Julian is very specific: conspiring with Chelsea Manning to publish the Iraq War logs, the Afghanistan war logs and the State Department cables.”

“The key points at issue were that Julian’s defence was requesting more time to prepare their evidence; and arguing that political offences were specifically excluded from the extradition treaty. There should, they argued, therefore be a preliminary hearing to determine whether the extradition treaty applied at all. The reasons given by Assange’s defence team for more time to prepare were both compelling and startling.”

“The evidence to the Spanish court also included a CIA plot to kidnap Assange, which went to the US authorities’ attitude to lawfulness in his case and the treatment he might expect in the United States. Julian’s team explained that the Spanish legal process was happening now and the evidence from it would be extremely important, but it might not be finished and thus the evidence not fully validated and available in time for the current proposed timetable for the Assange extradition hearings. **For the prosecution, James Lewis QC** [Queen’s Counsel] stated that the government strongly opposed any delay being given for the defence to prepare.”

“There were five representatives of the US government present.”

“Lewis actually told the judge he was ‘taking instructions from those behind’.”

“The US government was dictating its instructions to Lewis, who was relaying those instructions to Baraitser, who was ruling them as her legal decision.”

“Baraitser then capped it all by saying the February hearing will be held, not at the comparatively open and accessible Westminster Magistrates Court where we were, but at Belmarsh Magistrates Court, the grim high security facility used for preliminary legal processing of terrorists, attached to the maximum security prison where Assange is being held. There are only six seats for the public in even the largest court at Belmarsh, and the object is plainly to evade public scrutiny.”

“Assange’s defence team objected strenuously to the move to Belmarsh, in particular on the grounds that there are no conference rooms available there to consult their client.”

“Finally, Baraitser turned to Julian and ordered him to stand, and asked him if he had understood the proceedings. He replied in the negative, said that he could not think, and gave every appearance of disorientation. ... He became increasingly confused and incoherent.”

“I have been both cataloguing and protesting for years the increasingly authoritarian powers of the UK state, but that the most gross abuse could be so open and undisguised is still a shock.”

“Unless Julian is released shortly he will be destroyed. If the state can do this, then who is next?”

There’s yet more that’s in Murray’s account which would shock any intelligent reader, but those excerpts constitute what I consider its main points.

As regards whether the U.S. Government is a dictatorship: there have, by now, even been [some rigorous quantitative social-scientific analyses of that question, and all of the evidence points clearly to a “Yes” answer to it](#), concerning at least that particular Government.

We thus clearly have come to live in a totalitarian state: the U.S.-and-allied Deep State. To call this a ‘democracy’ is to insult that magnificent word. Some authentic revolutions have been sparked by tyrannies that aren’t as vile as this one.

The military-industrial complex (MIC) didn’t entirely control the U.S. Government back in 1971 when the MIC’s absolute right of censorship was rejected by the U.S. Supreme Court in the Pentagon Papers case; but, now, after 9/11, it finally does, and thus democracy has become totally eliminated in today’s America.

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Investigative historian **Eric Zuesse** is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).

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