



## Assange & Sweden

### Miscellaneous Information: Part 5

#### Part 5: 1 July 2012 – 27 October 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](mailto: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](http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case1.pdf)

**Part 2: 17 December 2011 – 17 February 2011**  
[www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case2.pdf](http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case2.pdf)

**Part 3: 20 February 2011 – 17 July 2011**  
[www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf](http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf)

**Part 4: 8 August 2011 – 30 June 2012**  
[www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf](http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf)

**For more and better-organized information:**  
[www.nnn.se/nordic/assange.htm](http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange.htm)

## How Julian Assange's private life helped conceal the real triumph of WikiLeaks

*Without the access to the US secret cables, the world would have no insight into how their governments behave*

Patrick Cockburn  
The Independent  
1 July 2012

As Julian Assange evades arrest by taking refuge in the Ecuadorian embassy in Knightsbridge to escape extradition to Sweden, and possibly the US, British commentators have targeted him with shrill abuse. **They almost froth with rage as they cite petty examples of his supposed gaucheness, egotism and appearance, as if these were criminal faults.**

**These criticisms tell one more about the conventionality and herd instinct of British opinion-makers than they do about Assange.** Ignored, in all this, is his achievement as founder of WikiLeaks in publishing US government cables giving people across the world insight into how their governments really behave. **Such public knowledge is the core of democracy** because voters must be accurately informed if they are to be able to choose representatives to carry out their wishes.

**Thanks to WikiLeaks, more information has become available about what the US and allied states are doing and thinking than ever before.** The only competing revelations that come to mind were the publication by the victorious Bolsheviks in 1917 of secret treaties, **including plans to carve up the Middle East by Britain and France.** **A more obvious parallel was the publication of the Pentagon Papers** thanks to Daniel Ellsberg in 1971, revealing systematic lying by the Johnson administration about Vietnam. In similar fashion to Assange, Ellsberg was reviled by the US government and threatened with the severest punishment *[but defended by the media, including the N.Y. Times which has heaped abuse upon Assange. --A.B.]*

**An extraordinary aspect of the campaign against Assange is that op-ed writers feel free to pump out thousands of words about his alleged faults, with never a mention of far more serious state crimes revealed by WikiLeaks.** All these critics, and readers who agree them, should first switch on YouTube and watch a 17-minute video film taken by the crew of an Apache helicopter over east Baghdad on 12 July 2007. It shows the helicopter crew machine-gunning to death people on the ground in the belief that they are all armed insurgents.

In fact, I cannot see any arms and what in one case was identified as a gun turned out to be the camera of a young Reuters' photographer, Namir Noor-Eldeen, who was killed along with his driver, Saeed Chmagh. The video shows the helicopter coming in for a second attack on a van that had stopped to pick up the dead and wounded. The driver was killed and two children wounded. **"Ha! Ha! I hit 'em," shouts one of the US crewmen triumphantly. "Look at those dead bastards."**

I was in Baghdad when the shooting took place and I remember at the time disbelieving, along with other journalists, the Pentagon's claim that the dead were all armed insurgents, **but we could not prove it.** Rebel gunmen did not amble about the

streets in plain view when a US helicopter was nearby. The existence of a video of the killings became known, but the US Defense Department adamantly refused to release it under the Freedom of Information Act. The official story of what had happened would not have been effectively challenged if a US soldier, Bradley Manning, had not turned over the video to WikiLeaks, which released it in 2010.

The cables obtained by Wiki-Leaks were published later that year in five newspapers – The New York Times, The Guardian, Le Monde, Der Spiegel and El País – **but the response to Assange himself was surprisingly mean-spirited and dismissive. Journalists seemed angry that their professional territory was being invaded by an Australian computer nerd who was doing their job.** The British commentariat is notoriously club-like, conservative and hostile to those with different cultural and political norms.

But this in itself would not have been enough for so much of the media to declare open season on Assange. What created the difference were the allegations of rape made in Sweden. Allegations of rape destroy a reputation, however flimsy or non-existent the evidence or convincing the rebuttal. Assange has never really recovered from this. As for the suggestion that he exaggerates the chances of being extradited to the US from Sweden, this is surely very flip. **Who would willingly take even a 5 per cent chance that their flight to Stockholm might result in 40 years' detention in a US prison cell?**

Some adopt the official line that "lives had been put in danger" by the leaks. This lobby began to fall silent in 2011 when Pentagon officials admitted, off the record, that they had no evidence that anybody had come to harm.

A more dismissive response was that the WikiLeaks revelations were not as secret as all that and the papers accessed by Private Manning did not carry the most secret classification. **Another point was made to me by a US diplomat in Kabul, where I was at the time of publication. He said: "We are not going to learn the biggest secrets from WikiLeaks because these have already been leaked by the White House, Pentagon or State Department."**

**In practice, the WikiLeaks documents are vastly and uniquely informative about what the US does and what it really thinks of the world in which we live.** For instance, there is a cable sent by the US embassy in Kabul in 2009 describing Prime Minister Hamid Karzai as "a paranoid and weak individual unfamiliar with the basics of nation-building".

Specialists on Afghanistan commented that Karzai's failings were scarcely news. They missed the point that **there is a vast difference between what is suspected by the outside world and what is confirmed by those with daily access to the Afghan leader.** Here were senior and experienced US officials giving their true opinion of the man whom the Americans and British were fighting and dying to keep in power.

All governments indulge in a degree of hypocrisy between what they say in public and in private. **When democratic openness about general actions and policies is demanded, they pretend they are facing a call for total transparency which would prevent effective government. This deliberate and self-serving inflation of popular demands is usually aimed at the concealment of failure and monopolising power.**

What the US government wanted to keep quiet about in Afghanistan was not just an embarrassingly negative assessment of Karzai as their main local ally. It was that it had no credible local Afghan partner and therefore could not win the war against the Taliban.

Assange and WikeLeaks unmasked not diplomatic reticence in the interests of the smooth functioning of government, but **duplicity to justify lost wars in which tens of thousand died. Recent history shows that this official secrecy, frequently aided by "embedding" journalists with armies, works all too well.**

In Iraq, in the months before the US presidential election in 2004, foreign embassies in Baghdad all knew and reported that US soldiers were only clinging to islands of territory in a hostile land. But the Bush administration was able to persuade US voters that, on the contrary, it was fighting and winning a battle to establish democracy against the remnants of Saddam Hussein's regime and the adherents of Osama bin Laden.

**State control of information and the ability to manipulate it makes the right to vote largely meaningless. That is why people like Julian Assange are so essential to democratic choice.**

<http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/patrick-cockburn-how-julian-assanges-private-life-helped-conceal-the-real-triumph-of-wikileaks-7901737.html>

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## **Melburnians Rally for Assange in response to Australian Government Abandonment**

*kazamcasrane*

*Wikileaks Australian Citizens Alliance*

On Sunday, July 1, Melburnians will take to their streets to rally in support of Julian Assange on the steps of the State Library from 12noon-2pm. Speakers; MP Adam Brandt, Lizzie O'Shea (leading Human Rights Lawyer), Daniel Matthews (WikiLeaks founding member) and live performances from internet sensation RAP NEWS and Natalie Pa'apa'a of Blue King Brown.

The rally supports Julian's appeal for political asylum in Ecuador in the context of overwhelming evidence the Swedish extradition order has been handled with unprecedented irregularity and the US administration are preparing to prosecute Julian Assange under the Espionage Act. Evidence which includes; Australian diplomatic reports released to Fairfax media and the Greens under freedom-of-information laws, disclosures at the Bradley Manning pre-trial of a massive investigation file on Assange & WikiLeaks and subpoenas issued to WL associates by a Grand Jury convened in Alexandria, Virginia to hear evidence against Assange.

Rally organizers, WikiLeaks Australian Citizens Alliance (WACA) stated "In the face of this the Australian government has adopted a "don't ask, don't tell" policy with the US



administration so that they can continue to disingenuously declare they have no information about an impending US extradition.”

Sam Castro of WACA further stated, “Our Government offers empty assurances that Julian will receive due process in Sweden without any acknowledgement or engagement with the facts that his treatment to date has been a continuous departure from due process.”

Sam Castro also claimed, “The Australian and Swedish government continues to ignore the demand for public assurance they will not approve an extradition request from the US while Julian is in Sweden. This is the only reason Assange, with the encouragement of his supporters, is refusing to comply with the Swedish extradition order.”

“If a US extradition is not successfully blocked and Assange, along with Manning, is made an example of to all Western activists, dissidents, whistleblowers, independent publishers and journalists the affect on freedom of speech, press & access to information will be absolutely devastating.” said Sam Castro.

*Video at:*

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrVL8X\\_nijk&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrVL8X_nijk&feature=player_embedded)

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## Fresh call on Assange 'espionage'

*Philip Dorling  
Brisbane Times  
July 2, 2012*

THE head of the United States Senate's powerful intelligence oversight committee has renewed calls for Julian Assange to be prosecuted for espionage.

The US Justice Department has also confirmed WikiLeaks remains the target of a criminal investigation, calling into question Australian government claims the US has no interest in extraditing Mr Assange.

**"Mr Assange should be prosecuted under the Espionage Act [of 1917]," the chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Californian Democrat Senator Dianne Feinstein, said in a written statement provided to The Age.**

"I believe Mr Assange has knowingly obtained and disseminated classified information which could cause injury to the United States. He has caused serious harm to US national security, and he should be prosecuted accordingly."

Senator Feinstein's call for the Obama administration to move ahead with plans to prosecute Mr Assange came as US Justice Department spokesperson Dean Boyd publicly confirmed that "there continues to be an investigation into the WikiLeaks matter".

Mr Assange remains in Ecuador's embassy in London while the Ecuadorian government assesses his application for political asylum. President Rafael Correa said on Saturday that his government had no deadline for a decision. "That decision will be absolutely sovereign and ... [show] respect for human rights," President Correa said.

Mr Assange presented himself at the Ecuadorian embassy on June 19 and has defied a British police order to turn himself in for extradition to Sweden, where he is sought for questioning in relation to sexual assault allegations. He fears a hostile political climate in Sweden will lead to his ultimate extradition to the US.

In a statement last Friday, one of Mr Assange's lawyers, Susan Benn, highlighted evidence of the existence of a secret US grand jury investigation targeting Mr Assange and other "founders or managers" of WikiLeaks.

Senator Feinstein, who enjoys access to the most secret US intelligence briefings, has argued that Mr Assange should not be protected by the First Amendment free speech provisions of the US constitution. "Mr Assange claims to be a journalist and would no doubt rely on the First Amendment to defend his actions. **But he is no journalist. He is an agitator intent on damaging our government,"** Senator Feinstein wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* in 2010.

**Foreign Minister Bob Carr, who has declined to describe Mr Assange as a journalist,** claimed last week that there was "not the remotest evidence" of any US government desire to prosecute the WikiLeaks founder.

About 200 Assange supporters braved Melbourne's rain yesterday in a rally supporting his appeal to Ecuador for asylum. The supporters marched from the State Library to City Square just after noon and heard speeches from WikiLeaks founding member Daniel Matthews, human rights lawyer Lizzie O'Shea and Greens MP Adam Bandt.

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/opinion/political-news/fresh-call-on-assange-espionage-20120701-21b59.html>

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## **My client Julian Assange would not get a fair trial in Sweden**

*I have enough experience of the Swedish legal system to know its poor treatment of suspects marks them out as guilty*

*Per Samuelson  
The Guardian  
2 July 2012*

The Julian Assange case has sparked international criticism of the Swedish legal system. Many Swedish citizens view this criticism as an attack on their country, and rally to the defence of their legal system. But it is about time that someone with experience of Swedish procedural law tells it like it is: Sweden routinely imposes severe restrictions on suspects held on remand. Pre-trial, suspects are often held in detention, or even in isolation. This treatment is unnecessary and humiliating and thwarts the defendant's ability to prepare their case.

Detaining and isolating a suspect is appropriate where the crime is sufficiently grave and the indication of guilt clear. Treating Anders Breivik in this way is the right thing to do, for instance.

The allegations against Assange, in contrast, are not nearly so serious, but a case of "he said, she said". Let us also not forget that Assange has not been charged with any crime, and that the allegations against him were at first dismissed by a Swedish prosecutor.

In August 2010, Assange was interviewed by the police for the first time, then released. A month later, the prosecutor requested an additional police interrogation be held, insisting this time that it be done with Assange behind bars. She called for Assange's arrest, issued a European arrest warrant and ordered that he be deported from the UK. Stockholm district court and the Svea court of appeal upheld her request and arrested Assange in absentia.

**Neither Assange nor I can understand the motivation. Why couldn't the second police interview be conducted with Assange at liberty? Assange is not a Swedish citizen. He does not reside in Sweden. His work has worldwide impact and he must be able to travel freely to accomplish this. He would happily have presented himself for interrogation and, had the case gone to trial, willingly returned to Sweden to face charges. All this could have been done while he remained at liberty. Had Sweden handled the case in this way, the issue would have been resolved a long time ago.**

**Instead, Sweden insists on Assange's forcible removal to Sweden. Once there, he will immediately be seized by police and put in jail. He will be taken to the detention hearing in handcuffs, and will almost certainly be detained. He will remain in custody for the duration of the proceedings.** This is unnecessary. The prosecutor is at liberty to withdraw the arrest warrant and lift the detention order, and a hearing in Sweden could be arranged very quickly. The prosecutor could also arrange a hearing in the UK or at the Swedish embassy in London.

This treatment is degrading. No one should be treated as guilty until proven innocent. There has been no trial, let alone conviction. Assange has not even been charged with any crime. And the situation makes it difficult for him to prepare his defence. If a defendant is placed in isolation they are allowed contact only with their defence lawyer. The prosecutor and complainants, however, can confer at length with witnesses and work out their strategies. Is there any acceptable reason why one of the parties be deprived of that opportunity?

Sweden has been criticised for its overuse of detention and isolation-- and not only by Assange and his supporters. **The UN committee against torture in 2008 strongly criticised conditions in Sweden's remand prisons, and Swedish courts, for the fact that prison restrictions, such as isolation, are imposed on 42% of detained suspects.**

The chief prosecutor has said that Assange will not be held in isolation. However, even without that being imposed, prison restrictions have become much harsher and more widespread in recent years. **In reality the rules in the remand prisons make it impossible for a suspect to have proper contact with the outside world:** there are not enough landline telephones, mobile phones are banned, letters are often censored, and to meet people you have to fill in application forms that can take weeks to process.

The treatment that the Swedish legal system has inflicted, and would be likely to inflict on Assange would mark him out as guilty and prevent him from preparing a proper defence and, for that reason, having a fair trial

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2012-07-04

Åsa Tillberg  
Redaktionschef  
Dagens Nyheter

"Ingen rättvisa i Sverige"?

Dagens tidning innehåller ett referat av Per Samuelssons artikel i The Guardian den 2 juli. Rubriken i DN är "Ingen rättvisa i Sverige", men jag hittar inte detta svepande påstående i Samuelssons artikel som återges [här ovan].

Rubriksättningen tycks således bekräfta den analys av The Independents Patrick Cockburn som också återges [här ovan]. Cockburn hänvisar till brittiska medier, men det problem som han belyser gäller DN och andra svenska medier i ännu högre grad.

Med vänlig hälsning,  
Al Burke

*[Inget svar från DN]*



Subject: Er förljugenhet  
Date: 6 Jul 2012 19:41  
From: Al Burke <editor@nnn.se>  
To: bjorn.wiman@dn.se  
CC: asa.tillberg@dn.se

Kulturchef Björn Wiman  
Dagens Nyheter

Red. Wiman,

Du och Åsa Tillberg ljuger hela tiden.

Med vänlig hälsning,  
Al Burke

Obs! Jag har förstått att, enligt DN:s praxis, behöver man inte lämna något underlag för påståendet om er förljugenhet. Detta framgår av dagens Kultur-bilaga som innehåller följande text bredvid ett porträtt av Julian Assange: "Han ljuger hela tiden. Guardian-journalist Nick Davies kommenterar Julian Assanges karaktär under ett seminarium i Almedalen."

Detta är för resten samma Nick Davies som december 2010 inledde The Guardians smutskastningskampanj mot Assange med en djupt ohederlig redogörelse för vad som står i protokollen från polisförhören i Assange-fallet och som reagerar med barnslig vrede när detta avslöjas; se bilagan [återges här nedan].

Jag antar för resten att ni inte har någonting emot att jag sprider denna korrespondens vidare för att så många som möjligt kan få kännedom om vilka etiska regler gäller hos DN.

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## **What drives Guardianistas so crazy about matters Assange?**

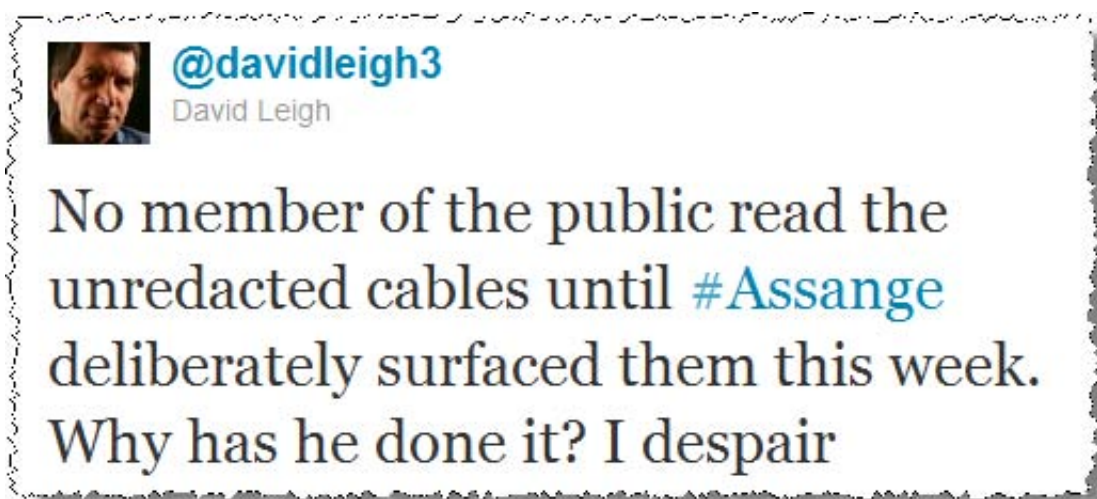
*Guy Rundle  
Crikey  
14 September 2011*

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:



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 was 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/>

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## Dianne Feinstein targets press freedom

*The California Democrat, long a prime defender of the Surveillance State, renews her assault on the First Amendment*

Glenn Greenwald  
Salon.com  
July 2, 2012

The supreme Senate defender of state secrecy and the Surveillance State, California Democrat Dianne Feinstein, yesterday issued a statement to Australia's largest newspaper, The Sydney Morning Herald, demanding (once again) the prosecution of WikiLeaks and Julian Assange. **To see how hostile Feinstein is to basic press freedoms, permit me to change "Assange" each time it appears in her statement to "The New York Times":**

The head of the US Senate's powerful intelligence oversight committee has renewed calls for [The New York Times] to be prosecuted for espionage. . . .

"I believe [The New York Times] has knowingly obtained and disseminated classified information which could cause injury to the United States," the

chairwoman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Dianne Feinstein, said in a written statement provided to the Herald. "[It] has caused serious harm to US national security, and [] should be prosecuted accordingly."

As EFF's Trevor Timm noted, there is no sense in which Feinstein's denunciation applies to WikiLeaks but not to The New York Times (and, for that matter, senior Obama officials). Indeed, **unlike WikiLeaks, which has never done so, The New York Times has repeatedly published Top Secret information.** That's why the prosecution that Feinstein demands for WikiLeaks would be the gravest threat to press freedom and basic transparency in decades. Feinstein's decades-long record in the Senate strongly suggest that she would perceive these severe threats to press freedom as a benefit rather than drawback to her prosecution designs.

The Morning Herald article also reported that "the US Justice Department has also confirmed WikiLeaks remains the target of an ongoing criminal investigation, calling into question Australian government claims that the US has no interest in extraditing Mr Assange." In other venues, the Obama DOJ has repeatedly confirmed the existence of an ongoing investigation, including just last week. Moreover, recently obtained diplomatic **cables published by the Morning Herald revealed in late May that "WikiLeaks publisher Julian Assange remains the target of a major US government criminal investigation and the subject of continuing US-Australian intelligence exchanges."** The U.S. Army's Criminal Division issued a letter last month expressly confirming that there is an ongoing investigation aimed at WikiLeaks.

Given all of that, it looks like the Observer's British neocon warcheerleading columnist, Nick Cohen, picked a really bad week to write an entire column mocking concerns that the U.S. would seek to prosecute and extradite Assange as "paranoia." Only wilful ignorance would lead someone to claim that such evidence is nonexistent. Indeed, the evidence has long been overwhelming that the U.S. is eager to prosecute him and is actively seeking to do so. That's because it's filled with people like Dianne Feinstein, whose supreme loyalty is to the National Security State which enriches them, and who are plagued by a demonstrated willingness to trample on basic Constitutional protections in order to protect it.

[http://www.salon.com/2012/07/02/dianne\\_feinstein\\_targets\\_press\\_freedom/](http://www.salon.com/2012/07/02/dianne_feinstein_targets_press_freedom/)

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION COMMAND  
U.S. ARMY CRIME RECORDS CENTER  
27130 TELEGRAPH ROAD  
QUANTICO, VA 22134

JUN 12 2012

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

Dear

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) for release of information from the files of the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (USACIDC) pertaining to Wikileaks. Your request was referred from United States Army Intelligence and Security Command, Freedom of Information/Privacy Office and was received at this headquarters on May 21, 2012.

A search of the USACIDC file indexes revealed that an active investigation is in progress with an undetermined completion date. You may submit another written request for a copy of the investigation at a later date, after it is completed. You may consider this an initial denial of your request pursuant to Title 5, USC, Section 552a, Exemption (j)(2) of the Privacy Act and Title 5, USC, Section 552, Exemption (b)(7)(A), (b)(7)(F), (b)(6) and (b)(7)(C) of the Freedom of Information Act.

This response is made on behalf of Major General David E. Quantock, Commander, USACIDC, the Initial Denial Authority for USACIDC records under the FOIA, and may be appealed to the Secretary of the Army.

If you decide to appeal at this time, your appeal must be submitted within 60 days of the date of this letter. In your appeal, you must state the basis for your disagreement with our response. Your appeal is made through this Center and should be addressed to the Director, U.S. Army Crime Records Center, 27130 Telegraph Road, Quantico, Virginia 22134, for forwarding, as appropriate, to the Office of the Secretary of the Army, the appellate authority. An appeal may not include a request for additional information or a request for an investigation to be conducted.

Any questions regarding this response should be provided in writing to the Director, U.S. Army Crime Records Center, Attention: FOIA/PA Division, 27130 Telegraph Road, Quantico, Virginia 22134 or you can call 1-855-306-0003. Please reference the above case number with your correspondence.

Sincerely,

Susan Cugler  
Director, Crime Records Center

Printed on Recycled Paper

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**Julian Assange**

*William Blum  
Anti-Empire Report  
July 3rd, 2012*

I'm sure most Americans are mighty proud of the fact that Julian Assange is so frightened of falling into the custody of the United States that he had to seek sanctuary in the embassy of Ecuador, a tiny and poor Third World country, without any way of

knowing how it would turn out. He might be forced to be there for years. "That'll teach him to mess with the most powerful country in the world! All you other terrorists and anti-Americans out there — Take Note! When you fuck around with God's country you pay a price!"

How true. You do pay a price. Ask the people of Cuba, Vietnam, Chile, Yugoslavia, Iraq, Iran, Haiti, etc., etc., etc. And ask the people of Guantánamo, Diego Garcia, Bagram, and a dozen other torture centers to which God's country offers free transportation.

You think with the whole world watching, the United States would not be so obvious as to torture Assange if they got hold of him? Ask Bradley Manning. At a bare minimum, prolonged solitary confinement is torture. Before too long the world may ban it. Not that that would keep God's country and other police states from using it.

You think with the whole world watching, the United States would not be so obvious as to target Assange with a drone? **They've done it with American citizens. Assange is a mere Aussie.**

And Ecuador and its president, Rafael Correa, will pay a price. You think with the whole world watching, the United States would not intervene in Ecuador? In Latin America, it comes very naturally for Washington. During the Cold War it was said that the United States could cause the downfall of a government south of the border... with a frown. The dissolution of the Soviet Union didn't bring any change in that because it was never the Soviet Union per se that the United States was fighting. It was the threat of a good example of an alternative to the capitalist model.

For example, on January 21, 2000 in Ecuador, where almost two-thirds live in poverty, a very large number of indigenous peasants rose up in desperation and marched to the capital city of Quito, where they were joined by labor unions and some junior military officers (most members of the army being of indigenous stock). This coalition presented a list of economic demands, seized the Congress and Supreme Court buildings, and forced the president to resign. He was replaced by a junta from the ranks of the new coalition. The Clinton administration was alarmed. Besides North American knee-reflex hostility to anything that look or smells like a leftist revolution, Washington had big plans for a large military base in Manta (later closed by Correa). And Colombia — already plagued by leftist movements — was next door.

The US quickly stepped in to educate the Ecuadorean coalition leaders as to the facts of Western Hemispheric imperial life. The American embassy in Quito... Peter Romero, Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America and Western Hemispheric Affairs ... Sandy Berger, National Security Adviser to President Clinton ... Undersecretary of State Thomas Pickering ... all made phone calls to Ecuadorian officials to threaten a cutoff in aid and other support, warning that "Ecuador will find itself isolated", informing them that the United States would never recognize any new government the coalition might set up, there would be no peace in Ecuador unless the military backed the vice president as the new leader, and the vice president must continue to pursue neoliberal "reforms", the kind of IMF structural adjustment policies which had played a major role in inciting the uprising in the first place.

Within hours the heads of the Ecuadorian army, navy and air force declared their support for the vice president. The leaders of the uprising fled into hiding. And that was the end of the Ecuadorian revolution of the year 2000.\*



Rafael Correa was first elected in 2006 with a 58% majority, and reelected in 2009 with a 55% majority; his current term runs until August 2013. The American mainstream media has been increasingly critical of him. **The following letter sent in January to the Washington Post by the Ecuadoran ambassador to the United States is an attempt to clarify one of the issues.**

Letter to the Editor:

We were offended by the Jan. 12 editorial "Ecuador's bully," which focused on a lawsuit brought by our president, Rafael Correa, after a newspaper claimed that he was guilty of ordering troops to fire on innocent citizens during a failed coup in 2010. **The president asked the publishers to release their evidence or a retraction. When they refused, he sued, as any citizen should do when recklessly wronged.**

**No journalist has gone to prison or paid a significant fine in the five years of the Correa presidency.** Media criticism — fair and unfair, sometimes with malice — of the government appears every day. The case involving the newspaper is on appeal. When the judicial process ends, the president has said, he will waive some or all of the penalties provided he gets a retraction. **That is a common solution to libel and slander cases in the United States, I believe.**

Your writer uses obnoxious phrases such as "banana republic," but here is the reality of today's Ecuador: a highly popular, stable and progressive democracy for the first time in decades.

Nathalie Cely, Washington

\* Washington Post, January 23, 2000, p.1; "The coup in Ecuador: a grim warning"

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## **Assange rape allegations 'hilarious': minister**

*AFP*

*5 July 2012*

Ecuador's foreign minister has said that rape and sexual assault cases lodged in Sweden against Julian Assange are laughable, but no ruling has yet been made on the WikiLeaks founder's asylum application.

"Personally, (I think) this is hilarious," Ecuadoran chief diplomat Ricardo Patino told reporters, explaining that Assange "is charged because his condom broke."

Assange is currently at the Ecuadoran embassy in London, seeking political asylum in the Latin American country.

Ecuadoran officials are examining the allegations of sexual misconduct in their review of Assange's application.

Patino said that one of the alleged victims filed a complaint, because she "realized that on certain nights, the condom broke."

Assange, an Australian, maintains he only had consensual sexual relations with the alleged victims.

WikiLeaks and Assange enraged the United States by publishing a flood of secret information about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The website founder fears that if extradited to Sweden, he will be subsequently re-extradited to the United States to stand trial for espionage, on account of the 250,000 US diplomatic cables that were published.

British and Swedish authorities are awaiting Ecuador's decision regarding Assange's asylum application, but Patino reported that investigations into the claims of the two alleged victims are ongoing.

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.

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## **Sweden's 'reinterpretation' of MLA law**

*Submitted by m\_cetera*  
*WL Central*  
2012-07-07

Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) is a common legal practice in the European Union. It is an agreement between two countries to help cooperation during investigation of alleged crimes. The EU's website states "mutual legal assistance and agreements on extradition are essential for the EU in order to achieve a European area of justice".

The Swedish prosecution has requested Julian Assange's extradition for the purpose of questioning on allegations of sexual misconduct. He is yet to be formally charged with an offense.

Since his arrest, Mr Assange has offered himself to be questioned under the MLA practices, by telephone, video conference, or in person. He continues to retain this offer, even during his current stay at the Ecuadorian Embassy as he awaits a decision on his application for asylum. The Ecuadorians have agreed to letting the Swedish prosecution come to the Embassy to question him.

WikiLeaks' legal adviser Jennifer Robinson met with Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt on July 5 during Almedalen Week, a political conference in Gotland. She discussed with him the allegations against Julian Assange and why Sweden has refused to question him over the past 18 months.

**"He told me it's not allowed. And when I pointed out that Sweden had only recently done just that in a murder investigation in Serbia, he had no reply."**

Swedish prosecutor Marianne Ny made similar statements in 2010, saying that Swedish Law prevents Mr Assange being interviewed by telephone or video link, and that both Swedish and British law prevent her from traveling to London to question Mr Assange. Many of the articles containing the latter statement were later removed.

Since Julian Assange has not been formally charged, he does not have the rights of a defendant, i.e. access to the full accusations against him or any of the evidence. Could the fact that he only faces allegations affect the use of MLA law?

The guidelines for getting Mutual Legal Assistance from the UK state the contrary. In the section entitled "What must be included in a Letter of Request" it states: "A description of the offences charged or under investigation and sentence or penalty."

Furthermore, in an "Example Letter of Request" it states: "Supply information on the charge or proposed charge."

A full page of the document is also dedicated to the information needed to request a telephone or video conference call, which includes an address, a possible list of questions, and any formal notification of rights.

Neither Carl Bildt or Marianne Ny would explain how or why it is illegal under Swedish law to question Mr Assange via telephone, video conference, or in person. With no explanation on their behalf, the EU promoting the use of Mutual Legal Assistance, and a document explaining how to achieve information this way, it opens the door for speculation as to why Sweden refuses to question Mr Assange.

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#### **WL Central, 2012-07-07**

The Foro de São Paulo, a political conference of organisations from Latin America and the Caribbean, called on the Government of Ecuador to grant Julian Assange political asylum to "save his life and liberty".

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### **Sao Paulo pide a Ecuador conceder el asilo a Julian Assange**

El Foro de Sao Paulo solicitó hoy al Gobierno de Ecuador que le conceda el asilo político al fundador de WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, para "salvar su vida y su libertad", según una resolución leída en la clausura de su reunión en Caracas.  
Fecha de Publicación: 2012-07-06 18:32

"Los movimientos de partidos políticos reunidos en el XVIII Foro de Sao Paulo reivindicamos el derecho universal a la libre información y respaldamos y apreciamos la protección que brinda el Ecuador a Julian Assange" en su embajada en Londres, reza una de las resoluciones que dio a conocer el secretario ejecutivo del Foro, Valter Pomar.

En ese contexto, pidieron al "Gobierno de Ecuador que le conceda el asilo político" a Assange "para salvar su vida y su libertad", añade la resolución leída por Pomar, dirigente del oficialista Partido de los Trabajadores de Brasil (PT).

Assange, refugiado en la embajada de Ecuador en Londres desde mediados de junio pasado, ha alegado "persecución" para reclamar asilo a Ecuador, así como para evitar una extradición a Suecia, donde se le acusa de delitos sexuales.

El fundador de WikiLeaks niega los presuntos abusos sexuales y violación de los que es sospechoso en Suecia, asegura que fueron relaciones consentidas que mantuvo con dos mujeres en Estocolmo en el verano de 2010 y alega que esas acusaciones tienen motivaciones políticas.

El ministro ecuatoriano de Relaciones Exteriores, Ricardo Patiño, señaló este miércoles que su Gobierno argumentará en un voluminoso documento la decisión respecto al pedido de asilo de Assange.

Insistió en que siguen estudiando "seriamente" el caso y se tomarán el tiempo para adoptar una decisión que será "suficientemente fundamentada".

WikiLeaks ha divulgado desde 2010 miles de cables diplomáticos y documentos militares confidenciales de Estados Unidos embarazosos para Gobiernos de todo el mundo, especialmente el de EE.UU.

<http://www.eltiempo.com.ec/noticias-cuenca/100580-foro-sao-paulo-pide-a-ecuador-conceder-el-asilo-a-julian-assange>

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## **Richard O'Dwyer extradition opposed by vast majority in UK**

*Pressure on Theresa May increased by finding that only 9% of British public want website founder to face trial in US*

James Ball  
The Guardian  
6 July 2012

The UK public overwhelmingly oppose the extradition of Sheffield student Richard O'Dwyer to the US on copyright charges, according to the results of a poll by YouGov.

**O'Dwyer, 24, faces up to 10 years in jail in America for charges relating to a website he founded linking to places to watch full TV shows and films online. UK authorities have pursued no charges against him.**

Only 9% of the British public believe he should face trial in the US for his actions, according to the YouGov research. **The largest group, 46%, said O'Dwyer should not be prosecuted at all, while 26% felt he should be tried in the UK.**

The poll adds to the mounting pressure on Theresa May, the home secretary, to take action on the O'Dwyer case, especially as only 10% of Conservative voters support extradition.

May, who has the statutory power to halt O'Dwyer's extradition, has been the subject of a campaign led by Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales to stop the extradition. Of Tory

voters, 45% thought O'Dwyer should face no legal action, while 33% thought he should be tried in the UK.

A petition to the Home Office , started by Wales, has gathered more than 215,000 signatures in less than two weeks. Wales urged May to stop ignoring the public will on the O'Dwyer case, and to agree to meet him and O'Dwyer's mother.

"The home secretary continues to ignore hundreds of thousands of citizens, the UK tech community, business leaders, celebrities and MPs from all parties on this issue," he said. "She should be very clear that we are not going to go away and new supporters are joining the campaign all the time. I urge her to meet with myself and Richard's mother, Julia, as soon as possible."

Julia O'Dwyer said she felt the government had so far failed her and her son, and urged May to respond to her son's campaign. "I can't believe that Theresa May has not had the good grace to respond to this campaign so far. I had hoped that as an elected representative in a country that holds values of freedom so dear, she would have made some sort of response.

**"I could lose my son for 10 years to a US prison for something that isn't even a crime in the UK.** I have been a taxpayer for my whole working life and now, when I need our government the most, they have totally failed me."

O'Dwyer is currently on bail in the UK pending a legal appeal against his extradition, to be heard later this year.

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## **Ecuador 'won't be bullied on Assange'**

*AFP*

*July 10, 2012*

Ecuador's President Rafael Correa has vowed his government would not yield to pressure from Britain, Sweden or the US in deciding whether to grant asylum to Julian Assange.

"We will consult with everyone we need to, but we will make a sovereign decision on whether or not to grant asylum to the Australian, Julian Assange," he said in an interview with local television station RTS.

Since last month, the WikiLeaks founder has been holed up in Quito's embassy in London, seeking political asylum to avoid being extradited to Sweden on rape charges.

Mr Correa said he had "great respect" for London, for Stockholm and for Washington but that Ecuador would not allow those governments to dictate its decision on whether or not to grant Mr Assange political asylum.

He said the mere possibility that Mr Assange could face capital punishment in the United States could be reason enough for his government to grant Mr Assange's asylum petition, if there was a chance he could end up there.

**"If Assange's life is at risk, that is sufficient cause to approve his asylum,"** the leftist leader said, noting that "the death penalty exists in the United States for political crimes".

Quito has said it is reviewing the allegations of sexual misconduct against Mr Assange as it weighs the request. Mr Assange maintains he had consensual sexual relations with the alleged Swedish victims.

As he weighs his decision, Mr Correa said his government would "examine what the charges are in Sweden, how the judicial process is carried out, and if it is compatible with the humanist vision of justice that we have in Ecuador".

The WikiLeaks website and Mr Assange enraged the United States by publishing a flood of secret information about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The site's founder fears that if his is sent to Sweden he could subsequently be re-extradited to the United States to stand trial for espionage, on account of the 250,000 leaked US diplomatic cables that were published.

Ecuador's Mr Correa has often been at odds with Washington and offered Mr Assange asylum in 2010.

<http://www.perthnow.com.au/news/breaking-news/ecuador-wont-be-bullied-on-assange/story-e6frg13l-1226423036566>

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## **US could put Assange to death if it gets him — former senior NSA official**

*RT*  
*9 July, 2012*

If America gets its hands on the WikiLeaks founder, they may go as far as execute him, a known National Security Agency whistleblower Thomas Andrews Drake told RT, adding that in the US, security has become a state religion.

An expert on electronic eavesdropping, Drake sacrificed his career to blow the whistle on perceived wrongdoings within the NSA. He was charged under the Espionage Act, though the charges were dropped only last year. He told RT that in America's 'soft tyranny', everyone is subject or suspect in terms of surveillance.

*RT: What was the potential harm of the program that you challenged while working with the NSA?*

Thomas Drake: There was a very large flagship program called Trailblazer that was designed to catapult the NSA into the twenty first century to deal with the vast amounts of data generated by the digital age. Given the massive fraud and abuse that the NSA had created with the Trailblazer program, as well as the super secret surveillance program, the NSA completely violated the Constitution and the Fourth

Amendment. In particular, the statute called the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which was the first commandment at the NSA: you did [not] violate Americans' privacy without a warning, and if you did— there is a criminal penalty for doing so. And I found this out to my horror and shock, that shortly after 9/11, the NSA entered a secret agreement with the White House in which the NSA would become the executive agent for this secret surveillance program.

On the front end, it was designed to deal with a terrorist threat— and that was quite understandable. But what it did— it actually turned the US into a collection platform. Vast rims of data were increasingly being collected through other entities and saved for analysis.

*RT: There is a lot of debate about the proposed legislation CISP A enabling providers (Google, Facebook etc.) to share users' personal data with the government. Are they already doing that? Do they need this legislation to protect themselves from being liable for what they are already doing?*

TD: I believe that is a part of it. The other part is the government just wants even more access to even more data. Under the Patriot Act there is a secret executive interpretation which essentially grants the government pretty much unfettered access to subscriber information held by those companies. CISP A would take that to a next level. Under the label or the rubric of cyber threats, and to provide cyber security, the government wants even more invasive access to networks not normally available to that public.

*RT: So what is the goal; is it total surveillance?*

TD: If you take what has been happening in the post-9/11 security world, what you're see is **the establishment of a surveillance society**— the establishment of a surveillance network. People don't realize the extent to which we're surveilled in many, many ways. The extent to which vast amounts of our transactional data in all forms— electronic forms, your emails, your tweets, bank records and everything else— are all subject or suspect in terms of surveillance. It raises the specter of the rise of so-called "soft tyranny." It raises the specter of you being automatically suspicious until you prove that you're not; the specter of a universal and persistent wiretap on every single person. If not— they can create one. Because what happens if they don't like you? What if you speak ill will against the government? What if you say something they consider disloyal? That is not the country I took an oath to defend four times in my government career.

**There is also a fear element. Fear in itself is control.** What would people do when they are fearful is they would begin to censor themselves. It sends an extraordinary chilling **message that if you speak out— they are going to hammer you hard. Our security has become our state religion, you don't question it.** And if you question it— your loyalty is questioned.

*RT: A question about Wikileaks' founder Julian Assange. How angry do you think Washington is at Julian Assange?*

TD: They are extremely angry. According to press reports, there has been a secret Grand Jury and maybe a secret indictment. They want to get him and put him away. There are those at high levels in this country— they have called for a death warrant. **Believe me, if the US get its hands on him— they're going to do everything they can to put him away for as long as they can— or worse.**

Speaking truth to power is very dangerous. The power elites, those in charge don't like dirty linen being aired. They don't like skeletons in the closet being seen. Not only do they object to it, they decide to turn it into criminal activity. Remember, **my whistle blowing was criminalized by my own government.**

*RT: Journalists exposing civilian deaths in drone strikes are exposed as helping terrorist. The terrorist-helper label has become a convenient tool to brush off investigative journalism, hasn't it?*

TD: What it is, you go after the messenger to deal with the message... because addressing the message has become very uncomfortable. If we start moving away from the law, which has already happened very significantly, and leave it to policy as a substitute— we're going down a very slippery slope in the US.

*RT: US officials condemn cyber attacks but it turns out the US government itself is involved in cyber attacks (like Stuxnet and Flame viruses). How do you see that?*

TD: There are authorized leaks, which is an oxymoron coming from senior administration officials.

*RT: They want people to know that?*

TD: Right. I believe that is the case. They actually wanted people to know what the US is capable of doing. It is another form of warfare, it is a cyber weapon. But it is a Pandora's box because we're on uncharted territories of a virtual war.

The Pentagon itself has it on record that if a nation conducts actions against the US using things like Stuxnet— that's an act of war. But we consider it (our actions) information or cyber operations. It goes under a whole host of different labels to make it something different from what it really is. So where are the lines drawn?

<http://www.rt.com/news/america-surveillance-society-drake-697/>

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## **Edmond Arapi wins payout from Italian court for wrongful murder conviction**

*British resident receives £18,000 compensation in blow to European arrest warrant system*

*Duncan Campbell  
The Guardian  
9 July 2012*

A Staffordshire man wrongly accused of murder in Italy and held in prison for weeks under a European arrest warrant has been awarded major damages in a precedent-setting case. **The decision has been hailed as a warning to judges and prosecutors throughout Europe not to grant such arrest warrants without examining the evidence closely.**

In 2006, Edmond Arapi, 31, an Albanian who came legally to the United Kingdom in 2000 was convicted in his absence of a murder in Genoa, Italy and sentenced to 16



years. Arapi, who works as a chef in Leek, Staffordshire, was unaware of the case until he was arrested at Gatwick airport in 2009 on his return from a family holiday in Fier, Albania. He has only been out of the UK on two occasions since he first arrived and had never been to Genoa.

Despite his protestations of innocence and the flimsy case against him, he was held in jail for a number of weeks, to the distress of his pregnant wife, Georgina, whom he had met in 2001. They now have three children. Even after he was released on bail, he was under strict bail conditions as he awaited extradition to Italy.

A campaign was organised on his behalf by the charity, Fair Trials International (FTI), which has repeatedly warned that the European arrest warrants are being used too frequently and without proper consideration. Eventually, it was shown that Arapi could not have carried out the crime as he had been in working in a cafe in Staffordshire at the time. It became clear that he was the victim of a case of mistaken identity and another man with a similar name and from the same region in Albania was the actual suspect. The extradition order was withdrawn by the Italian authorities and the case against him dropped.

With the help of FTI, Arapi launched an action for compensation and the evidence was heard in Genoa earlier this year. He has now been awarded £18,000 by the appeal court in Genoa in recompense for his time inside and the distress caused to him and his family.

"No amount of money can really compensate Edmond, his wife and three children for their year-long ordeal and its long-term financial and emotional impact," said Jago Russell, the chief executive of FTI. "This decision, should, though, act as a warning to judges and prosecutors across Europe who have been using Europe's tickbox extradition regime without thinking and in completely inappropriate cases."

**Fair Trials International have highlighted a number of cases where arrest warrants have been issued on cases where the evidence is insubstantial or the alleged offence is very minor. There has also been concern that in some European countries, those extradited under the warrants can spend months or even years before they actually come to trial.**

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SvD: 11 juli 2012

## **Åklagare erbjöds täckmantel i London**

Representanter för den svenska åklagarmyndigheten erbjöds att närvara vid utlämningsförhandlingarna mot Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange i London under täckmantel. Den åklagare som har hand om den svenska utredningen mot Assange, Marianne Ny, ville inte medverka vid förhandlingen eftersom det skulle kunna uppfattas som att hon försökte påverka beslutet.

I stället ville myndighetens informationsdirektör Karin Rosander åka. Den brittiska åklagarmyndigheten erbjöd då båda att komma, och att de kunde presenteras som två unga juridikstudenter på genomresa, rapporterar TV 4 Nyheterna.  
Julian Assange

- Jag blev lite överraskad. Jag hade absolut inte tänkt åka under någon täckmantel. Däremot var jag angelägen om att inte bli ansatt av medierna, säger Karin Rosander.

Hon valde att helt avstå från att åka.

TT

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## **PM's department deems Gillard signature 'irrelevant'**

*Philip Dorling  
Sydney Morning Herald  
July 17, 2012*

The Prime Minister's department has declared Julia Gillard's signature on official documents to be "irrelevant" in an effort to conceal information about her handling of sensitive briefings on WikiLeaks.

A senior executive in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet last week ruled that "the signatures of the Prime Minister and her staff are irrelevant matter" to be redacted from documents released to Fairfax Media under freedom-of-information legislation.

The surprising characterisation of the Prime Minister's annotations arises from embarrassment caused to Ms Gillard last May when an earlier freedom-of-information application by Fairfax revealed the Prime Minister took days to read secret and high-priority briefing papers about WikiLeaks.

Declassified copies of Ms Gillard's briefings in November and December 2010, the period when WikiLeaks began releasing thousands of leaked US diplomatic cables, showed the Prime Minister never signed any briefing papers as read on the day they were submitted.

Ms Gillard generally took between four and six days to read urgent briefings. Much of her paperwork appeared to have been delegated to her staff.

Ms Gillard took five days to read urgent advice from the Australian Federal Police on whether WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange had breached Australian law, after she had publicly said WikiLeaks' publication of US classified documents was illegal. The AFP later publicly announced no offence against Australian law had occurred.

**The federal government has also moved to suppress the release of information about the extradition of Mr Assange to Sweden or the United States on the grounds disclosure of "assessments of legal processes in foreign jurisdictions" would harm Australia's foreign relations.**

Questioned at a Senate estimates committee hearing, then national security adviser Duncan Lewis insisted Ms Gillard's handling of urgent briefing material was irrelevant to the work of her own department.

"We cannot say that the handling of these documents in the Prime Minister's office or by the Prime Minister had any impact whatsoever on the pace at which we were working in the department," Mr Lewis said.

Redactions in the latest FOI release of Ms Gillard's WikiLeaks briefings, made by Rupert Hollin, an assistant secretary in the Defence, Intelligence and Information Sharing division of the Prime Minister's department, specifically exclude information that reveals when Ms Gillard read official papers.

**The government is adopting an increasingly restrictive approach to the release of information about WikiLeaks, especially the extent of its knowledge of the ongoing US espionage investigation directed against Mr Assange.**

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/pms-department-deems-gillard-signature-irrelevant-20120717-227y6.html>

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## **A bold stand in support: Vaughan Smith on Julian Assange**

*The founder of the Frontline Club sat down with GlobalPost to talk about Wikileaks, journalism and what the future might hold for one of the world's most wanted men.*

Charles M. Sennott  
Global Post  
July 15, 2012

LONDON—Of course, it's raining. Outside the Ecuadorian Embassy a gaggle of supporters of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange are clustered under umbrellas and tucked in doorways trying to stay dry.

Their placards, laminated against the rain, state their case: "Free Assange" and "Asylum for Assange. No to Rendition." One that reads "Freedom of Expression is a Right" is handwritten in black ink and the words run like tear-stained mascara down a white cardboard poster in a steady downpour.

An armed Scotland Yard officer in uniform is posted at the entrance of the Embassy. Several more police hover on the fringes and in unmarked cars on the narrow street known as Hans Crescent just across the entrance from Harrods. The streets are packed with tourists and shoppers on Friday afternoon in the run up to the Olympics, but few take notice of this little stand-off between the protesters and the British government's attempts to extradite Assange to Sweden where he still faces allegations of sex-related offenses....

For now, Assange is ensconced inside the first-floor flat of the Embassy here in London's posh neighborhood of Knightsbridge. An Embassy official answered the door Friday and then a young man with black Buddy Holly glasses named Joseph came out to politely explain that Assange is not doing interviews right now.

But earlier, I spent some time with Vaughan Smith, the founder of the Frontline Club, who has stood by Assange for nearly two years through his odyssey in the limelight and his legal ordeal.

Smith's Frontline Club is a gathering place for journalists near Paddington which has become home base in London for many of the world's foreign correspondents (including this one).

Smith has taken some heat for his support of Assange. Some journalists have disagreed with Smith's assertion that Assange has as much right to be a member of the Frontline club as any other self-proclaimed journalist. Assange is in the business of digging for information and publishing it, and for Smith it is really that simple.

I am a founding member of the Frontline Club, which opened its doors in 2003. I wrote a pretty tough column in this space on Assange, challenging the notion that trafficking in stolen documents is journalism. But as the smoke settles on the Assange affair and the facts come into focus, it is becoming clear that Smith took a bold and principled stand.

Smith was right to stand up for Assange and defend his release of hundreds of thousands of documents and diplomatic cables that dragged the U.S. and U.K. and other governments into the glaring light of transparency on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, even if they came kicking and screaming.

Over a long lunch with Smith at the Frontline Club, we talked about the Assange affair and the sad state of traditional journalism as we knew it back in the lush days of mainstream media when we were covering Afghanistan in the 1990s. But we also shared the excitement in the air about opportunities that lie ahead in the digital age.

"In the final balance sheet, I think any professional journalist who studies the facts would conclude that the release of documents—the sum of them all—was a great public service," said Smith.

The British press in particular, he said, personalized the Assange story, and missed the larger point of the documents and what they told the world about how power works.

**Smith said he had done a Google search of British newspapers several months ago and found that the word "Assange" appeared 7 to 8 times more often than the word "WikiLeaks."**

**Yet, the media accuse Assange for chasing the limelight, Smith points out.** At the Associated Press, the ratio of Assange-WikiLeaks was 3 to 1, and it's now 2 to 3, in Wikileaks' favor. **But, in newly industrialising countries, the focus is more on the content of the documents, not the man.** Smith points out that a Google search of the Hindustan Times revealed that Assange is mentioned only once for every three times that WikiLeaks is mentioned. The Hindustan Times alone did 20 front pages on the release of the documents.

"That suggests to me that the world is more interested in the content than the man and that perhaps we in the Western media misunderstand just how valuable these documents are to the developing world," said Smith.

“Assange has given us information that allows us to understand how our governments act in the world, and how corporations act in the world... If diplomats have secrets to keep, it is their job to keep them. We as journalists and as representatives of the public’s right to know should be arguing for the least amount of secrets possible,” said Smith.

As a father of five children and a retired Captain in the Grenadier Guards, a storied British army regiment, Smith is heir to a large farm in Norfolk that has been in his family for 250 years. He’s hardly a radical.

“I’m a member of the establishment, a mischievous one, but a member nonetheless,” says Smith, who has allowed Assange to stay with him on his family farm for much of the last two years.

“We as journalists are defined, and best understood, by our ability to be tolerant of many points of view. Assange challenges us as journalists to rethink what we do and I think that is a good thing,” said Smith, who hosted a press conference for Assange at the Frontline Club and eventually the club granted him membership.

“There is a tendency of journalists to guard their profession, to see it as a club, that it is somehow exclusive,” he says, as we sit back in the leather couches of the Frontline Club surrounded by the photos, signed books, framed photographs, famous front pages and the memorabilia and keepsakes of the old guard of mostly British foreign correspondents.

Smith smiles at the irony laden in his words before I can call him out on it. He turns a glass half-filled with white wine in his right hand and quickly adds, “He’s stirred up journalism, and he’s challenged our notion that we hold the exclusive right to control the information. We don’t. Not anymore.”

In the throes of the complex process and paperwork required to prepare a case for political asylum in Ecuador, Assange has been meeting with lawyers on and off, particularly Gareth Pierce, the fierce human rights lawyer who represented so many Irish Republican activists in the height of The Troubles in Northern Ireland.

**Among the Assange supporters there on the sidewalks was Jim Curran, 65, the head of the Irish Civil Rights Association and a long-time activist against the use of extradition of Irish prisoners. Wearing a tweed jacket pierced with a pin of an Irish flag, he said the history of the British exploiting extradition for political purposes has a nearly 500 year old history and that Assange is just the latest victim.**

Niall Taylor, 45, a high school history teacher and an Assange supporter, said, “WikiLeaks is about letting us know the truth about what our governments are doing in our name, and you can’t have democracy without that.”

Taylor spoke with a thick Scottish accent and had a Red Sox cap pulled down tight against the rain. The fact that he has chosen this baseball team to follow, of course, says everything we need to know about his enduring faith in and penchant for underdogs and lost causes. He said he was well aware the Red Sox have been dwelling in last place this summer, but he was still a fan.

When asked why he is spending his afternoon in the rain showing his support for Assange, he said, **"It's important to support people who are telling the truth. That's it, really."**

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatches/globalpost-blogs/groundtruth/vaughan-smith-julian-assange>

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## **Ecuador: Grant Political Asylum Now to Julian Assange**

*Mairead Maguire*  
*Common Dreams*  
*July 18, 2012*

As concerned citizens of the world well know, the Editor-in-Chief of WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, is currently inside the Ecuadorian Embassy, in London, England, having gone there to ask for political asylum. I want to add my voice to the many people of conscience around the world in urging President Correa of Ecuador to grant political asylum to Julian Assange.

The British courts shamefully refused Mr. Assange's appeal against extradition to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning accused of sexual molestation. No criminal charges have been made against him. Mr. Assange has said he is willing to answer questions relating to accusations against him, but only in England. He has good reason not to want to be extradited to Sweden, as he could find himself imprisoned in solitary confinement, and then very likely extradited to a U.S. prison.

American media have reported that the U.S. Justice Department and the Pentagon have 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."

**Mr. Assange's only crime is that he cared enough about people to respect their right to truth, and had the courage and bravery to print the truth. In the process, he embarrassed powerful governments.**

The WikiLeaks release of thousands of U.S. State Department Cables, and especially the 2007 video footage from a U.S. Apache helicopter which appears to show U.S. military deliberately killing civilians, including two Reuters employees, reveals the United States' crimes against humanity.

For this "truth telling," Julian Assange has inherited the wrath of the U.S. government, and has been targeted in a most vindictive way, as has Private Bradley Manning.

I support the right of WikiLeaks to publish leaked information, as it is in the interest of the world's public and their right to know. WikiLeaks were not the leakers or whistleblowers; they are an on-line news media.

Many believe there are people in high places who wish to punish Julian Assange for outing them, and to force others to remain silent, and that they will not rest until Mr. Assange is behind bars in the United States.

There are even some American politicians who have put Mr. Assange's life in grave danger by calling for him to be assassinated.

It is ironic that Julian Assange's basic human rights have been breached when he as a journalist dedicated to working for the people's right to freedom of speech, and a free press. The Australian, Swedish and U.K. governments have a responsibility to see this "man of courage" is treated fairly and with justice and that he be allowed to tell his story in the U.K. when he can prove whether the incompetent and contradictory accusations against him are true or false.

As world citizens, we all need to support Julian Assange. He tried to protect the innocent by outing the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity. They are the ones who one day should be made accountable for their crimes.

It must be asked: If Julian Assange ends up in an American prison for a long time, in grave danger to his life, and maybe even under the death penalty, Who's next? Where goes freedom, human rights and justice?

I urge President Correa of Ecuador to grant safe political asylum to Julian Assange.

• Mairead Corrigan Maguire won the 1976 Nobel Peace Prize for her work for peace in Northern Ireland. Her book, *The Vision of Peace* (edited by John Dear, with a foreword by Desmond Tutu and a preface by the Dalai Lama) is available from [www.wipfandstock.com](http://www.wipfandstock.com). She lives in Belfast, Northern Ireland. See: [www.peacepeople.com](http://www.peacepeople.com)

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## **Smeared With Sex Allegations**

*Julian Assange Interviews Anwar Ibrahim Leader of the Malaysian Opposition*

*July 20, 2012*

As a rising internal rival to the former Prime Minister Mahathir, Anwar was imprisoned for 5 years after being smeared with sex allegations. As a result of a popular campaign in 2004, his conviction was overturned and he was released from prison.

In 2008, he was again targeted for sex crimes allegations, he won the case earlier this year. With Malaysian elections looming with Anwar tipped to win, he has now been charged with unauthorized assembly. If found convicted, he will be prevented from running. Assange talks to him about how he has survived and what he sees as the future of Asia and the West.

Video at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=QaPpfJhKUXY&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QaPpfJhKUXY&feature=player_embedded)

## The rights groups that lost the plot on Ecuador and Julian Assange

*Free speech advocates should defend WikiLeaks' founder from US spying charges, not invent a media crackdown in Ecuador*

Mark Weisbrot  
The Guardian  
21 July 2012

Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, remains trapped in the Ecuadorean embassy in London since 19 June, as he awaits the government of Ecuador's decision on whether to grant him political asylum. It is interesting, if rather aggravating, to see how people who are supposed to be concerned with human rights and freedom of expression have reacted to this story.

Although Assange has not been charged with any crime, the Swedish government has requested his extradition to Sweden for questioning. For more than 19 months now, the Swedish government has refused to explain why he could not be questioned in the UK. Former Stockholm chief district prosecutor Sven-Erik Alhem testified that the decision of the Swedish government to extradite Assange is "unreasonable and unprofessional, as well as unfair and disproportionate", because he can be easily questioned in the UK.

Of course, it's not hard to figure out why Assange's enemies want him in Sweden: he would be thrown in jail and would have limited access to the media, and judicial proceedings would be conducted in secret. But most importantly, it would be much easier to get him extradited to the United States. Here in the US, there is an ongoing criminal investigation of WikiLeaks; and according to leaked emails from the private intelligence agency Stratfor, a criminal indictment for Assange has already been prepared. Powerful political figures such as Dianne Feinstein, Democratic chair of the US Senate intelligence committee, have called for his prosecution under the Espionage Act, which carries the death penalty.

For these reasons and many more, it is quite likely that the government of Ecuador will decide that Assange has a well-founded fear of political persecution, and grant him political asylum. Yet, surprisingly and shamefully, organizations whose profession it is to defend human rights and press freedoms have not only remained silent on the question of Assange's right to asylum, or Sweden's political persecution of a journalist, but have, instead, attacked Ecuador. **For example, José Miguel Vivanco, director the Americas Watch division of Human Rights Watch (HRW), has stated:**

"I think this is ironic that you have a journalist, or an activist, seeking political asylum from a government that has— after Cuba— the poorest record of free speech in the region, and the practice of persecuting local journalists when the government is upset by their opinions or their research."

Much of the media ran with this, perhaps not knowing a great deal about the media in Ecuador, and not realizing that any of the other independent democracies in South America would also grant asylum to Assange. **When Assange was first arrested in 2010, then President Lula da Silva of Brazil denounced the arrest as "an attack on freedom of expression". And he criticized other governments for not defending**



**Assange.** If it was clear to Lula and other independent governments that Assange was politically persecuted then, it is even more obvious now.

The problem is that Sweden does not have an independent foreign policy from the United States, which is why the Swedish government won't accept Assange's offer to come to Sweden if they would promise not to extradite him to the US. Sweden collaborated with the US in turning over two Egyptians to the CIA's "rendition" program, by which they were taken to Egypt and tortured. The UN found Sweden to have violated the global ban on torture for its role in this crime.

One would expect better from a human rights organization that is supposed to be independent of any government's political agenda. But Vivanco's attack on Ecuador is inexcusable. **As anyone who is familiar with the Ecuadoran media knows, it is uncensored and more oppositional with respect to the government than the US media is.**

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has mounted a similar political campaign against Ecuador, falsely charging: "Correa's administration has led Ecuador into an era of widespread repression by systematically filing defamation lawsuits and smearing critics."

What HRW and CPJ are doing is taking advantage of the fact that few people outside of Ecuador have any idea what goes on there. They then seize upon certain events to convey a completely false impression of the state of press freedom there.

To offer an analogy, it so happens that France and Germany have laws that make it a crime, punishable by fines and imprisonment, to lie about the Holocaust, and have recently prosecuted people under these laws. Personally, I agree with a number of scholars who see these laws as an infringement on freedom of expression and believe they should be repealed. But I would not try to pretend that the people who have been prosecuted under these laws— like the extreme rightwing leader Jean-Marie Le Pen of France— are themselves champions of free speech. **Nor would I try to create the impression that such laws, or their enforcement, are part of a generalized "crackdown" on political opposition; or that France and Germany are countries where the freedom of expression is under attack from the government.**

**If I were stupid enough to do so, nobody would believe me-- because France and Germany are big, rich countries that are much better known to the world than Ecuador.**

Let's look at one of the major cases that groups like Americas Watch and CPJ have complained most about. Last February, the nation's highest court upheld a criminal libel conviction against the daily El Universo, with three directors and an opinion editor sentenced to three years in prison, and \$40m in damages. President Correa announced a pardon for the convictions 13 days later-- so no one was punished.

As noted above, I am against criminal libel laws and would agree with criticism advocating the repeal of such laws. But to say that this case represents a "crackdown" on freedom of expression is more than an exaggeration. **These people were convicted of libel because they told very big lies in print, falsely accusing Correa of crimes against humanity. Under Ecuadorian law, he can-- like any other citizen-- sue them**

**for libel, and the court can and did find them guilty.** Just as Le Pen in France was found guilty of having "denied a crime against humanity and was complicit in justifying war crimes."

Groups like Americas Watch and CPJ are seriously misrepresenting what is going on in Ecuador. Rather than being a heroic battle for freedom of expression against a government that is trying to "silence critics", it is a struggle between two political actors. One political actor is the major media, whose unelected owners and their allies use their control of information to advance the interests of the wealth and power that used to rule the country; on the other side is a democratic government that is seeking to carry out its reform program, for which it was elected.

In this context, it is difficult to take seriously these groups' complaints that President Correa's public criticism of the media is a human rights violation.

While I would not defend all of the government's actions in its battle against a hostile, politicized media, I think human rights organizations that grossly exaggerate and misrepresent what is going on in Ecuador undermine their own credibility— even if they can get away with it in the mainstream US media. It is equally disturbing that they cannot find the courage— as more independent human rights defenders, such as the Center for Constitutional Rights, have done— to defend a journalist who is currently being persecuted by the government of the United States and its allies.

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## **Sex, Lies, and Julian Assange**

*Andrew Fowler and Wayne Harley  
Four Corners/ABC (Australia)  
23 July 2012*

KERRY O'BRIEN, PRESENTER: He humiliated the most powerful country in the world. But his relationship with two Swedish women, and their claims of sexual assault, may yet destroy Julian Assange.

PER E. SAMUELSON, SWEDISH DEFENCE LAWYER FOR ASSANGE: You shouldn't write such text messages if you had been raped by that person the night before.

CLAES BORGSTROM, LAWYER FOR ANNA ARDIN & SOFIA WILEN: I will not tell any media of how I am going to represent the women in court. I'm sorry.

KERRY O'BRIEN: Sex, lies, the Swedish justice system, the founder of WikiLeaks— and, somewhere in the background, an angry and embarrassed US government. A tangled web indeed. Welcome to Four Corners.

Julian Assange may have suspended his fate at the hands of a Swedish court by claiming political asylum in the Ecuadorian embassy in London, but the Swedes are not going away anytime soon. Nor are the British police, who are waiting to arrest him and extradite him to Stockholm the minute he attempts to leave his temporary sanctuary. Assange's troubles in Sweden go back almost exactly two years. The first sensational

intelligence of diplomatic leaks had already hit the public domain. In the American government's eyes, Assange had become public enemy number one. But for many others around the world, he was a *cause célèbre*. But for all their power and influence in the world, they had seemed impotent to stop the leaks, or somehow make Assange pay for what they saw as espionage.

When it emerged that two young Swedish women were pressing charges against him, alleging rape and molestation in somewhat curious circumstances, an extradition proceedings began in the British courts, Assange alleged that America was somehow manipulating the whole process behind the scene, in order to in turn extradite him back to the US to face the judicial music there.

On the assumption that Assange can't wait in his Ecuadorian sanctuary forever, and while we await the outcome of that standoff, Four Corners has gone back to Sweden, where the drama began, to pin down what actually happened there, and take a closer look at the inconsistencies in the various versions of events. Here is Andrew Fowler's report.

ANDREW FOWLER, REPORTER: In late 2009 WikiLeaks set up home in the Iceland capital of Reykjavik. It was a perfect fit. Iceland has world class internet. Its constitution forbids censorship. Julian Assange was made welcome. It was here that Assange received the first leaked cable of the now famous Cablegate documents. It centred on the US embassy in Reykjavik. Birgitta Jonsdottir, an Icelandic MP was working with WikiLeaks. She received an invitation to a cocktail party at the Embassy

BIRGITTA JONSDOTTIR, MP, ICELAND: Cocktail parties are mind-numbingly boring, and I only go if I have a reason. So I actually decided... I thought it was sort of funny and I'm a bit of a prankster sometimes, so I decided it would be quite funny for me to go with one of the WikiLeaks people to the Embassy.

ANDREW FOWLER: She invited Julian Assange, but on the day of the cocktail party she couldn't find him. Birgitta Jonsdottir decided not to go, but Assange did. In a moment of monumental chutzpah Julian Assange inveigled his way into the cocktail party here at the US embassy. He struck up a conversation with US diplomat Sam Watson. Several weeks later Assange published confidential cables authored by the very same diplomat. Now Sam Watson hadn't leaked and neither had any of the other US Embassy staff. Nonetheless, there was a massive internal investigation.

BIRGITTA JONSDOTTIR: I think that many people thought that he had actually gone in and mysteriously sucked out the cables with some spy device or something.

ANDREW FOWLER: Once the document came out, it was convenient to say it might have come from the Embassy?

BIRGITTA JONSDOTTIR: Of course, yeah.

ANDREW FOWLER: Which would have driven the United States intelligence agencies crazy trying to find out where this leak came from?

BIRGITTA JONSDOTTIR: Yes. Well you know, they all need to have a reason to earn their bread.

ANDREW FOWLER: It was the first act of humiliation by WikiLeaks of the world's

greatest superpower, but it was nothing compared to what was to come: Collateral Murder; the gunning down of unarmed civilians in a Baghdad street; and the Afghan War Logs. Eight months after his taunting of the US in Iceland, Assange landed in Sweden. He was now a cyber-celebrity.

THOMAS MATSSON, EDITOR, EXPRESSEN NEWSPAPER: I would say he was... it was a like a pop star, ah, arriving in Sweden. He made public appearances and many media companies wanted to, to talk about... talk with him about eventual co-operation with WikiLeaks.

ANDREW FOWLER: Assange had come to Sweden to speak at a conference, but he was also there for more intriguing reasons— to negotiate the use of a former underground nuclear fall-out shelter that stores Internet servers. It would provide first class security against the prying eyes and ears of the world's intelligence agencies. The bomb shelter houses the computer hardware of Rick Falkvinge's Swedish Pirate Party.

RICK FALKVINGE, SWEDISH PIRATE PARTY: We contacted them first, as in just offering server space— right?

ANDREW FOWLER: It might sound like a whacky organisation, but in Sweden it's taken seriously enough to have a member in the European Parliament. The Party's close to WikiLeaks.

RICK FALKVINGE: So we knew about them, they knew about us. We saw they were in trouble and we said, "Hey guys we might be able to help you out here."

ANDREW FOWLER: Falkvinge offered WikiLeaks some space in the bunker.

RICK FALKVINGE: It's an amazing place, to be honest. But, yeah, that's where we offered them hosting space. I don't know how they're using it. I shouldn't know how they're using it. That would interfere with my interests. But I understand it got quite some attention worldwide that WikiLeaks is now hosted in a nuclear bomb-proof fallout shelter.

ANDREW FOWLER: Assange was on a roll. Stockholm August 16th, 2010. Julian Assange caught a train from the central station. All the years of hard work were finally paying dividends for Julian Assange. Collateral Murder had been released, so too had the Afghan War Logs. But what would happen in the next few days would derail the WikiLeaks juggernaut.

Assange was not travelling alone. His companion was Sofia Wilen, a 26-year-old admirer. As Assange and Wilen left the train to spend the night together, they could have no idea of the repercussions that would flow from their one night stand. Assange's life would later descend into turmoil.

Two days earlier, the faithful and adoring had gathered at the L.O. building— Stockholm's Trade Union Headquarters. In the audience were two women: Sofia Wilen— in the pink cashmere sweater— and Anna Ardin. Assange was staying at Ardin's flat. They'd slept together the previous night. Later she would tell a friend she had a "wild weekend" with Assange.

Sofia Wilen was enthralled by the Assange phenomena— she texted during his talk, "He looked at me!"

PER E. SAMUELSON: He came to Sweden on the 11th of August 2010, and he had this apartment where one of these women lived. She was supposed to be away so he could stay there, but she came home on the that Friday night— 13th of August— and then they had consensual sex and he continued to stay in that apartment until the 18th of August. But in the meantime he made acquaintance with the other woman, and and one night he travelled to her town in Sweden and they had co—

ANDREW FOWLER: Consensual.

PER E. SAMUELSON: Consensual sex.

ANDREW FOWLER: The sex with Sofia Wilen in her apartment might have been consensual, but critically there was a question over whether Assange had used a condom. The next day, Assange caught the train back to Stockholm. Wilen stayed at home, worried about the possibility of an STD infection. She later rang Anna Ardin, Assange's lover of the previous week.

PER E. SAMUELSON: Somehow the two women started to exchange text messages which... with each other and started to discuss what had happened, and they ended up at the police station, **but they did not file any charges against Julian.**

ANDREW FOWLER: Ardin and Wilen went to Central Stockholm's Klara police station to see if they could compel Assange to take an STD test should he refuse.

PER E. SAMUELSON: **But the police interpreted what one of the girls said as some sort of sex crime having been committed and that resulted in a prosecutor the same night issuing a warrant of arrest for Julian.**

ANDREW FOWLER: It would become a tabloid journalist's dream: sex, politics and international intrigue.

(To Thomas Mattson) How big a story has the Assange case been here?

THOMAS MATTSON: The Assange story has been huge, of course...

ANDREW FOWLER: Thomas Mattson is the Editor of Expressen.

THOMAS MATTSON: The story has so many aspects. You have the political question whether this is a case created to damage WikiLeaks...

ANDREW FOWLER: At the time though, Mattson thought it was little more than salacious scandal.

THOMAS MATTSSON: I think that many people... in the beginning, people were, like, shaking their heads, thinking that if you are innocent, well in that case, this is, cannot be a problem. Just show up, say that you're innocent and you will most probably be cleared, if that's the case.

ANDREW FOWLER: Assange in fact did go to the Swedish Police ten days after the first allegations were made. He was interviewed but not charged with any offence, and he was free to leave the country while the inquiry continued.

PER E. SAMUELSON: In mid-September he got a message from his then-lawyer, but the prosecutor did not want him and... that he was... for an interview, and that he was free to leave Sweden, and under that assumption he left Sweden in the afternoon of the 27th of September in good faith that he had sought for and got approval from the prosecutor to leave the country.

ANDREW FOWLER: Assange made his way to London, holing up at the Frontline Club for journalists. He had unfinished business with America.

JULIAN ASSANGE, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, WIKILEAKS (October, 2010): This disclosure is about the truth.

ANDREW FOWLER: Assange was at his peak, working with some of the most prestigious and influential media outlets in the world— including the Guardian and New York Times. But ominously, 12 days after giving Assange clearance to leave the country, the Swedes issued a warrant for his arrest. Three weeks later WikiLeaks launched the third big hit against America: The Iraq War Logs.

Then the Swedish prosecutor upped the ante— with Assange now working on the biggest and most sensitive cache of US cables yet, Sweden issued an Interpol Red Notice for his arrest.

JENNIFER ROBINSON, UK LEGAL ADVISOR TO ASSANGE: You only need to look at the way that Red Notices are used around the world. Red Notices are normally the preserve of terrorists and dictators. The president of Syria does not have a Red Notice alert. Gaddafi in Libya, at the same time Julian's arrest warrant was issued, was not subject to a Red Notice but an Orange Notice. It was an incredibly... **it was incredibly unusual that a red notice would be sought for an allegation of this kind.**

ANDREW FOWLER: The timing of the Red Notice could not have been worse. US Army soldier Bradley Manning had allegedly leaked WikiLeaks more than a quarter of a million classified documents, and Julian Assange was anxious to get them out. They became known as Cablegate.

JULIAN ASSANGE (September 2011): There are so many thousands of stories that have come from that and have influenced elections and have been involved in the course of revolutions.

HILLARY CLINTON, US SECRETARY OF STATE: The United States strongly condemns the illegal disclosure of classified information. It puts people's lives in danger, threatens our national security, and undermines our efforts to work with other countries to solve shared problems.

ANDREW FOWLER: An outraged Washington set up a crack team of Pentagon investigators to take on WikiLeaks. It even launched a legally questionable financial blockade to starve WikiLeaks of funds. For America, Cablegate was the final straw. Some even wanted Assange dead.

(Excerpt from Fox News, December, 2010)

FOX PANELLIST: This guy's a traitor, a treasonous, and, and he's broken every law of the United States, the guy ought to be... and I'm not for the death penalty, **so if**

**I'm not for the death penalty there's only one way to do it: illegally shoot the son-of-a-bitch.**

FOX PRESENTER: Paul what about it?

**FOX PANELLIST II: This little punk... now I stand up for Obama. Obama, if you're listening today you should take this guy out, have the CIA take him out.**

(End of excerpt)

ANDREW FOWLER: If Assange was looking for support from home, he didn't get it.

**JULIA GILLARD, AUSTRALIAN PM (December 2010): I absolutely condemn the placement of this information on the WikiLeaks website. It is a grossly irresponsible thing to do— and, an illegal thing to do.**

ANDREW FOWLER: The then-Attorney-General threatened to revoke his Australian passport. **It was only because the Federal Police believed that Assange's passport was the best way to track him that he kept it.**

JULIAN ASSANGE (September 2011): Well the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General are US lackeys. I mean, it's as simple as that. They had a whole of government task force involving every intelligence agency and the Australian Federal Police and the Department of Defence and him trying to work out how to deal with WikiLeaks and me personally.

ANDREW FOWLER: Though the task force found that Assange had broken no law, his more immediate worry was that his extradition to Sweden would be a backdoor to onward extradition to the United States.

For more than 500 days Julian Assange and his legal team fought his extradition. Through the magistrates courts to the High Court and on to the Supreme Court, the most powerful court in the land. But on June the 14th Julian Assange lost his final appeal. The Supreme Court ruled he'd have to be extradited. Five days later, Assange fled to the Ecuadorean Embassy in London.

Last month, we managed a brief phone call from a London hotel with Assange in the embassy.

(On phone to Julian Assange) Ok, hang on, I'm just going to put the speaker phone on, one second, sorry...

He revealed why he was seeking political asylum.

JULIAN ASSANGE (on phone): Yes, there are a number of dramatic events that occurred just beforehand. First of all, the Swedish government publicly announced that it would detain me without charge in prison under severe conditions. On the same evening, the UK government security contractors that maintained the electronic manacle around my leg turned up unannounced at 10.30pm and insisted on fitting another manacle to my leg, saying that this was part of routine maintenance— which did not sound to be credible.

ANDREW FOWLER: Assange sensed that the net was tightening around him.

JULIAN ASSANGE (on phone): Then the next day, the Crown Prosecution Service, acting we believe on behalf of the Swedish government, requested that the 14 days that I had to apply to the European Court of Human Rights, be reduced to zero.

Assange is safe all the time he remains inside the embassy. But once he steps out, it's almost certain he'll be arrested and extradited to Sweden.

PER E. SAMUELSON: **The minute he hits Swedish soil he will be arrested. He will be brought to a custody jail. He will be kept there in isolation for four days. He can only meet with me and my co-lawyer. On the fourth day he will be brought into a courtroom in handcuffs in front of a custody judge, and they will decide whether he will be kept in custody up until the final court case is tried, or if we if he will be released. I will try to get him released of course.** But at least four days in Sweden in Swedish prison is... we can't avoid that.

ANDREW FOWLER: At the heart of the matter is whether the Swedish judicial authorities will treat him fairly. Certainly, events so far provide a disturbing picture of Swedish justice. Using facts agreed between the defence and prosecution and other verified information, we have pieced together what happened during those crucial three weeks in August.

On August 11th, 2010, Assange arrived in Sweden to attend a conference organised by the Swedish Brotherhood— a branch of the Social Democratic Party. He was offered Anna Ardin's apartment while she was away, but Ardin returned home a day early on Friday the 13th. She invited Assange to stay the night, and they had sex. She would later tell police Assange had violently pinned her down and ignored her requests to use a condom. *[She has also said that Assange is not a violent man. --A.B.]* Assange denies this.

The following day, Assange addressed the conference with Ardin at his side. Later that afternoon Ardin organised the Swedish equivalent of a top-notch barbeque— a crayfish party. She posted a Twitter message. "Julian wants to go to a crayfish party. Anyone have a couple of available seats tonight or tomorrow?"

The crayfish party was held that night in a courtyard off her apartment. It went on until the early hours of the morning. Ardin tweeted at 2am: "Sitting outdoors at 02:00 and hardly freezing with the world's coolest, smartest people! It's amazing!"

A guest at the party would later tell Swedish Police the event was a very hearty evening. When he offered to put Assange up at his apartment, Ardin replied, "He can stay with me."

In the past 24 hours, Ardin had worked closely with Assange, had sex with him, organised a crayfish party on his behalf— and, according to one witness, turned down alternate accommodation for him. It is during this same period that police will later investigate whether Assange coerced and sexually molested Anna Ardin.

PER E. SAMUELSON: Well, if you send text messages like that, "I've just spent some time with the coolest people in the world", the night after you then say you were raped— I mean you shouldn't write such text messages if you had been raped by that person the night before.

ANDREW FOWLER: Your client described Julian Assange as a "cool man". I think, one of the "coolest men in the world" that she'd had in her bed.



CLAES BORGSTROM: I will argue in court. I have of course arguments concerning exactly what you're talking about now, but I will not tell any media of how I am going to represent the women in court. I'm sorry.

ANDREW FOWLER: But can you see how that looks as though...

CLAES BORGSTROM: Yes, of course I can.

ANDREW FOWLER: ... it's a fit up. It looks as though they are in fact setting him up.

CLAES BORGSTROM: I'm quite aware of that.

ANDREW FOWLER: Sunday August 15th— the next day. Assange attended a dinner party at Stockholm's Glenfiddich restaurant, organised by pirate party founder Rick Falkvinge.

RICK FALKVINGE: I think a lot of people at the... at the table had meatballs. I think Julian might have been one of them. Now, Swedish meatballs that, that's a little bit like mum's apple pie in Sweden— as in, you can call my wife ugly, you can kick my dog, but the instant you say something bad about my mother's meatballs I'm going to take it personal.

ANDREW FOWLER: Also at the dinner was Anna Ardin.

(To Rick Falkvinge) So, just to get this straight: Julian Assange arrived with Anna Ardin and he left with Anna Ardin.

RICK FALKVINGE: Yep.

ANDREW FOWLER: What was their behaviour like towards each other?

RICK FALKVINGE: Well, I was discussing mainly with Julian and the... again I can't go into too much detail here, but it was at least a very professional dinner. There were two high level organisations, both intent on changing the world behaving professionally.

ANDREW FOWLER: The fact that Anna Ardin accompanied Julian Assange through this dinner and left with him— what does that say to you?

RICK FALKVINGE: Well that's going into speculating on merits of extradition, and I can't really do that. I think that be... you're presenting an objective fact, as did I, and if people want to read something into that that's obviously ripe for doing so, but I can't spell it out.

ANDREW FOWLER: Four Corners has obtained a photograph, lodged with police investigators, from that evening. Anna Ardin is on the left. Afterwards, Assange would again spend the night at her apartment.

The following day, August the 16th, Assange had sex with Sophia Wilen at her apartment. According to police records, Ardin was aware that he had slept with Sophia. **A witness told police he contacted Anna Ardin looking for Assange. She texted back: "He's not here. He's planned to have sex with the cashmere girl every evening, but not made it. Maybe he finally found time yesterday?"** That same day, the witness asked Ardin, "Is it cool he's living there? Do you want, like, for me to fix

something else?" According to the witness she replied: "He doesn't, like, sleep at nights so that's a bit difficult. So he has a bit of difficulty taking care of his hygiene. **But it's ok if he lives with me, it's no problem.**"

Three days later on August 20th, Wilen, accompanied by Ardin went to the Klara police station in central Stockholm to seek advice about whether Assange could be forced to take an STD test. Ardin had gone along primarily to support Wilen. Sometime during Wilen's questioning the police announced to Ardin and Wilen that Assange was to be arrested and questioned about possible rape and molestation. **Wilen became so distraught she refused to give any more testimony and refused to sign what had been taken down.**

JENNIFER ROBINSON: The circumstances leading up to the issue of the arrest warrant gave cause for grave concern for Julian about the procedures that were adopted in the investigation. We have to remember that when the announcement was put out that he would be subject to a warrant, one of the complainants was upset by that, and **later said that she felt railroaded by the police.**

KARIN ROSANDER, SWEDISH PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE: Well what happened is what was that the duty prosecutor got a phone call from the police and the duty prosecutor decided that he should be arrested.

ANDREW FOWLER: And what happened?

KARIN ROSANDER: He was arrested in his absence, but he... they never got in... got in contact with him so, but he was arrested in his absence. It's a technical... technical thing in Sweden, Swedish law, yeah.

ANDREW FOWLER: The Prosecutor's Office might not have contacted Assange but within hours they let the whole of Sweden know what was going on— leaking to the Expressen Tabloid the statements of Ardin and Wilen. The newspaper front page read: "Assange hunted for rape in Sweden".

JENNIFER ROBINSON: Julian wakes up the following morning to read the newspapers to hear that he's wanted for double rape and he's absolutely shocked.

THOMAS MATTSSON: Two of our reporters had information about Julian Assange, and we also had a confirmation from the prosecutor which confirmed on record that there was a police investigation against Julian Assange.

ANDREW FOWLER: It was now the case took a strange twist. Within 24 hours, a more senior prosecutor dismissed the rape allegations, leaving only the lesser accusation of molestation [*non-sexual molestation --A.B.*]. Assange willingly went to the police on August 30th and made a statement.

During the interview he expressed his fears that anything he said would end up in the tabloid newspaper Expressen. The interviewing police officer said: "I'm not going to leak anything." The interview was leaked.

PER E. SAMUELSON: Why did you leak his name to a tabloid paper? How... how can you drop the case and reopen the case and how can you... how can you not say that he waited for five weeks in Sweden voluntarily to participate in the investigation? Why do you have to arrest him? Why do you have to keep him in handcuffs? Why can't you

conduct this in a proper manner? **The rest of the world sees it, but Sweden unfortunately doesn't.**

ANDREW FOWLER: It is perhaps understandable that Assange had doubts he would receive fair treatment from the Swedish authorities. On September 15th, the prosecutor told Assange he was permitted to leave Sweden. **Assange, back in England, would later offer to return within a month. The Swedish Authorities said too late— a second warrant had already been issued for his arrest.**

ANDREW FOWLER: He says that he left the country and then was prepared to come back at any time. Is that your understanding?

CLAES BORGSTROM: I don't believe that.

ANDREW FOWLER: He says that he was prepared to come back in October but the prosecutor wanted him back earlier.

CLAES BORGSTROM: I don't know. I don't believe he wanted to he was he wanted to come freely back to Sweden. I don't think so.

ANDREW FOWLER: Can you understand that the Australian people may not understand how somebody can be accused in their absence when they haven't even been interviewed, then have that rape case dropped, the arrest warrant removed and then have it re-instituted, all in the space of a few days?

KARIN ROSANDER: Yeah I can very well understand the confusion and, and I... that is very difficult to understand, well, exactly how it works.

ANDREW FOWLER: **Well you call it confusing, it's... it may be slightly more than that.**

KARIN ROSANDER: Well that's the way it works here in Sweden so, well... but I can understand the confusion, definitely.

ANDREW FOWLER: Assange, still hunkered down in the London embassy, has no doubt what his fate will be if he is extradited.

JULIAN ASSANGE (on phone): If I was suddenly taken to Sweden, I would not be in a position to apply for political asylum in relation to United States. it would be the end of the road. I would just be taken from one jail to another.

JENNIFER ROBINSON: The US has said specifically, the US ambassador to London said, they would wait to see what happened in Sweden. And so we are very concerned about the prospect that once matters are resolved in Sweden, he will... there will be an extradition request from there and he will not be able to travel home to Australia and will have to fight extradition in the Swedish court.

ANDREW FOWLER: The US Ambassador to Australia suggests that Washington isn't interested in the Swedish extradition.

JEFFREY L. BLEICH, US AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRALIA (May 2012): It's not something that the US cares about, it's not interested in it, it hasn't been involved in it—and frankly, if he's in Sweden, there's 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's nothing to it.

MICHAEL RATNER, US LAWYER ASSANGE: That's diplomatic speak. That doesn't mean anything. Their last statement three days ago by their spokesperson Linn Boyd says we are continuing our investigation of WikiLeaks. So you can't accept those words.

ANDREW FOWLER: Michael Ratner, Assange's New York lawyer, believes there's an easy solution to the issue.

MICHAEL RATNER: If they flatly said, "We do not... we will not prosecute Julian Assange" that would be a very different kind of statement—and... and they, in my view, is they should that I think they should say it, one, because then Julian Assange could leave the Ecuadorian Embassy, go to Sweden, deal with Sweden and continue on with his life.

ANDREW FOWLER: But Ratner thinks that's not what the United States wants. He's convinced a Grand Jury is investigating WikiLeaks and Julian Assange. **Four Corners has obtained a copy of a subpoena from a Grand Jury which is examining evidence for possible charges relating to "conspiracy to communicate or transmit national defence information" and obtaining "information protected from disclosure from national defence". Critically the subpoena contains the identifying codes "10" and "3793".**

MICHAEL RATNER: There's a Grand Jury currently sitting in Alexandria Virginia and the Grand Jury's number—and it's interesting the Grand Jury's number is 10 standing for the year it began, GJ which is Grand Jury and then 3793. Three is the Conspiracy Statute in the United States. 793 is the Espionage Statute. **So what they're investigating is 3793: conspiracy to commit espionage.**

ANDREW FOWLER: Certainly, anyone associated with Assange is feeling the heat of the US authorities. Icelandic activist, Smari McCarthy, worked on the Collateral Murder video. We caught up with him at a Reykjavik hotel.

ANDREW FOWLER: So what is it about WikiLeaks that changed everything?

SMARI MCCARTHY, ICELAND MODERN MEDIA INITIATIVE: It industrialised the process of leaking.

ANDREW FOWLER: McCarthy flew into Washington earlier this year to attend a conference. Security officials had him in their sights the moment he stepped off the plane.

SMARI MCCARTHY: When I get out through the doorway there's two bordering customs control officers. **One of them takes a look at my passport, says, "Yes this is the guy", and they walk with me away.**

ANDREW FOWLER: McCarthy was questioned for several minutes about the reason for his trip, before the border guards got to the point.

SMARI MCCARTHY: And then about, like, in the last couple of minutes they say, "Well you know we're actually asking you these question is because we know you're related to WikiLeaks", and I say, "Well I was, but I'm no longer". And they ask, like, "So you're not in contact with Julian Assange?" And I say, "No, I have no contact with Julian", and they're like, "Oh, okay", and basically let me out. I'm on my way.

ANDREW FOWLER: But it wasn't the last McCarthy would see of the FBI. After the conference McCarthy had a drink with friends before heading to the Washington Metro. He missed the last train. As he walked out of the Archives Station two men confronted him.

SMARI MCCARTHY: Two guys come up to me and address me by name, and say that they're FBI agents, and, "We'd like to ask you some questions", and I say to them, "Well I've had some beers and I don't have lawyers, so no, I'm not going to answer any questions". They nevertheless give me a piece of paper with a phone number and an email address. This was not a business card, this was a piece of paper. This was just a kind of a card file thing, but it was handwritten and the email address was not at FBI.gov as you would expect from FBI agents.

ANDREW FOWLER: Just why they wouldn't give an FBI email address puzzled McCarthy .

SMARI MCCARTHY: **They say, "Well, they contain our full names", and I said, "Why is that a problem?" "Well we're afraid that if our full names... if we give you our full names, then there will be retaliation against us personally from Anonymous."**

ANDREW FOWLER: The two men seemed worried he might be a member of the cyber-hacker group Anonymous which had worked with WikiLeaks.

SMARI MCCARTHY: And I said, "Who the hell do you think I am? I'm not like the grand master of Anonymous. There's no... I don't even know anybody in Anonymous," right?

ANDREW FOWLER: McCarthy's experience could be dismissed as an oddity, but **in the backstreets of Paris we found someone with a very similar story. Jérémie Zimmermann heads up an Internet activist group. He's a WikiLeaks supporter.**

JÉRÉMIE ZIMMERMANN, INTERNET LIBERTY: I'm a friend with Julian. I think he's a he's a very intelligent and and very witty person, and I enjoy very much the conversations we have together.

ANDREW FOWLER: Earlier this year, as he prepared to board a plane at Washington's Dulles Airport, two men approached him about his involvement with WikiLeaks

JÉRÉMIE ZIMMERMANN: They didn't show any badge. So I didn't ask for one, but I saw their colleague maintaining the gate of the plane open, so I thought you don't do that with a, you know, a university library card, so I thought...

ANDREW FOWLER: So you thought they must be FBI?

JÉRÉMIE ZIMMERMANN: I thought they must be FBI— and actually the agent questioning me was a caricature of FBI agent, you know, with a large jaw, short hair, tight suit— and he said, "Well, your name was mentioned in a criminal investigation for conspiracy involving lots of people", and so which case he was referring to it's the Grand Jury in Virginia. And so I ask him, thinking aloud, if I understand correctly: "Either I talk to you or I take full responsibility for my actions in front of a judge during a fair trial". And this is where he replied immediately: "Have you ever been arrested? Have you ever been to jail?"— in an obvious attempt to intimidate me.

ANDREW FOWLER: What do you think they were trying to achieve?

JÉRÉMIE ZIMMERMANN: Maybe it was to turn me into an informant, try to send me, get information from Julian, or whatever. I don't know. I will never know, probably.

MICHAEL RATNER: Zimmermann was stopped roughly at the same time coming back from a similar thing with McCarthy, so I don't know who would be tricking them into thinking they were FBI agents. What we've seen in a couple of these stops in the Assange WikiLeaks case is people introduce themselves as Homeland Security— at least in one instance— and not as FBI and then when they get pushed a little they have to admit they're FBI. Now, it's interesting when you think about it: these people have been hit by the FBI and that also tells you that this is a Justice Department investigation of civilians.

ANDREW FOWLER: Even Assange's UK legal advisor, Jennifer Robinson, appears to have been caught in the US dragnet.

JENNIFER ROBINSON: I'd had an incredibly long day at work and I was late to the airport. I rushed out to Heathrow, handed over my passport and the woman behind the desk was having a lot of difficulty. She couldn't check me in. She looked at me in a strange manner and said "Look, this is odd. You're Australian, you're travelling home to Australia, you shouldn't need a visa". I said, "Well no, I'm Australian. Here's my passport, I'm going home", and she said, "I can't check you in".

ANDREW FOWLER: A security officer took Robinson's passport away

JENNIFER ROBINSON: She came back about 15 minutes later carrying a mobile phone, handed my passport to the woman behind the desk and said, "She's inhibited. We can't check her in until we've got approval from Australia House."

ANDREW FOWLER: Though Robinson was eventually allowed to catch the plane, she has still not received an explanation why she is on a so-called "inhibited list". It does not appear to be an Australian government term. But US Homeland Security uses the phrase to identify people who need to be watched.

Now back in England, she continues to be Assange's legal advisor. We caught up with her on a visit to the Ecuadorian Embassy.

JENNIFER ROBINSON: Look he is now gathering and preparing materials for the purpose of his application to the Ecuadorian authorities, and essentially now it's a matter for the Ecuadorian government.

ANDREW FOWLER: How is he... what's his manner like? How's his humour?

JENNIFER ROBINSON: **I have never known anyone to deal with the amount of stress that he's under as well as he does.** He's in very good spirits and still very committed to WikiLeaks work. He may be confined to the embassy but as he showed during house arrest, that doesn't stop him. In the last 18 months we've seen a television program, we've seen further WikiLeaks releases— so I don't think he'll let this stop him either.

ANDREW FOWLER: Assange's primary concern is that the Australian Government has never properly addressed the central question: the near certainty that a Grand Jury is investigating WikiLeaks and the possibility of him being charged.

JENNIFER ROBINSON: We are very concerned about the very prospect of potential extradition to the US. We need only look to the treatment of Bradley Manning. He's been held in pre-trial detention for more than two years now, in conditions for a large part of that detention which the UN Special Repertoire said amount to torture. We are very concerned about the prospect of him ending up in the US, and the risk of onward extradition from Sweden was always a concern and remains a concern.

ANDREW FOWLER: Once in Sweden he would be at the mercy of a system which has a record of complying with US wishes. And there's evidence that Sweden has acted illegally in past extraditions involving the US.

RICK FALKVINGE: Sweden has frankly always been the United States' lap dog and it's not a matter we are particularly proud of. The Swedish Government has... essentially, whenever a US official says, "Jump", the Sweden Government asks, "How high?"

ANDREW FOWLER: If that seems like a heavy handed comment, there's evidence to back it up.

RICK FALKVINGE: There was a famous case in last decade where a couple of Swedish citizens [*they were political refugees seeking asylum --A.B.*] were even renditioned by the CIA in a quite torturous manner to Egypt where they were tortured further, which goes against every part of Swedish legislation, every international agreement on human rights— and not to say human dignity.

ANDREW FOWLER: A United Nations investigation later found against Sweden. The country was forced to pay compensation. For Assange, coupled with his other experiences of the Swedish judicial system, it is perhaps understandable that he fears ending up in Sweden.

MICHAEL RATNER: For me the question really is if I'm sitting in Julian Assange's position, I'd be very, very nervous because the United States gets their hands on you in this case, and you're a goner. So, you know, what I get asked all the time is, "Well, how do you know." To me the question isn't how I know I know there's a lot of evidence out there that it looks like that. To me the burden should be on the United States Government to say, "We are not planning to prosecute Julian Assange". **If they just gave that assurance, I can guarantee you that Julian Assange would go to Sweden tomorrow.**

KERRY O'BRIEN: We approached Australia's Attorney-General, Nicola Roxon, to pose a number of questions related to the Assange case, but she was unavailable on holidays. Ultimately, some of our questions were answered by a Foreign Affairs spokesman, by email, on behalf of Foreign Minister Bob Carr. They're on our website.

*End of transcript*

<http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/stories/2012/07/19/3549280.htm>

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## **Late-night visit helped spark Assange asylum bid**

*Andrew Fowler and Wayne Harley  
Four Corners/ABC (Australia)  
July 24, 2012*

A late-night visit by the security contractor who maintained the electronic bracelet around Julian Assange's ankle was one reason why he decided to seek political asylum in the Ecuador embassy in London.

For the first time, Mr Assange has revealed full details of the sequence of events that led to him moving into the embassy last month. Mr Assange told Four Corners he only took the decision because after a number of "dramatic events" he feared his bail was about to be cut short.

For more than 500 days the WikiLeaks founder had been fighting extradition to Sweden where he is wanted for questioning over alleged sex crimes, including rape. Speaking from the embassy by phone, Mr Assange said he became suspicious when the Swedish government publicly announced it would detain him "without charge in prison under severe conditions".

What happened next made him believe he may soon be taken into custody. "On the same evening, the UK government security contractors that maintained the electronic manacle around my leg turned up unannounced at 10.30 pm and insisted on fitting another manacle to my leg, saying that this was part of routine maintenance, which did not sound to be credible," he said.

Mr Assange said the following day the security contractor "filed a section nine bail breach against me" in that "my bail would be revoked and they did so under the basis that we refused to let them in at 10.30 pm unannounced".

Later that day Mr Assange said he feared his last avenue of appeal was about to be terminated by the British crown prosecution service.

"Acting, we believe, on behalf of the Swedish government, (they) requested that the 14 days that I had to apply to the European court of human rights be reduced to zero."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-07-23/julian-assange-four-corners/4148700>



## **Declaration of Abandonment Australia's position towards Assange**

### **All 16 requests for assistance are refused in full**

The table below contains the letter from Julian Assange's solicitor, human rights lawyer Gareth Peirce from Birnberg Peirce and Partners, and Ken Pascoe, the Consul-General of the Australian High Commission in London. **Australia refuses to make representations on Mr. Assange's behalf in any manner whatsoever.**

The letter outlines the requests that Mr. Assange makes for representations by his government regarding due process and fair trial, and the Australian government's position: an effective declaration of abandonment. Not only does Australia fail to make representations that are perfectly appropriate and customary— they explicitly refuse to do so.

**Note that the Australian government took almost two months to respond to Ms. Peirce's letter**, despite her insistence that the matter was urgent, and that Mr. Assange's due process rights were being violated, and are being violated, in the absence of the Australian government's representations.

Details at: <http://justice4assange.com/Declaration-of-Abandonment.html>

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## **On Assange, government defiant in face of reality**

*Bernard Keane  
Crikey  
24 July 2012*

The government's insistence on ignoring the Obama administration's investigation of Julian Assange is becoming increasingly untenable as public evidence mounts of a grand jury and a continuing campaign by the US government against him.

In a response to a recent letter from Melbourne QC Julian Burnside, acting for Assange, acting Attorney-General Jason Clare refused point blank to respond to direct questions about whether the government had asked the Obama administration if it was conducting an investigation of Assange's journalism as editor of WikiLeaks. Instead, Clare resorted to the government's standard line that the US has not laid any charges against Assange.

While the existence of a sealed indictment of Assange remains formally unconfirmed, an investigation of Assange was confirmed by the Obama administration on the public record late last year through an agent giving evidence at the pre-trial hearing of alleged WikiLeaks source Bradley Manning, currently enduring an almost Kafkaesque military trial in which his ability to call witnesses or raise exculpatory evidence has been severely circumscribed.

On June 30 this year, a Department of Justice spokesman again confirmed that there continues to be an “investigation” into Assange for his journalism. We also know there is a grand jury investigating Assange via several subpoenas, including that of David House, who recently published a transcript of his appearance on June 15, 2011 before the grand jury (much of which is hilarious), based on notes that Department of Justice prosecutor Patrick “phalanx of attorneys” Murphy demanded House stop taking.

And as Crikey recently reported, this year has seen several activists and journalists stopped and interrogated for their connections to Assange (Four Corners followed up some of this last night).

With so much evidence now on the public record of an investigation of Assange for his journalism and of a grand jury process, the Australian government’s refusal to say anything other than a obstinate insistence that no charges have been laid has become a straight refusal to acknowledge reality. Clare’s letter carefully and tightly frames a response to Burnside’s direct questions about whether the government has inquired about the investigation or the grand jury by talking only about the “issue” of whether charges have been laid. “The Minister for Foreign Affairs has raised this issue ... The Attorney-General has also raised this issue,” Clare says.

That issue, of course, is a cover for either gross deception by the government as to the advice it has received from the Obama administration, or a wilful blindness as to its intentions.

Clare also clearly states for the first time the government’s belief that there is no grounds for the view that the “temporary surrender” mechanism that exists in a treaty between Sweden and the United States (but not between the UK and the US) has less appeal or procedural rights than standard extradition. Clare says:

“Temporary surrender is not an alternative to extradition but an option for a requested State to interrupt its own legal proceedings or sentence and allow extradition of a person for the duration of criminal proceedings in the country seeking the extradition (hence ‘temporary’). All protections available to the person whose extradition is sought apply equally to an extradition that is a temporary surrender.”

This is a key point in dispute between the Australian government and Assange’s lawyers, who insist there is doubt over whether the Swedish government would be required to observe standard extradition protections for a temporary surrender, or whether Assange could be handed over by Sweden to the United States before he has time to appeal against surrender, given the close relationship between the current Swedish government (with its prime ministerial consultant adviser, one Karl Rove) and the United States. There are many lawyers who agree with the government’s interpretation.

For Assange, however, the stakes are much higher than a mere legal point of difference; it may involve an extended prison sentence for his journalism or even his life.

<http://www.crikey.com.au/2012/07/24/on-assange-government-defiant-in-face-of-reality/>

## Julian Assange defence to be led by Spanish jurist Baltasar Garzón

*WikiLeaks founder hires renowned human rights investigator who indicted Augusto Pinochet to fight extradition to Sweden*

*Giles Tremlett in Madrid  
The Guardian  
25 July 2012*

The celebrated and controversial Spanish human rights investigator Baltasar Garzón is to lead the defence of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange as he fights extradition from Britain to Sweden where he is wanted for questioning over rape allegations.

Garzón, who was disbarred as a judge in Spain in February, said he would lend Assange the weight of his knowledge of international human rights and extradition law in a case that he denounced as "arbitrary and baseless". He travelled to London to meet Assange, who has been taking refuge in the Ecuadorean embassy since 19 June.

Garzón, who was the investigating magistrate when the former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet was arrested in London on an extradition warrant to face genocide charges in Spain, **said he believed Assange was the victim of obscure international political manoeuvring. "There is clear political intentionality behind this affair, which explains his current situation,"** added Garzón on Wednesday.

"Obviously this is not just about his future but his physical and psychological stability and It is only right that Assange should be protected by the same rights as those of any other citizen."

"Assange has not rebelled against any jurisdiction, given that he respects the action of the law, but he -- and we -- are seriously worried about what will happen to him because his situation is becoming political as a result of the great work done by his organisation when it comes to denouncing corruption," he added.

"That cannot be the reason for **a judicial process that appears, and which I believe we can show, is arbitrary and totally baseless,**" he stated, according to the Cadena SER radio station.

"It does not seem right that a single person should be under such pressure from governments," referring to both Sweden and Britain. "I believe that Assange... is in a situation that is an attack on his human rights."

A statement posted on the Support Julian Assange website <http://www.support-julian-assange.com/tag/baltasar-garzon> in the names of both Garzón and Assange confirmed the news. "The Spanish judge, lawyer, and international jurist, Baltasar Garzón, will lead the legal team representing Julian Assange and WikiLeaks," it said.

The two men had discussed a new legal strategy to defend Assange and WikiLeaks from "the existing abuse of process". Its aim included showing "how the secret US processes against Julian Assange and WikiLeaks have compromised and contaminated other legal processes, including the extradition process."

"The judge has expressed serious concerns regarding the lack of safeguards and transparency with which actions are being taken against Julian Assange, and the harassment he is being subjected to which has irreparable effects on his physical and mental wellbeing," the statement added. **"The threats against his person are further aggravated by the complicit behaviour of the Swedish and UK governments, who are wrongfully abrogating his rights."**

Garzón's career as an investigating magistrate in Madrid in effect came to an end five months ago when the supreme court disbarred him for wiretapping conversations between defence lawyers and their clients in a corruption investigation involving the Spanish prime minister Mariano Rajoy's People's party.

He was given an 11-year suspension as supporters claimed he was the victim of a conspiracy to bring down one of the world's best-known human rights investigators, who had successfully pursued henchmen working for Argentina's military juntas.

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## **Julian Assange may face embassy questioning**

*BBC*

*26 July 2012*

Ecuador is to allow the Swedish authorities to interview Wikileaks founder Julian Assange at its London embassy where he has taken refuge. A source at the embassy in Knightsbridge revealed an approach was made to Sweden on Wednesday.

The Australian, 40, arrived on 19 June, announcing he was a political asylum. The anti-secrecy campaigner, whose website published secret US cables, wants to avoid being sent to Sweden to face sex crime claims, which he denies.

He faces arrest for breaching the terms of his bail if he leaves the embassy. But under international diplomatic arrangements, the police cannot enter to arrest him.

Mr Assange enraged Washington in 2010 when Wikileaks released thousands of confidential US diplomatic cables. He fears if he is sent to Sweden to face rape and assault accusations, he could be transferred to the US to face charges over Wikileaks, where he could be given the death penalty.

A Wikileaks spokesman said Mr Assange had been willing to be interviewed in London for 18 months now and would welcome the chance. Speaking in Iceland, he told the BBC he had no "first hand information" about an approach to Sweden, but saw no reason why the Ecuadorian government would object. Mr Assange was in "good spirits" when he last spoke to him a few days ago, he added.

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SvD: 26 juli 2012

## **Sverige avkrävs Assange-garantier**

Ecuador vill ha garantier från Sverige om att Julian Assange inte kommer att lämnas ut till USA efter en våldtäktsrättegång, skriver The Guardian. Enligt källor till tidningen har ecuadorianska och svenska diplomater träffats för att diskutera frågan.

Julian Assange sitter sedan den 19 juni fast på Ecuadors ambassad i London, efter att han flytt till ambassadbyggnaden och sökt politisk asyl i landet, genom att åberopa FN:s deklaration om mänskliga rättigheter....

Julian Assange har sedan länge påstått att den egentliga anledningen till att han motsatt sig ett utlämnande till Sverige är att det är första steget i ett utlämnande till USA, som enligt Assange vill åtala honom för offentliggöranden av bland annat diplomatrappporter.

Den brittiska dagstidningen The Guardian skriver att ecuadorianska diplomatkällor gör gällande att landet nu vill ha garantier från både den brittiska och svenska regeringen, om att Julian Assange inte kommer att utlämnas till USA efter en domstolsprocess i Sverige.

Enligt diplomatkällorna har Ecuador ställt frågan till Storbritannien och Sverige, men utan att få något svar. Däremot har ecuadorianska diplomater haft ett 10-tal möten med svenska företrädare, samt ett 20-tal möten med det brittiska utrikesdepartementet, skriver tidningen. Landet ska även ha erbjudit svenska åklagare att förhöra Assange i ambassaden.

Nu ska Ecuador även fråga USA om det finns en pågående rättsprocess mot Assange som kan sluta i en utlämningsbegäran.

Ecuadors utrikesminister Ricardo Patiño meddelade under onsdagen att ett beslut om Julian Assanges asylansökan inte kommer förrän OS i London är avslutat.

• Erik Paulsson Rönnbäck

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## **Ecuador seeks to stop 'evil' of Julian Assange US extradition**

*Ecuadorean diplomats seek UK assurances that WikiLeaks founder will not be extradited to US after proceedings in Sweden*

*Paul Lewis  
The Guardian  
26 July 2012*

The Ecuadorean government is seeking to avert the "evil" of the extradition of Julian Assange to the US, according to a senior legal adviser to the country's embassy in London, where the WikiLeaks founder has sought sanctuary with a view to claiming asylum.

Diplomats for the small Latin American country said they had been seeking assurances from the UK that Assange would not be extradited to the US after the completion of legal proceedings in Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning over allegations of sexual assault.

Lawyers for Assange, who has been living in the Ecuadorean embassy for five weeks, believe there are secret plans to extradite him to the US to face trial, possibly for conspiracy to commit espionage. If found guilty, the 40-year-old could face life imprisonment.

Two officials at the Ecuadorean embassy said it had been seeking assurances from both the UK and Sweden that Assange would not be eventually sent to the US, but had received no answer. They said Ecuador would now formally ask the US if there were any legal proceedings against Assange or "an investigation which has identified him as a target and which may result in a later extradition request".

The senior legal adviser said: "In legal terms ... **the evil that Ecuador wishes to prevent is the extradition [of Assange] to the US.** Now if there are ways and means of that being tied down, I think that would be a just solution."

Assange first sought refuge in the Ecuadorean embassy, citing the UN declaration on human rights, on 19 June. Ever since, he has been living in the ground-floor embassy in a small, square room, which friends who have recently visited estimate is around 15 ft wide.

The embassy, near the Harrods department store in Knightsbridge, has no courtyard, so Assange has been given exercise equipment. But he remains confined to the small room and adjoining corridor, with a window that barely opens.

Meanwhile, diplomats at the embassy have spent recent weeks seeking to negotiate a solution to the legal impasse. Assange remains on bail after losing his last supreme court appeal against extradition to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning in connection with accusations of sexual assault and rape in Stockholm in 2010.

If he leaves the premises, he is liable to immediate arrest by the Metropolitan police, which has stationed two officers outside the building.

**A political adviser to the Ecuadorean government said Assange's asylum claim had presented the country with "an absolutely extraordinary case" that placed it at the centre of a global controversy involving four other countries:** the UK, Sweden, the US and Australia, where Assange was born and remains a citizen.

Ecuador was seeking to be an "honest broker", he said, while meeting its international obligations. He said that on Wednesday, Ecuador formally offered the Swedish prosecutor the opportunity to interview Assange inside the London embassy. **Sweden had not responded to the proposal.**

Most of the discussions have focused on seeking to establish whether, once Swedish legal proceedings against Assange are resolved, there will be any attempts to extradite him to the US.

He said Ecuador was "deeply concerned" at the prospect of Assange's extradition to a country which has the death penalty. "Ecuador has also raised the point— and is very much concerned about— life sentence," he said. **"According to our law, life sentence may be equally inhumane,** in the sense that any person that has no prospect of leaving confinement is, in fact, as we see it, condemned to a death sentence [for] life. For us, that is equally inhumane."

Assange's US lawyer, Michael Ratner, said he was certain Assange had already either been secretly indicted by a grand jury in Washington or would face extradition with a view to prosecution. He believed the death penalty remained a possibility.

"I have no doubt there is a serious investigation, which has gone on, and is continuing, into Julian Assange and WikiLeaks," he said. **However, Ratner said it was highly unlikely the US would confirm to Ecuador or any other party that it intended to prosecute Assange.**

Ever since Assange unexpectedly sought refuge at the embassy five weeks ago, diplomats have been in regular discussions with both the Swedish and UK governments.

**The two officials estimated there had been more than 20 meetings—including video conferences— with the UK Foreign Office. There had also been around 10 meetings arranged between Ecuadorean and Swedish diplomats, they said.**

Diplomatic discussions were said to have been "friendly and polite". The Ecuadoreans said discussions had focused on what was likely to happen to Assange once legal proceedings in Sweden were completed.

**The senior legal adviser said that under extradition law, the concept of "specialty" ensures an individual can only be extradited to one country—in the case of Assange, Sweden. Once legal proceedings in that country have been completed, the individual is given a 45-day leave, during which they are free to go where they want.**

Assange should, therefore, be free to travel to any other state—including the UK, Ecuador or Australia— once legal proceedings against him are completed in Sweden. **However, specialty can be waived by the country granting the initial extradition request—in this case the UK—** thereby allowing an individual to be extradited to a third country.

The senior legal adviser to the Ecuadoreans said that the home secretary, Theresa May, would need to waive specialty under section 58 of the Extradition Act 2003, before Assange could be extradited from Sweden to the US.

**Despite repeated requests from Ecuador, the Foreign Office has not said whether or not May intends to exercise her powers to allow for any potential future extradition to the US.**

**"The concerns that Ecuador has in relation to that whole process is that some states—not least of which the US— have been known to hold back on their extradition requests, to a timely moment, when they can serve the process with greatest impact,"** the senior legal adviser said. "And so the concern would be that the US has in mind a request for extradition on the basis of WikiLeaks charges."

The officials said they did not expect a decision to be made on Assange's asylum claim until after the Olympics.

A spokesman for the Foreign Office said: "Since Mr Assange first entered the Ecuadorean embassy five weeks ago, we have repeatedly made clear to the Ecuadorean government that the UK has a binding legal obligation to extradite Mr Assange to Sweden to face questioning over allegations of sexual offences. We have been seeking a diplomatic solution and expect Ecuador to resolve this issue in accordance with its international obligations.

"The UK courts, including the supreme court, have confirmed that Mr Assange's extradition to Sweden complies with all the requirements of the UK's Extradition Act, including as regards the protection of his human rights. We have gone to great lengths to explain to Ecuador the human rights protections inherent in our law."

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## **Extradition Gives America Jurisdiction Over The Globe**

*Wendy McElroy*  
*Future of Freedom Foundation*  
*July 30, 2012*

Since June 19, WikiLeaks whistle-blower Julian Assange has eluded the British authorities by secreting himself within the diplomatically shielded Ecuadorian embassy in London. On June 14, Assange's final appeal against his extradition to Sweden was rejected by the British courts, and he was ordered to surrender himself to the police on June 29. Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa may well grant Assange's request for permanent political asylum. Correa is a vociferous critic of American interventionism within Latin America.

Given that the embassy is Ecuadorian, the nation is England, and the charges are Swedish, why does America inevitably enter any discussion of Assange? In a word, "extradition."

Various authorities have pursued Assange around the world for years now, even though there were no criminal convictions or charges against him. (An arrest *in absentia* has been lodged by Sweden subsequent to his refusal to be extradited.)

The clear reason for this hunt was and is Assange's pivotal role in WikiLeaks' release of thousands of diplomatic documents that profoundly embarrassed the American government (among others) by spotlighting corruption and duplicity. American politicians and military officials were especially outraged by the April 2010 release of the video "Collateral Murder." The video shows a 2007 American attack in which Iraqi civilians were killed, including two Reuters journalists.

The San Francisco Bay Guardian (May 4, 2010) commented:

Reuters demanded an investigation in the summer of 2007, and asked for copies of the video the choppers took. The government refused. But after three years, a copy



of the video has finally been released — through WikiLeaks. The chilling footage shows the helicopters firing on seemingly unsuspecting Iraqi civilians — and includes the helicopter crew's comments, which are even more chilling.

It's as if the gunners were playing a video game, as if they didn't consider the people on the ground to be living human beings. **"Oh, look at those dead bastards," one crewman says.** At another point, the gunners — who aren't allowed to fire at unarmed targets — practically beg a wounded man to pick up a weapon so they can finish him off. And when the man gets into a van that arrives to help him, they ask for permission to open fire: "Come on, let us shoot!"

Of course, Assange's Swedish extradition order was not officially connected to WikiLeaks; it was allegedly based on a need to question him on unrelated accusations of rape. The extraordinary measures employed, however, belie the idea that the prosecutor is merely conducting a preliminary investigation on whether a sex case is prosecutable.

According to written testimony by former Stockholm chief district prosecutor Sven-Erik Alhem, the handling of the Assange investigation by authorities has violated Swedish law and procedures in several ways. For example, Alhem declared the "confirmation of the identity of a suspect to the media" to be "completely against proper procedure and in violation of the Swedish law and rules regarding preliminary investigations," which require confidentiality.

**Alhem continued, "In my opinion, a reasonable and professional prosecutor would have sought to interview Mr. Assange in London" in order to determine if a prosecutable case existed. In response to the prosecutor's claim that Swedish law required questioning on Swedish soil, Alhem stated, "there is ... nothing in Swedish law that I know of to prevent a prosecutor" from seeking assistance from the authorities of another nation to interview a suspect on foreign soil.**

He concluded, "a prosecutor should not seek to arrest and extradite Mr. Assange simply for the purposes of questioning as long as other means have not been tried." Indeed, the British authorities have demonstrated their willingness to cooperate by placing Assange under house arrest in 2010. *[Unfortunately Alhem has also said — during an extradition hearing! — that Assange should immediately and voluntarily return to Sweden and surrender himself. --A.B.]*

Making sense of why such dramatic steps were taken to obtain Assange's person leads back to familiar words — "America" and "extradition." Once he is on Swedish soil, Assange could be imprisoned immediately while legal matters are conducted in the background without media attention. The highest legal priority is likely to be extradition to the United States, where such powerful political figures as Diane Feinstein, Democrat and chair of the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee, have been trying for years to find grounds to prosecute Assange for treason under the Espionage Act.

Prosecuting Assange is legally problematic. Treason — the crime of betraying your own nation — is defined by the United States Code, Title 18, Part I, which declares that the crime applies to "Whoever, owing allegiance to the United States, levies war against them or adheres to their enemies." But Assange is Australian and so owes no allegiance to the United States.

Nonetheless, according to confidential emails posted at WikiLeaks' site The Global Intelligence Files, the U.S. government has had a secret indictment against Assange for more than 12 months that could be produced in a flash should Assange arrive on Swedish soil.

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." According to Burton: "Assange is going to make a nice bride in prison. Screw the terrorist. He'll be eating cat food forever." 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."

The Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), which represents WikiLeaks and Assange, has condemned the sealed indictment. CCR claims the indictment underscores "the very thing WikiLeaks has been fighting against: abuses the government commits in an environment of secrecy and expansive, reflexive calls for 'national security.'"

## **Why Sweden and not the UK?**

If the United States has an indictment that could be activated at any time, why wait for extradition to Sweden? After all, the U.K. is a staunch ally of America and therefore likely to comply with extradition. There are several reasons for the United States to prefer a Swedish extradition.

First, the Swedish claims have been "in play" since before the sealed indictment. FOX News reports a comment by John Bellinger, a former legal adviser to the U.S. State Department.

"If the Justice Department were actually to issue charges against Mr. Assange while he was still in Britain there could be potentially a decision for the U.K. government whether to extradite him to Sweden or to the United States, and that could get to be a complicated clash between the two different requests which would put the U.K. government in a difficult position."

Second, as the Justice for Assange website states, "The UK's judicial review process, while far from perfect, has a number of practical review mechanisms. The nearest equivalent case, of Gary McKinnon — a UK citizen who has been charged for hacking US military systems — has been opposed in the courts for 8 years." Both sides acknowledge that McKinnon was seeking information to feed his passion for UFOs; nevertheless he faces up to six decades imprisonment on American soil.

**Third, a handful of cases similar to McKinnon's are causing a backlash in British public opinion.** When the U.S. recently won the "right" to extradite a 23-year-old

student for running a UK-based website that linked to external pages with copyrighted material, it raised a furious debate on whether the extradition treaty was fair.

**Fourth, the British media, public opinion, and court system are more favorable to Assange than their Swedish counterparts are. A strategic extradition would be considerably more difficult in the United Kingdom.**

### **A flip of the coin on Assange's future**

It all hinges on whether Ecuador will grant asylum to Assange. Although he has been in its embassy for over a month, Ecuador may well delay making a decision. As long as Ecuador is deliberating, it faces few international consequences, and Assange remains safe.

If I had to wager, I would bet on Ecuador granting asylum. It is not merely that President Correa roundly dislikes the United States. Nor that Assange has a strong case for being politically persecuted. As José Miguel Vivanco, director of the Americas Watch division of Human Rights Watch, commented,

It would be a PR coup for Ecuador to become the protector of free speech against a censorious United States. It would also raise Ecuador's status in Latin America. Assange's persecution is unpopular in the region. In 2010, then president Lula da Silva of Brazil referred to Assange's arrest as "an attack on freedom of expression."

If asylum is denied, then Assange's path will almost inevitably lead to the United States. He may or may not be tried for treason or for the theft of government documents. He could simply receive the same treatment as Bradley Manning, the alleged source of the leaked documents about which the U.S. government is so incensed.

Manning has been imprisoned for two years without trial, almost one year of which was passed in solitary confinement for 23 hours a day; he was left in the cell and awoken every five minutes in an attempt to make him implicate Assange. In March 2012, the United Nation's special rapporteur on torture formally called Manning's treatment cruel, inhuman, degrading, and a violation of his human rights. Assange could simply be kept for years in solitary confinement without trial.

In a statement delivered on July 2 outside the Ecuadorian embassy, Susan Benn of the Julian Assange Defense Fund noted the determination of the U.S. government to prosecute Assange. She stated, "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."

Meanwhile, Assange is gearing up for a fight. Agence France-Press (July 18) reported, "WikiLeaks said Wednesday that it had found a way to get around the banking blockade that has dramatically cut its donations over the last 18 months." The blockade against WikiLeaks had been led by "US financial giants VISA and MasterCard." Now WikiLeaks intends to use "a French affiliate of Visa" that "VISA and MasterCard

are contractually barred from directly cutting off.” WikiLeaks claims that the blockade reduced their donations by over 90 percent.

Of the blockade and those who capitulate to it, Assange declared, “Let them demonstrate to the world once again their corrupt pandering to Washington. We're waiting. Our lawyers are waiting.”

With money in his pocket, Assange may be able to perform the legally miraculous act of beating the U.S. government.

- Wendy McElroy is the author of *The Reasonable Woman: A Guide to Intellectual Survival* (Prometheus Books, 1998). She actively manages two websites: <http://www.ifeminists.com> and <http://www.wendymcelroy.com>.

<http://www.fff.org/comment/com1207x.asp>

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## WikiLeaks supporter David House lashes out against Julian Assange

*MIT computer scientist attacks founder in series of tweets that claim his actions 'put WikiLeaks supporters at risk'*

Ed Pilkington  
The Guardian  
31 July 2012

Julian Assange has lost another of his dwindling band of loyal supporters. [???] David House, one of very few people to have met both Assange and the WikiLeaks suspect Bradley Manning, has denounced the WikiLeaks founder in a blaze of excoriating tweets.

House, a computer scientist based at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts, launched his attack on Assange **out of the blue** on Tuesday morning from his twitter account @VoxVictoria:

David House @VoxVictoria

As long as #WikiLeaks remains icon of the Open Government movement, the antics [for example? --A.B.] of Assange will continue to reflect negatively on us all.  
31 Jul 12

The Twitter attack from House continued with a comment that as long as WikiLeaks is controlled by Assange, the shortcomings of his leadership would "continue to put WikiLeaks' supporters at risk". The implicit reference to Manning— the US soldier facing 22 charges as the alleged source of the massive WikiLeaks publication of state secrets— was made explicit in House's next tweet:

David House @VoxVictoria

The alleged actions of Bradley Manning have not been edified by the missteps of #WikiLeaks [for example? --A.B.] under the direction of Julian Assange.  
31 Jul 12

House's criticisms come two days after WikiLeaks claimed credit for a hoax article under the name former New York Times editor Bill Keller which was circulated widely on the internet. The organisation's involvement in the hoax drew criticism that it had undermined its credibility for a publicity stunt. *[It was also defended, but it is typical of The Guardian to omit mention of that. --A.B.]*

House's decision to publicly call for Assange's removal is significant because until now he has been assumed *[by whom? --A.B.]* to be a firm supporter of the Wikileaks founder. He took a defiant stance after he was called before a grand jury in Virginia investigating the possibility of bringing criminal charges against Assange for the WikiLeaks publication of the Iraq and Afghanistan war logs and hundreds of thousands of confidential US diplomatic cables.

Not only did House refuse to answer any questions in front of the grand jury, pleading the Fifth Amendment, he recently took the legally risky step of publishing his notes of the proceedings— a rare breach of grand jury secrecy.

House used to be one of the few people allowed to visit Bradley Manning in more than two years in military custody. House is still regularly referred to as a "close friend of Manning". **However, Manning cut him off from his small list of approved visitors several months ago, for unknown reasons**, and the description is no longer appropriate.

It is true, though, that House has the distinction of being in a very select— perhaps even unique— class of having met both Manning and Assange. Apart from his visits to Manning, he also met Assange in London on a few occasions. These meetings took place after Manning was arrested in May 2010. *[Does that constitute "loyal support"? --A.B.]*

Assange remains in sanctuary in the Ecuadorean embassy in London seeking to avoid extradition on sexual misconduct allegations to Sweden. His inner circle of supporters and WikiLeaks staff has already withered to about five or six people. *[Was the "inner circle" every substantially larger than that? --A.B.]*

House describes himself as an "open-government advocate and information economics researcher with the MIT Center for Digital Business". In his tweets on Tuesday House encouraged his followers to donate to the Bradley Manning defense fund and accused Assange of deviating from the core values he held for what he called "open government whistleblowers and activists":

David House @VoxVictoria

Assange deviated from these core values. *[In what ways? --A.B.]* Either he must be replaced at #WikiLeaks, or WikiLeaks must be displaced within OpenGov movement.

31 Jul 12

### **House declined to comment to the Guardian.**

His Twitter onslaught provoked a robust response from several people who still see Assange as a free information hero. *[Is that an expression they use?-- A.B.]* Typical was the tweet from Elizabeth Ferrari: "Attacking Assange is counter-productive to the defense of all whistleblowers being persecuted by the American gov."

## Assange Meets Ecuador's Foreign Minister

*Submitted by Jaraparilla*  
*WL Central*  
*2012-07-31*

While WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange remains trapped in Ecuador's London embassy, his mother has flown to the small South American capitol to provide additional information on his request for political asylum, and make a personal plea for assistance.

At a press conference following today's meeting, Christine Assange thanked the Foreign Minister and the government of Ecuador "for paying attention to the information I have given, which is more than my own government will do."

Mrs Assange claimed the Australian government has abandoned her son, and reiterated her fears for his safety if he is extradited to the USA. She explained how the US Grand Jury process worked, and cited the treatment of Bradley Manning as an example of what her son could expect. She told local media that the current situation is not just about WikiLeaks, but also about justice and the future of press freedom.

The meeting was briefly halted when Mrs Assange was overcome with emotion, after beginning to explain to a reporter why she preferred to focus on the facts of the case rather than her own experiences.

**According to Ecuador's El Telegrafo newspaper, Mrs Assange revealed that her phones are tapped, her 21-year-old grandson has had death threats, her father is dying and might not be able to see Julian before he dies, and the family is suffering symptoms of chronic stress.**

Mrs Assange earlier said she was "terrified" by the thought of US extradition and that her son was "under extreme psychological stress" while confined to the Ecuadorian embassy. "He is freedom-loving. He cannot run. He cannot go outside to see the sky. Outside, the UK police wait like dogs to take him."

"I am not here to demand asylum," she said. "I come to humbly ask, as his mother."

**Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño said he was "very surprised" by the information he had received from Mrs Assange, including details of processes "that could be underway in America" and alleged torture of Australian citizens in Guantanamo Bay.**

Mr Patiño also revealed that the Ecuadorian embassy in Sweden has asked the Swedish government to come to London if they want to question the WikiLeaks Editor-in-Chief. "Ecuador continues its thorough analysis of this case in order to take an informed decision. Our decision will seek not to endanger the life of a human being," Patiño said.

"I am sure the president and his aides will make the best decision in this case," said Mrs Assange.

Christine Assange is scheduled to meet with President Rafael Correa before departing on August 4th. As a gesture of respect to Britain, no decision on asylum is expected before the Olympic Games finish on August 12th.

Note: Reports that Christine said that Julian Assange's Australian passport has been cancelled appear to be due to bad translations. The 41-year-old's passport was confiscated by UK police when he was arrested two years ago.

#### UPDATE

WikiLeaks has tweeted that Sweden has rejected the request to interview Julian Assange in the UK....

It is also worth noting that two tweets from @CancilleriaEc, which live-tweeted the press conference, were later deleted. These tweets described comments by Christine Assange that were critical of the Swedish media and Swedish prison system.

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### Correa Comments on Sweden's Refusal to Interview Assange in London

*Prensa Latina*  
2012-08-01

Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa said that there are unthinkable things in Latin America in the Swedish legal framework, referring to that government's refusal to interview Julian Assange in London.

The news agency Andes reported on Tuesday night that Correa referred to Ecuador's request to Sweden to interview Assange about the alleged sex charges at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London.

Correa noted that Sweden requests the extradition of the founder of Wikileaks, not because he was charged or sentenced, but to testify about the accusations against him.

**"These are inconceivable things in Latin America's legal framework, if we did that here and they did not, we were troglodytes,** cavemen, the ones who attempted and the same old story of always," Correa said.

Correa, said the source, refused to anticipate criteria about whether Sweden's decision might influence Ecuador's response to Assange's request for political asylum in Ecuador.

The president's statements came during a visit to Quito by Christine Assange, the mother of the Australian journalist, who denounced the creation of a Grand Jury in the United States to sentence her son.

Christine met on Tuesday with Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño, to whom she expressed her gratitude for the government's protection of her son in London, where he is waiting for political asylum since July 19.

Patiño ratified that Ecuador's decision on this case will be made public after the Olympic Games in London, and made it clear that Ecuador will never endanger a citizen's life.

## Wikileaks lawyer Garzon 'worried' for Assange health

AFP

1 Aug. 2012

MADRID — The renowned Spanish lawyer representing Julian Assange said he was worried about the WikiLeaks founder's health due to the pressure on him as he fights efforts to extradite him from Britain.

Baltasar Garzon, known for pursuing Chile's former dictator Augusto Pinochet, met Assange, 41, on July 19 in the Ecuadorean embassy in London, where the Australian Wikileaks man has taken refuge and is seeking asylum.

"He seemed to me steady and determined to continue the fight in which he believes," Garzon told reporters in Madrid. "But at the same time I am worried about his psychological and physical condition, because the tension he is experiencing is very great," he added.

Assange has been in the embassy since June 19 seeking political asylum in Ecuador after losing a legal battle to avoid extradition to Sweden to face questioning over rape and sexual assault claims.

He fears that if sent to Sweden, he will be re-extradited to the United States to stand trial for espionage for publishing leaked US diplomatic cables that embarrassed governments around the world.

**"As the coordinator of his defence team, it seems to me that in the current circumstances there are not the minimum and indispensable conditions for a fair trial," Garzon said.**

Assange founded Wikileaks, a whistle-blowing website that in 2010 released hundreds of thousands of classified diplomatic documents on its site.

**Garzon said there was "a most perverse hidden intention to subject Mr. Assange to criminal proceedings in the United States, which are currently under way in secret."**

Garzon was banned from the judiciary in Spain in February after standing trial accused of exceeding his authority in investigating a political corruption case. He said Wednesday he is working for Wikileaks for free.

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## Julian Assange is right to fear US prosecution

*There are clear signs that the US is on track to prosecute the WikiLeaks founder, which, as his US lawyer, I advise him to heed, despite the denials of the Obama administration*

*Michael Ratner  
The Guardian  
2 August 2012*

As the drama unfolds over Julian Assange's bid for political asylum in Ecuador, a troubling irony has emerged: the besieged founder of WikiLeaks is seeking refuge in this small Andean nation because he fears persecution from the United States, a nation whose laws famously grant asylum to people in precisely Assange's situation. Indeed, the US has demonstrated its commitment to be a safe haven for those being persecuted for their political beliefs by recognising that journalists punished for expressing political opinions in places like China meet the criteria for asylum under the US's own laws.

The journalistic function and legacy of WikiLeaks cannot be disputed. The site has published 251,287 leaked US diplomatic cables and military documents that revealed the inner workings—warts and all—of US foreign policy. These publications illuminated state-sponsored human rights abuses in Iraq and Afghanistan, exposed a secret war in Yemen, and revealed the Obama administration's interference with independent efforts to prosecute Bush officials for torture and other war crimes.

So why is Assange so concerned? Are his fears of persecution due to his political beliefs and expression reasonable?

There are several unambiguous signs that the US is on track to prosecute Assange for his work as a journalist. A grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia, empanelled to investigate violations of the Espionage Act—a statute that by its very nature targets speech—has subpoenaed Twitter feeds regarding Assange and WikiLeaks. An FBI agent, testifying at whistleblower Bradley Manning's trial, said that "founders, owners and managers" of WikiLeaks are being investigated. And then there is Assange's 42,135-page FBI file—a compilation of curious heft if the government is "not interested" in investigating its subject.

In this context, Assange's fears of extradition to and persecution in the US, and therefore his plea for asylum, are eminently reasonable.

What's more, Assange is rightly concerned about how he will be treated if he is extradited to the US. One need only consider how the US treated Bradley Manning, the army private who allegedly leaked the cables to WikiLeaks to see why. Manning spent close to a year in pre-trial solitary confinement for 23 hours a day, and then eight months under conditions designed to pressure him into providing evidence to incriminate Assange. During this time, Manning was stripped of his clothing and made to stand nude for inspection. Thousands of people, including scores of legal scholars and the United Nations special rapporteur on torture, have condemned Manning's treatment as inhumane, and state that it may constitute torture. There is no reason for Assange to expect he will be treated any better.

Most disturbingly, the US government is more concerned with investigating a journalist and publisher than the high-level government officials whose alleged war crimes and misdeeds Assange and his cohorts brought to light. Why? To send a message to others who might dare to expose government misconduct, who believe that transparency, exposing abuses, and dissembling hypocrisy strengthen democracy—and who act on those beliefs. In short, the US is intent on persecuting a crusading journalist and publisher for his political expression.

These are the circumstances under which Ecuador is considering whether it will grant Assange the asylum he is entitled to under law. If it does, and should the UK or the US retaliate against Ecuador, that would be a violation of the law. Granting asylum is a peaceful and humanitarian act and cannot be regarded with hostility.

The US claims to lead the world in freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and the role these play as the foundations of democratic government. These freedoms do not die when governments feel threatened or are embarrassed by the publication of information. As Justices Stewart and White famously said, "the only effective restraint upon executive policy and power in the areas of national defence and international affairs may lie in an enlightened citizenry—in an informed and critical public opinion which alone can here protect the values of democratic government".

Indeed, it is precisely those who challenge the powerful, including government, who most require the protection afforded by fundamental free speech rights. If our current administration chooses to abandon them, it may fall to Ecuador to uphold the best of American principles.

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## The Fate of Julian Assange

*Kevin Gosztola*  
*The Nation*  
*August 2, 2012*

Over a month ago, the founder and editor-in-chief of WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, entered the Ecuadorean embassy in the United Kingdom and requested political asylum. He has been holed up in the embassy ever since, waiting for the Ecuadorean government to decide on his request, which Ecuador Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño says will come after the London Olympics. Assange also recently hired former Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón to represent his legal team.

The Ecuadorean government appears to be seriously considering the possibility of granting Assange asylum. President Rafael Correa has said the situation is "not simple" and must be studied thoroughly before the country can announce a decision. **Patiño has indicated Ecuador will release a document that may be "hundreds of pages" long, which will provide "sufficient justification" for the decision made because the country realizes it could have great "international impact."** And Anna Alban, Ecuador's ambassador to the UK, flew to Ecuador on June 23 to meet with Correa and brief him on the application.

Statements made by both Correa and Patiño seem to favor Assange. Patiño told the press on July 5 he found the sexual assault allegations against Assange to be “hilarious” because they stem from a broken condom. On June 22, **Correa said, “In Ecuador, if someone had done one hundredth of what has been done to Assange, they would be called dictators and oppressors.”** Correa also later declared Ecuador “will consult with everyone” but the country will “make a sovereign decision” and not be pressured by Sweden, the UK or the United States. He made a key acknowledgment: the death penalty exists in the United States for “political crimes” and if Assange’s life is “at risk,” that would be “sufficient cause to approve his asylum.”

Officials have made it clear to Swedish authorities that they could come question Assange in the embassy at any time. They have sought diplomatic assurances from the UK and Swedish authorities that Assange would not be extradited to the United States, especially if he went to Sweden to be questioned. They’ve done what one might expect a country to do if they were preparing to grant an asylum request.

If Ecuador were to grant asylum, an agreement on “safe passage” would have to be worked out before Assange could leave the UK. The Metropolitan Police have served him with a notice that he is to be extradited to Sweden and accused him of violating his bail conditions by remaining in the Ecuadorean embassy. Without an agreement, the police would likely arrest him before he reached an airplane for Ecuador.

For making his asylum request, Assange has been criticized for being paranoid or considering himself above the law. His supporters have even faced scorn from commentators for defending his decision to exercise his legal right and seek asylum. So, what evidence exists to suggest Assange is right to consider himself a political target and not a common criminal?

The first sign is Swedish authorities have not questioned him yet. As Susan Benn of the Julian Assange Defense Fund stated on June 29, “Although it is normal procedure, Swedish authorities have refused, without reason, to make the three hour trip to London and to interview Julian causing him to be trapped in the UK under virtual house arrest” for over 500 days. Also, once in Sweden, Assange would be imprisoned immediately and not have any opportunity to seek asylum at any embassy in Sweden.

Another sign is the existence of a secret grand jury that has been empanelled in Alexandria, Virginia, to investigate WikiLeaks. Assange told Democracy Now! that seven WikiLeaks staffers and volunteers have been subjected to this investigation. **Google and Twitter have been issued subpoenas ordering the companies to turn over private data on users believed to be affiliated or connected to WikiLeaks, and the organization suspects that Facebook has also been issued similar subpoenas. The US government has subpoenaed WikiLeaks’s domain registrar, Dynadot, for server data. The government has subpoenaed Sonic.net for the private e-mails of WikiLeaks volunteer Jacob Appelbaum, who has been detained multiple times at airports by federal agents who have questioned him about his links to WikiLeaks.**

Justice Department spokesperson Dean Boyd said in late June, “There continues to be an investigation into the WikiLeaks matter.” Also, in a June motion hearing in the case of Pfc. Bradley Manning, the soldier accused of releasing classified information to WikiLeaks, it was revealed that the FBI has a 42,135-page investigative file into WikiLeaks. **Only 8,741 of the pages are allegedly relevant to Manning’s case. That**

**means more than 30,000 of the other pages likely involve evidence the US government has on Assange and WikiLeaks staffers or volunteers.** It is hard to imagine that this investigative file would be put together if the US government did not plan to prosecute someone. Not to mention, Manning is charged with “aiding the enemy” and military prosecutors have established in court that the “enemy” is Al Qaeda.

Finally, the political climate in the United States is ripe for an Assange extradition. Senator Dianne Feinstein, head of the US Senate Intelligence Committee, has renewed her call for Assange to be tried for “espionage.” Congress members have mounted a bipartisan offensive against “leaks” by President Barack Obama’s administration on Obama’s “kill list,” cyber warfare against Iran and a CIA underwear bomb plot sting operation in Yemen. The Obama administration has indicted an unprecedented number of people under the Espionage Act for “leaking” or whistleblowing. And, House Republicans have expressed support for jailing journalists if they don’t comply with a political witch hunt for “leakers.”

WikiLeaks’ releases of diplomatic cables, war logs, the “Collateral Murder” video and other disclosures brought about shocks to American superpower on a scale no person in US government could have ever imagined. Collectively, the releases exposed how US diplomats had engaged in blackmail, bribery, coercion, cover-ups, fraud, misconduct and other tactics to advance US foreign policy.

Those in Washington currently appear to have a zero tolerance for the free flow of information, particularly information that results in criticism or scrutiny of the US. Given that, it is reasonable to suggest that— especially after the grand jury investigation concludes— the US government would be interested in making a request for Assange’s extradition.

<http://www.thenation.com/article/169209/fate-julian-assange>

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## **Ecuador wants to avoid Assange's extradition to Sweden**

*Reuters*  
*August 2, 2012*

Ecuador wants to prevent Julian Assange's extradition to Sweden because it is disappointed that the Scandinavian country has turned down an offer to question the WikiLeaks founder in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London, a minister said....

Ecuador has long said that it will take as long as needed to make a thorough analysis of Assange's asylum request before making a decision. Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino vowed on Monday to wait until the end of the London Olympic Games on August 12 to announce a decision.

He said Ecuador had invited Swedish authorities to question Assange in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London, which could give the former computer hacker a chance to avoid extradition to Sweden.

But following a meeting with Correa today Patino said he had "unofficially" learned that Sweden had turned down the offer. He said he was disappointed about Sweden's decision because it "makes the situation more complicated".

"This makes it more difficult for us to make a decision that would mean that Mr Assange would have to travel to Sweden," Patino told reporters outside the presidential palace.

Patino did not say if Ecuador is now more inclined to grant political asylum to Assange, but said his country's decision will seek to protect Assange's life and his right to freedom.

"This will be a factor to consider in the decision we have to make," Patino said. "Had we had a positive answer from the Swedish government then we would be considering taking a different kind of decision."

Sweden's foreign ministry declined to comment, but a Swedish prosecution authority spokesman said prosecutor Marianne Ny had turned down an offer to interrogate Assange in Ecuador's Embassy in London. The spokesman said the offer was made by Assange's Swedish lawyer Per Samuelsson, but that the prosecution authority had not been in contact with Ecuadorean officials. He said he was unaware if there had been any contacts at government level.

According to Julian Assange's mother, Christina Assange, who is in Ecuador to plead for her son's asylum request, the United States is bent on having the 41-year-old extradited, and that would only be possible if he is sent to Sweden first.

She fears that her son will face torture and even execution if deported to the United States. "I'm here humbly as a mother to present some facts," she told reporters after a meeting with Correa today. "Of course I'll be most grateful if asylum is granted to my son to save him from being hooked by the US government."

Neither US nor Swedish authorities have charged Assange with anything....

"Even though there isn't a trial, there aren't judicial proceedings against him, Sweden wants to imprison him... That's why we asked the Swedish government to question him where he's now," Patino said as **he expressed disbelief that Sweden had turned down the offer.**

<http://tvnz.co.nz/world-news/ecuador-wants-avoid-assange-s-extradition-sweden-5004485>

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## **Spanish judge hits out at US over Assange**

*Ciaran Giles  
Sydney Morning Herald  
August 2, 2012*

A controversial Spanish judge has criticised the US investigation into WikiLeaks, saying the grand jury process that could lead to charges being filed against the secret-spilling site's founder is undemocratic.

Baltasar Garzon, a human rights lawyer best known for indicting former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet in 1998, recently agreed to act as an international coordinator for Julian Assange, the embattled WikiLeaks founder.

"A democratic country can't operate with its back to a person who is suspected of very serious crimes that could deprive him of liberty for a long time," Garzon told reporters on Wednesday. "The United States should make it known what it is doing so that Mr Assange can stand up for his rights. We don't know what we are facing."

A Virginia grand jury is studying evidence that might lead to charges being filed against Assange for WikiLeaks' mass disclosure of hundreds of thousands of secret US documents— including a quarter of a million State Department cables whose publication rocked Washington.

The grand jury has been investigating the matter for more than a year and could continue for months or even years longer. Witnesses have been called, though the identities of most are unknown. US grand juries typically operate in secret— something that Assange and his supporters have criticised.

Garzon said he had no idea what was going on in the US— and that troubled him. "We are very worried about what is happening," he said.

Assange is currently holed up at the Ecuadorian embassy in London while seeking asylum in the Latin American country.

He hopes to avoid extradition to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning over allegations of sexual misconduct. He and his supporters believe he is being persecuted politically for publishing the secret files.

**Swedish officials have rejected allegations they are seeking Assange on Washington's behalf, but Garzon said he believed there was a secret plan to have Assange eventually taken to the United States for trial.**

The Spanish judge gained fame for taking on international human rights cases in recent decades but he was convicted for overstepping his jurisdiction in a domestic corruption probe this year and barred from the bench for 11 years.

The magistrate said he would travel to Ecuador on Thursday to meet Assange's mother. He declined to specify who else he would meet there.

Garzon said he was not at liberty to discuss the status of the Ecuadorian asylum petition but said Ecuador had demanded certain guarantees from Sweden, which so far had not been granted.

Garzon said Assange, whom he met in London July 19, was not afraid of facing Swedish justice. But he said Assange believes that "in the present circumstances the conditions for a fair trial do not exist".

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-world/spanish-judge-hits-out-at-us-over-assange-20120802-23g8g.html>

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## **The Assange Case goes to JO, the Swedish Ombudsmen for Justice**

*Helene Bergman*  
*2:e augusti 2012*

*[Translation]*

The Swedish Ombudsmen for Justice (JO)  
Gothenburg and Stockholm  
August, 2, 2012

We most urgent requires that the ombudsmen for justice investigates the Swedish handling of the case of Julian Assange, by the prosecutor Marianne Ny, Director of the Public Prosecution Authority Development Center in Gothenburg.

1. Mr. Assange could have been investigated by the Swedish police before he left the country on September 27, 2010, and with the knowledge of the prosecutor Marianne Ny. At that date Mr. Assange had been available for an interview during five weeks.

2. Since Mr. Assange arrived in London, he has on several occasions offered to give his own version of what happened in Stockholm in August 2010, at the Swedish embassy, or being questioned by video link.

3. In late July, Mr. Assange offered to talk to the Swedish prosecutor, now at the embassy of Ecuador, where he has asked for asylum.

The prosecutor, Ms. Ny has at all different occasions neglected or rejected Mr. Assanges proposals.

Between August 13, and August 16 Mr. Assange had consensual sex with two different women.

On August 20, 2010, the two women went to a local police station in Stockholm in order to urge Mr. Assange to undergo an HIV-test. At that point the police choosed to start an investigation about rape, without the consent of the two women.

On the same day a prosecutor decided to issue an arrest warrant for Mr. Assange. At the time the newspaper Expressen, headlined a front page article "Assange accused of rape".

The next day another prosecutor decided that there was no reason for the warrant.

On August 30, interrogates Julian Assange for the first time by the Swedish police, and denies all allegations.

The day after the lawyer of the two women, Mr. Claes Borgström, who also was a former Swedish Ombudsman for equality, requested that the case should be reopened by the prosecutor in Gothenburg, Marianne Ny.

Julian Assange is now again accused of rape, molest, and sexual harassment. Mr. Assange stayed in Sweden until September 27 for further questioning.

We are, like his lawyer, Mr. Baltasar Garzón, serious concerned, regarding the lack of safeguards and transparency with which actions are being taken against Julian Assange, and the harassment he is being subjected to which has irreparable effects on his physical and mental wellbeing.

The threats against his person are further aggravated by the complicit behavior of the Swedish governmental authorities.

This has implied that Mr. Assanges civil rights, and his rights according to the European Convention have been violated.

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<http://khelenebergman.blogspot.se/2012/08/the-assange-case-goes-to-joth-swedish.html>

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## **Ecuador's Coming Decision on Julian Assange's Asylum Request**

*Kevin Gosztola  
Firedog Lake  
August 3, 2012*

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has been in the Ecuadorian embassy in London awaiting a decision from Ecuador on his asylum request for over a month now. Recent headlines suggest Ecuador is going through all the motions a country would need to go through before it granted asylum to someone who had made such a request. They also have announced that they will not be making any decision on the Assange's request while the Olympic games in London are taking place.

Ecuador welcomed Assange's mother, Christine Assange, this past week. She met with President Rafael Correa on August 1 to share her views on what she fears could happen to her son if Ecuador does not grant asylum. She did not share what was discussed after the meeting ended but did say, "The president, and his ministers, are very knowledgeable intelligent and compassionate people, genuinely so, and they have a good understanding of the case."

She added, "It's not a secret that the president and his foreign minister believe this case to be political," and, "The US government feels that it can seek to try my son for espionage, and possibly [execute] him simply for doing the job of a good investigative journalist, which is telling the truth about power."



**Correa said after the meeting if WikiLeaks had revealed information on Ecuador or Venezuela that benefited powers like the US, maybe Assange would be a hero. However, he is being persecuted.**

Assange's mother met with the country's foreign minister, Ricardo Patino, on July 30 and told the press after that meeting she was worried about her son's health after "seven weeks confinement in the South American nation's London embassy." She noted Assange had been under "stress" for two years now and this only increased the discomfort he had been experiencing.

Ecuador extended a public invitation to Sweden to come question Assange in their embassy in London. **They did this to "protect" Assange's "life at all costs," but Sweden refused to go question him. That prompted Ecuador to declare they were disappointed in the country and would now do everything possible to ensure Assange was not extradited to Sweden.**

According to Reuters, Patino said, "Even though there isn't a trial, there aren't judicial proceedings against him, Sweden wants to imprison him... That's why we asked the Swedish government to question him where he's now." He also stated, "This will be a factor to consider in the decision we have to make. Had we had a positive answer from the Swedish government then we would be considering taking a different kind of decision."

... Additionally, former Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón has agreed to lead Assange's legal team. A human rights lawyer who is known for indicting former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet in 1998, Garzón gained additional notoriety when WikiLeaks published the US State Embassy cables, as cables showed the Bush administration had pressured the Spanish government to stop Garzón from indicting high-ranking administration officials for torture at Guantanamo and other overseas prisons.

He was suspended as a judge in May 2010 and made to face three separate trials. He had, according to a New York Times report, opened a criminal investigation into atrocities committed by Spanish General Francisco Franco during the Spanish Civil War. Garzón and other human rights groups contend he was eventually disbarred and punished because he was investigating past human rights abuses in Spain.

Upon taking over as a representative of Assange's legal team, he immediately expressed concerns he had over his prosecution by Sweden and the United States. He called the investigation into Assange by Sweden "arbitrary and baseless."

The Guardian reported Garzón said, "Assange has not rebelled against any jurisdiction, given that he respects the action of the law, but he— and we— are seriously worried about what will happen to him because his situation is becoming political as a result of the great work done by his organization when it comes to denouncing corruption."

The former Spanish judge declared weeks later the secret grand jury investigation into Assange, WikiLeaks staffers and others associated or connected to the media organization is "undemocratic.... A democratic country can't operate with its back to a person who is suspected of very serious crimes that could deprive him of liberty for a long time... The United States should make it known what it is doing so that Mr Assange can stand up for his rights. We don't know what we are facing.

**Garzón also maintained the conditions for a fair trial in Sweden do not exist right now.**

**It would be a kind of poetic justice if the human rights lawyer the US government tried to shut down was able to make the legal maneuvers necessary so that Assange could eventually have a safe passage to Ecuador from the United Kingdom.** And, as impossible as an exit from the country might seem, Correa, Patino and other officials laud the truth-telling power of WikiLeaks, are sympathetic to the fears of Assange and willing to assert their sovereign power to ensure Assange's human rights are not violated.

The government is clearly taking very public steps that they can point to when they make their final decision. If that decision is one where they do agree to grant asylum, they will be able to point to all the disregard, inaction or lack of cooperation the Swedish, UK and US government showed when it was collecting all the facts so a proper decision could be made. It will make it patently clear that they are not just biased toward Assange and WikiLeaks in a way that bothers US government officials deeply. The "hundreds of pages" long decision, which could come right after the Olympics or months later, will include minute legal and specific political details to prove what has been going on between the three governments has been "arbitrary and baseless," as Garzón has said.

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## **SA should give Assange asylum**

*Rafik Saley and Okoth Osewe*  
*City Press (S.A.)*  
*2012-08-05 10:00*

In the recent past, South Africa has been silent on the case of Australian activist and journalist Julian Assange, the editor-in-chief and founder of WikiLeaks, although media freedom is of paramount importance to South Africans.

Given the threat to Assange's life if he gets repatriated to the US, our submission is that the South African government should offer him political asylum.

Why?

Since the Assange case began, Sweden has played a very complicit role in his persecution. This is not strange because Sweden has a history of double standards as exemplified in the cases of three Swedish journalists— Dawit Isaak, Johan Persson and Martin Schibbye— currently jailed in Africa. Persson and Schibbye have admitted to entering Ethiopia illegally and have been duly sentenced.

Assange's case has received negative publicity, focusing mainly on the sex crime allegations. That was after the right-wing Expressen newspaper arbitrarily exposed Assange's identity.

The Swedish foreign affairs minister Carl Bildt has business interests in the horn of Africa but there hasn't been equal media bashing of him compared to Assange. In fact, the hypocrisy of the Swedish government in Assange's case became manifestly clear this week.

On Tuesday, the Swedish Prosecution Authority turned down an offer by the Ecuadorian embassy in London to question Assange at the embassy where he has sought refuge. Since he moved to the UK, the authority has refused Assange the interview he has been requesting for the past 18 months.

We are 100% sure that the charges levelled against him are politically motivated and that Assange is correct in declining to travel to Sweden without diplomatic guarantees that he will not be extradited to the US.

Most importantly, Sweden has a so-called "temporary surrender" extradition agreement with the US which implies that Assange can, at the behest of the US government, be repatriated to the US without a single judicial review. He can then technically be returned to Sweden after 20 years to answer the bogus sex crime allegations.

At this juncture, it is important that more prominent personalities support Assange.

Nobel Peace Prize laureate Mairead Maguire has voiced her support and we call upon South Africa's laureates to do the same.

*» Saley is general secretary of the African Committee for Development in Stockholm, Sweden.  
Osewe writes for Kenya Stockholm Blog*

<http://www.citypress.co.za/printArticle.aspx?iframe&aid=81c0590a-49c5-41b5-8176-6a978d954bdc&cid=2161>

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## **Billy Butt gets prison in celebrity sex case**

*Of the 24 women that Expressen had enticed the prosecutor dropped all cases except nine.*

8 March 1993. Billy Butt acknowledges in the Court that he has been a morally rotten person who managed to get loads of younger women into bed with vague promises about modelling jobs, commercials and music videos. But he firmly denies that he has ever coerced anyone into sex.

**The District Court gets to hear remarkable stories.** One of the girls testifies how she interrupts the rape to go to the toilet to remove her tampon. Thereafter, she returns to the bed to let the rape continue. One woman does not want to disturb the neighbors so she never makes any sound. Other young women recommend their friends to seek out Billy Butt after their own sex-meetings— although they now years later claim to have been raped.

“Pia” tells how she in the morning after the rape in Butt’s Stockholm apartment asks if they are going to take those model pictures. After all, he did not have time do it before they ended up in his bed. When they part she hands Billy Butt the phone number to her host family in Brighton in England where she will be attending a modelling course. He is often in London and may call her for a new date. He does. After a fancy dinner at the London hotel she claims to have been raped again. **Nevertheless they eat hotel breakfast together and Billy Butt drives Pia in his own car from London to Brighton. There he is turned on by her friend “Camilla”. She wonders if Butt is a trustworthy person. Pia has only good things to say....**

15 April 1993. Billy Butt is sentenced in the District Court to four years imprisonment on nine counts of rape and one attempted rape. He was found guilty of raping “Pia” on two occasions, in Stockholm and later at the hotel in London.

“The two charges relating to Pia had never held up in any country other than Sweden, except maybe possibly Norway”, Billy Butt comments in his autobiography.

• *This is an excerpt from the new eBook A Brief History of Swedish Sex: How the Nation that Gave Us Free Love Redefined Rape and Declared War on Julian Assange by Oscar Swartz.*

<http://swedishsexbook.com/2012/08/05/billy-butt-gets-prison-in-celebrity-sex-case/>

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SvD: 6 augusti 2012

## Råstam om vårdcirkusen Quick

*En vårdskandal eller en bisarr längtan efter att få stoltsera med Sveriges första seriemördare? I sin postumt utgivna bok målar Hannes Råstam upp en bild av fallet Quick som vore det en teaterföreställning. Journalisten Mattias Göransson berättar om arbetet.*

Det anas ett smått ironiskt tonläge när Hannes Råstam redovisar de vallningar som genomfördes med Thomas Quick på olika mordplatser under nittiotalet. Här framställs rättsprocessen som en vårdcirkus med Quick som polisens alldeles egna dramaqueen, en mytoman som åkte privatplan från mordplats till mordplats på en resa genom ett rättsväsende som närde en dröm om att få sin alldeles första seriemördare.

Och på läktaren satt advokater, läkare, terapeuter och poliser och klappade händerna.

- Hannes hade ju en väldigt torr och underskruvad humor, säger Mattias Göransson som var den som tillsammans med Råstam slutförde boken.

Mattias Göransson lärde känna Hannes Råstam när han skulle göra en intervju med honom om boken “Fallet Thomas Quick— att skapa en seriemördare” för magasinet Filter. Men Hannes Råstams dödliga cancer kom emellan och intervjun kom i stället att bli ett personporträtt, “ Grävarens testament”, som nu är publicerat som ett efterord till boken. Under arbetet med artikeln kom de att bli nära vänner.

- Till slut förstod han att inte skulle hinna bli klar, utan att han faktiskt skulle dö. Då blev det mer diskussioner om hur jag skulle redigera färdigt det omfångsrika materialet.

Det var 2008 som den prisbelönta journalisten Hannes Råstam bestämde sig för att skriva sin första bok, om allt det han inte fick med i sina tv-program om Thomas Quick som i dag heter Sture Bergwall.

**- Han trodde att dokumentärerna skulle få större följder, att det skulle startas en utredning och att Quick skulle frias från alla de fall som han hade beviljats resning för, men nästan fyra år senare är det inte så. Därför skrev han boken, säger Mattias Göransson.**

Bokens undertitel lyder " att skapa en seriemördare" och syftar på hur det svenska rättsväsendet i början av nittio-talet var djupt influerat av de nya seriemördarteorier som USA arbetade med. Mattias Göransson tror att det fanns en undermedveten längtan hos den svenska polisen att också kunna avslöja sin första seriemördare.

- Man ville efterlikna USA, men undvek alla slutsatser som FBI hade dragit om hur seriemördare beter sig. Det var som om hela Sverige bara stod och väntade på vår egen seriemördare. **Alla ville ha honom— och där kom han!**

Att Hannes Råstam kunde komma fram till så många nya rön i ett redan så omskrivet fall som Thomas Quicks, tror Mattias Göransson beror på att han var noga med kronologier. Sture Bergwalls liv strukturerade han upp i ett exceldokument med över 600 poster. **Uppgifterna korskörde han sedan med varandra. Därigenom kunde han komma fram till fakta som att Sture läste en artikel om ett mord tre dagar innan han sedan erkänner detsamma under en terapisession.**

- Det som blir läskigt är när Hannes Råstam har korsklippt drogjournalen med terapeutens. Här kan man se hur hans psykoterapeut skriver om framstegen i terapin och hur den medicinska **personalen samtidigt har pumpat i honom hästdoser av psykofarmaka.**

TT Spektra: Vad tycker du är det mest frapperande i boken som inte redan har framgått i tv-dokumentärerna?

- Ur Hannes perspektiv så var det mest hårresande den vansinniga vårdskandal som uppdagades när han fick ta del av Stures sjukjournaler, egna dagböcker och anteckningar— samt inte minst det bokmanus som hans terapeut hade skrivit på, material som ingen tidigare hade delgivits.

TT Spektra: Lite av en besatthet var det väl ändå att till och med på dödsbädden skriva boken?

- Visst var det absurt att ägna de tre sista åren av sitt liv åt den här saken, men han ville veta sanningen. Han kunde inte släppa det. Vissa tyckte att Hannes var rättshaverist, en principryttare, men han hatade verkligen den postmoderna inställningen att sanningen är relativ. Han sa alltid att det bara finns en sanning.

TT Spektra

[http://www.svd.se/kultur/rastam-om-vardcirkusen-quick\\_7399438.svd](http://www.svd.se/kultur/rastam-om-vardcirkusen-quick_7399438.svd)

*[Obs! Quicks rikligt belönade "försvarsadvokat", som i själva verket samverkade med åklagarna, var Claes Borgsström. --A.B.]*

## "HD agerar skamligt i fallet da Costa"

*Nyligen nekade högsta domstolen de två läkarna, allmänläkaren och obducenten, i Catrine da Costa-fallet att få sin sak prövad en sista gång. Det är ett skamligt rättsövergrepp.*

Andreas Carlgren  
Expressen  
6 aug. 2012

J'Accuse...! Med den lånade rubriken från Émile Zolas, världen över välkända, anklagelse 1898 i Dreyfus-affären anklagar jag nu det svenska rättssamhället för alla de juridiska övergrepp, felaktiga beslut, rättsvidrigheter, försummelser, misstro och nonchalans som under mer än 25 år har präglat fallet Catrine da Costa.

Senast gäller kritiken högsta domstolen som nu vägrat de två läkarna, allmänläkaren och obducenten, att få sin sak prövad i det skadeståndsmål som pågått under snart fem år, då de stämde staten på 40 miljoner.

Saken gäller hur de båda anklagades för att ha mördat Catrine da Costa och därefter styckat den döda kroppen. **De friades från mordåtalet, men i domskälen skrev tingsrätten in att de hade styckat kroppen.**

**Det påståendet är roten till fallets kompletta rättsröta och som sedan dess förpestat de bådas liv. Domskäl får inte ha någon rättsverkan, men det var exakt vad som hände då de slutligen framtogs sina läkarlegitimationer 1991.**

**Fallet har nu prövats närmare 20 gånger** av skilda rättsinstanser i det här landet, som alla dömt till deras nackdel. Det är sammanlagt ett trettiootal domare som varit inblandade, som ridit högt på juridiska formaliteter, och beskydd av varandras vandel, i stället för att se till hur två oskyldiga män fått sina liv förstörda.

På goda grunder kan man misstänka att åtskilliga domare i sammanhanget känt behov av att skydda kollegor som tidigare agerat felaktigt. Ingen domares renommé får nämligen fläckas.

Alla som satt sig in i fallet vet att de båda läkarna är oskyldiga. **Det var en tidsmässig omöjlighet att genomföra brottet så som åklagaren påstod.**

Rättsskandalen kring Catrine da Costa är i själva verket betydligt värre än den som omgärdat fallet Tomas Quick, senare Sture Bergwall, eftersom han nu får upprättelse i dom efter dom, medan allmänläkaren och obducenten förnekas rättvisa.

Eftersom de båda friades från mordanklagelsen kan vi här tala om ett friande justitiemord som nu till sist högsta domstolen bekräftat, då man vägrar låta läkarna få sin sak prövad en sista gång.

De fem justitieråd som avslog begäran om prövningstillstånd hade den utmärkta möjligheten att röja upp i det juridiska trask som fallet da Costa under så många år smutsat ner det land som så gärna vill kalla sig för en rättsstat. Men i stället valde de fem den fegt ynkliga vägen att fortsätta rida högt på formalia.

Det finns en ålderdomlig juridisk maxim som säger att man inte alltid kan få rätt. Ibland får man nöja sig med att veta att man har rätt. Men den maximen är för en rättsstat inget annat än gammal nattstånden advokaty, som för länge sedan borde förpassats till historiens skräphög.

**Allmänläkaren och obducenten fördömdes ursprungligen av en ultrafeministisk mobb, understödd av en rad så kallade kulturpersonligheter och alltsammans orkestrerades dessutom av en rad kända journalister. Det var en mobb som bland mycket annat tilläts påstå att de båda drack da Costas blod och grillade hennes ögon på Rättsläkarstationen i Solna.**

I fallet har egentligen ingenting kunnat bevisas. Ingen vet med säkerhet när, var eller hur Catrine da Costa avled. Ändå har förföljelse och avsaknad av rättvisa fått fortgå under mer än 25 år.

I den här saken har snåltänkt juridik tillåtits stå i vägen för rättvisa och därmed skapat den värsta rättsröten i modern svensk historia. För de båda läkarna är alla svenska möjligheter nu uttömda.

Och de fem justitieråden i högsta domstolen känner sig säkert helt nöjda med att på mindre än tre sidor avvisat frågorna om 25 års lidande. I själva verket har de dragit skam över landets högsta juridiska instans, som inte vågade gå emot den juridiska nomenklatura som under decennier inbördes skyddat varandra.

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**TwitLonger**  
**WikiLeaks (@wikileaks)**

*10 August 2012*

NDAA & "offshoring" Julian Assange: Congressional discussion, led by Representatives Peter King, Doug Lamborn and Trent Franks (all members of the House Armed Services Committee)

"We have Khalid Sheikh Mohammed sitting down in Guantanamo Bay yet. Two years into the Obama Presidency, when President Obama said he was going to close Guantanamo Bay and try these terrorists in civilian courts, and now we found out what happens when you try these terrorists in civilian courts — a whole bunch of evidence that's essential to the conviction has been left out of the prosecution, and they were not successful in an effective prosecution and conviction of the last terrorist that was tried in civilian court."

"It's a pretty sticky constitutional question on how we would deal with American citizens in that category [material support], but it's not when we deal with someone like **Julian Assange. An Australian citizen could be put into that category, moved over to a place offshore of the United States outside of the jurisdiction of the Federal courts, the civilian Federal courts in the United States, and adjudicated under a military tribunal in a fashion that was designed by this Congress and directed by this Congress.**"

<http://www.twitlonger.com/show/ip9qfr>

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## **Most Australians back Assange, poll finds**

*Phillip Coorey  
Sydney Morning Herald  
August 9, 2012*

A majority of Australians believe the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange would not receive a fair trial should he ever be extradited to the United States. The nationwide poll, conducted by UMR Research, also finds more than half do not believe he should be prosecuted for releasing thousands of leaked diplomatic cables.

Meanwhile, public opinion is split over whether the Gillard government is doing enough to help the Australian national.

After unsuccessfully challenging moves to extradite him to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning over alleged sexual offences, Mr Assange remains holed up inside the Ecuadorian embassy in London.

He is seeking asylum in Ecuador but if unsuccessful could find himself sent to Sweden. Officially, the US government says it has no plans to then extradite him to the US, but a grand jury has been convened to probe the release by WikiLeaks of about 250,000 allegedly stolen diplomatic cables, raising suspicions to the contrary.

UMR Research, the company Labor uses for its internal research, sampled the views of 1000 people at the end of July, when Mr Assange was ensconced inside the embassy.

**It finds 58 per cent believe he will not receive a fair trial in the US while 22 per cent believe he will be afforded proper justice.** Another 20 per cent are unsure.

The poll also finds 52 per cent believe Mr Assange should not be prosecuted for releasing the leaked cables, while only 26 per cent believe he should be prosecuted. Another 21 per cent are unsure.



The poll finds opinion is evenly split over assistance given to Mr Assange so far by the Australian government. **It finds 38 per cent believe the government should do more, 36 per cent believe it is doing enough** and 25 per cent are unsure.

**Mr Assange is not a particularly popular person in Australia either, with 40 per cent having a favourable view of him, 30 per cent having a negative view and 30 per cent unsure.** [*How does this compare with other public figures? -- A.B.*]

The managing director of UMR, John Utting, said if Mr Assange was extradited, his popularity would most likely increase "due to an underdog effect, more prominent in Australia than other countries".

"The lack of confidence in the ability of the US judicial system to deliver a fair result has resonated with the Australian public and its sense of fair play," he said.

In May, a UMR poll showed Mr Assange stood a good chance of securing a seat in the Australian Senate, a career path [???] he has mooted.

[www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/most-australians-back-assange-poll-finds-20120808-23uwh.html](http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/most-australians-back-assange-poll-finds-20120808-23uwh.html)

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## **Assange statue on Maggie?**

DANIEL BATEMAN  
*Townsville Bulletin (Australia)*  
August 10th, 2012

PLANS to erect a monument to Wikileaks founder Julian Assange will be discussed at a special event held in his honour on Magnetic Island this weekend.

The Nobel Peace Prize nominee is holed up in the Equador's embassy in London, and seeking asylum in the South American country to avoid extradition to Sweden, where he is accused of sexual assault. A decision as to whether he will be granted asylum is expected to be made after Sunday.

Mr Assange, 41, who was born in Townsville in 1971, lived on Magnetic Island with his mother Christine. He has described growing up on the island as being akin to "Tom Sawyer."

Islanders are hosting a picnic at Picnic Bay on Sunday, to voice their support for the freedom of information fighter. **They will also discuss plans to erect a monument to Mr Assange, to mark his childhood island home, and as a symbol of his battle for truth and justice.**

Local activist David "Crusty" Herron, who in the past has floated the idea of Wikileaks-inspired public urinal in the past, believed a proper monument was still a good idea. "He's an award-winning journalist, who has shown the little bloke that he can't be pushed around," he said.

Magnetic Island Community Development Association president Lorna Hempstead believed any money that would be spent on a monument would be better spent as a donation to Wikileaks, to help fight Mr Assange's sexual assault charge. "A monument is not going to keep him out of jail, and it's not going to keep freedom of speech," she said.

Magnetic Times editor George Hirst said the picnic would celebrate the achievements of Mr Assange, who he believed was a great example to others. "I've sort of stepped out of the role of being a journalist who just reports in this instance, because I think it's an actual extraordinary circumstance for a journalist who needs a little bit of proactive support," he said.

"Having looked at his story over some time, and in great depth, and reporting on his background on Magnetic Island, this is an appropriate thing to do. I would urge any journalist who felt so inspired to join us as well."

The Picnic on Picnic for Julian Assange picnic will be held at Picnic Island on Sunday from 4pm.

[http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/article/2012/08/10/352521\\_news.html](http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/article/2012/08/10/352521_news.html)

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DN: 2012-08-14

## **Hannes Råstam: "Fallet Thomas Quick. Att skapa en seriemördare"**

Bilden av ett rättsligt haveri tonar fram i Hannes Råstams nya reportagebok. I en tung granskning pulvriserar han åtal och bevis mot den för flera mord dömd Thomas Quick.

En varm junidag på stranden förändrar allt. Säterpatienten Sture Bergwall och en av hans vårdare är på en liten badutflykt vid sjön Ljustern. Året är 1992. De ligger i solen och småpratar när Sture Bergwall plötsligt säger: "Undrar vad ni skulle tycka om mig om ni fick veta att jag gjort någonting riktigt grovt."

Det är en försiktig trevare som leder till den största samlade mordutredningen i svensk rättshistoria. Sture Bergwall blir Thomas Quick, och han erkänner under terapi att han mördat den sedan tolv år försvunne Sundsvallspojken Johan Asplund och ett annat mord i Växjö som Sture Bergwall begått 1964, blott 14 år gammal.

**Mellan 1992 och 2001 erkänner Thomas Quick mer än trettio mord, sex olika domstolar finner honom skyldig till åtta av dem.**

Det finns de som tvivlar, och tvivlar starkt. Han döms utan teknisk bevisning, **domstolarnas bedömning grundas helt på Thomas Quicks erkännanden.** Åklagare, polis, advokater och medier är eniga: en seriemördare. Skeptikerna hävdar i årtal att Thomas Quick inte en enda gång berättat något för polisen som den inte redan visste. Och att det fanns allvarliga luckor i så gott som varje erkännande.



*Thomas Quick, andra från vänster, vallas runt av polis och vårdare i norska Drammen 1996, under utredningen av mordet på en nioårig flicka.*

2001 tystnar Thomas Quick, han upplever ifrågasättandet av honom som kränkande och han stänger dörren om sig. Det skall dröja sju år innan han ställer den på glänt igen, och det är Hannes Råstam, en av Sveriges mest ansedda grävande journalister, som knackat på.

För Hannes Råstam erkänner nu Sture Bergwall (han tar tillbaka sitt namn 2002) att han hittat på alltihopa. Han har inte mördat någon, han har aldrig träffat offren. **Allt började som ett försök att bli mer intressant för sina terapeuter på Säterkliniken. Och responsen blev enorm. Plötsligt stod han i centrum för allas intresse.** Det fanns inget slut.

Hannes Råstam kommer att i stort sett pulvrисera vartenda erkännande, varenda dom, varenda utredning. Först i två tv-sända dokumentärer julen 2008, nu i bokform. Hannes Råstam avled i januari 2012 efter en längre tids sjukdom.

**Det är skakande läsning från första sidan. Thomas Quick är visserligen i perioder tungt medicinerad, han ändrar sig gång efter annan, pekar ut platser där han mördat och styckat utan att man hittar något litet enda— men åklagare, polis, terapeuter och till och med Thomas Quicks egen advokat är övertygade om hans skuld. Det är inte svårt att dras med.**

Det är också förvirrande läsning, man kastas fram och tillbaka i tiden, det är kilometer-långa brottsutredningar, samtal, förhör, tvivlen är många:

Thomas Quick är dömd för allvarliga grova våldsbrott, han har undersökts och diagnostiserats av landets främsta experter; till synes erfarna utredare och åklagare har faktiskt också ifrågasatt många av hans erkännanden. Är det verkligen möjligt att

Thomas Quick i nio (!) år lyckats hålla ihop alla lögner så att sex olika domstolar hävdar att det bortom allt rimligt tvivel är Thomas Quick som mördat, skändat, styckat?

Hannes Råstams argumentation bygger inte på hörsägen, det finns knappast en sten han inte vänt på. Med en närmast manisk energi går han igenom sida efter sida, förhör efter förhör, vittnen, vallningar, obduktionsprotokoll.

Hannes Råstam har grottat ner sig i den största svenska rättsröten någonsin — och han har kommit så långt ner att vi som åskådare, läsare, medborgare bara inte kan ta in sanningen. Är detta verkligen möjligt?

Hannes Råstam konfronterar alla huvudpersonerna i dramat, inte bara huvudmannen själv. Överåklagare Christer van der Kwast, polisutredaren Seppo Penttinen, terapeuten Birgitta Ståhle, **advokat Claes Borgström**, alla får berätta, förklara och försvara. **Ingen av dem vill i dag tillstå att några allvarliga fel begåtts.** Inte ens efter att Sture Bergwall har fått resning, inte ens när domarna ogiltigförklarats och han frikänts— de arbetade på goda grunder, de tror fortfarande på hans skuld. Det blir rätt magstarkt efter Hannes Råstams minutiösa slakt av deras insats. Sture Bergwalls roll är kanske det som ändå, trots allt, skaver mest i Hannes Råstams bok. Här har man visserligen ägnat all energi åt att bearbeta fakta, men gåtan Thomas Quick/Sture Bergwall är fortfarande helt olöst.

Sture Bergwall får en närmast lite farbroderlig framtoning i boken. Thomas Quick är en person han i dag helt tycks ha tagit avstånd ifrån. Hur går det till?

Hans egen förklaring, att han ville leverera bra material till sina terapeuter främst för att få fortsätta den terapeutiska behandlingen (som ett tag ifrågasattes av flera av hans läkare), får duga för Hannes Råstam när han inleder sökandet, och den duger för oss under läsningens lopp.

Ändå är det inte nog. Man får ingen ro med den förklaringen. Det skaver och skaver— och **något säger mig att det kommer mera.** När Thomas Quick erkände på löpande band fick också Sverige en seriemördare, det blev givetvis värsta medierusningen. Åt samma håll. När nu allt tyder på att Hannes Råstam strimlat den bilden har vi sett en liknande medierusning.

Åt andra hållet.

Det är väl därför vi så desperat behöver fler Hannes Råstam, som åker i motsatt riktning, som går på tvärs, som letar där ingen annan letar.

Tyvärr har just hans röst försvunnit, men hans reportage lever, hans bok kommer att bli läst av många, förhoppningsvis inspirerar han andra att följa i hans spår. Det svåra. Det mödosamma. På jakt efter sanningen.

• *Johan Croneman*

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Expressen: 15 aug 2012

## Hägglund om asyl för Assange: "Fegis"

Reaktionerna var blandade när beskedet att Julian Assange beviljats asyl till Ecuador kom. Socialminister Göran Hägglund (KD) gick direkt ut på Twitter och kritiserade beslutet.

– Om det är sant så är det förbluffande av Ecuador, säger Göran Hägglund till Expressen.se

Det var brittiska The Guardian som på tisdagskvällen kom med beskedet att Ecuadors president Rafael Correa har beviljat Wikileaks-grundaren Julian Assange asyl. Under tisdagskvällen har uppgifterna visat sig vara obekräftade och det är i nuläget oklart huruvida Assange beviljats asyl eller inte.

*"Ett kräk"*

När beskedet kom var det många som rasade över beslutet på Twitter. En av dessa var socialminister Göran Hägglund (KD).

**"Sjukt. En fegis som inte vågar få sitt case prövat inför domstol. Om han gjort det han anklagas för är han ett kräk", skrev han på sin Twitter.**

Hägglund uttalar sig på liknande sätt när Expressen.se pratar med honom i telefon.

– Assange är en väldigt feg person som inte vågar konfrontera anklagelserna mot honom, säger han.

*"Ynklig stackare"*

Socialministern står fast vid samma ordval som på Twitter.

– Om han har gjort det han är anklagad för så tycker jag att man kan kalla honom för ett kräk. Han verkar vara en ynkelig stackare, säger han.

Han är förvånad över Ecuadors beslut att bevilja Assange asyl.

– Om det är sant så är det förbluffande av Ecuador.

**Hägglund säger att en anledning till Ecuadors beslut kan vara landets avsky mot USA.**

– Det kan mycket väl vara sådant som ligger bakom ett sådant beslut, eller så kan det rentav handla om en publicitetsönskan, säger han.

• *Andrea Gunnarsson*

<http://www.expressen.se/nyheter/hagglund-om-asyl-for-assange-fegis/>

DN: 2012-08-15

## Assanges asylärende: Låt rättvisa gå före plakatpolitik

Signerat: Karin Svanborg-Sjövall

[Obs! Det är något av en bedrift att få så mycket fel i en så kort text. Felaktigheter och dubiösa tolkningar **rödmarkeras**. Den verkliga historien [redovisas här](#). — A.B.]

Ecuadors president Rafael Correa har märkliga motiv för sitt försvar av Julian Assange. Det får inte hindra ett svenskt beslut om eventuell rättslig prövning.

Man vet att världen blivit galen när en australier söker asyl i Ecuador **för att undkomma svenskt rättsväsende**. Men så är det faktiskt. I dag har president Rafael Correa lovat att meddela huruvida Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange får politisk asyl i Ecuador eller inte.

En snabb rekapitulation är kanske på sin plats. För två år sedan var Assange i Sverige, pikant nog för att utreda huruvida vår starka yttrandefrihetslagstiftning gjorde landet lämpligt som bas för Wikileaks verksamhet. Under sin korta turné inträffade ett antal incidenter som ledde till att **Assange polisanmälades** för bland annat en våldtäkt och sexuella övergrepp på två svenska kvinnor.

**Innan Assange hann förhöras flydde han dock landet. Han hävdade att Sveriges nära relationer till USA innebar risk för att han skulle utlämnas, och eventuellt dömas till döden av amerikanska myndigheter.**

Här började en redan besynnerlig historia bli alltmer skruvad. Väl i London, dit Assange tagit sin tillflykt, prövades frågan om han skulle utlämnas till Sverige för att kunna förhöras. **Assange svarade med en högljudd medial kampanj där Sverige, bland annat i tidningen Guardian, utmålades som rättsosäkert.** Genom att hävda att han inte kunde få en rättvis rättegång i **ett land av hen-anhängare och USA-kramande politiker försökte försvaret motivera att Assange skulle slippa utlämnas.**

Men nu fanns det en europeisk arresteringsorder, och att inte fatta beslut om utlämning hade varit ett allvarligt underkännande av svenskt rättsväsende från brittisk sida. Så skedde heller inte.

Här hade sagan kunnat avslutas om inte Assange hade dragit fram ett nytt kort ur rockärmen: Ecuador. President Correa och Assange hade efter en **anmärkningsvärd** intervju i rysk tv (!) funnit varandra i sin gemensamma avsky för USA. **Efter domstolens beslut** flydde Assange till ambassaden, där han enligt Expressen sovit på en luftmadrass sedan dess.

Nu tar historien ytterligare en bisarr vändning. För att hjälpa sin skyddsling har Ecuador, som enligt Transparency International knappast utmärker sig för de egna domstolarnas oberoende (plats 130 av 142 granskade länder), avkrävt Sverige garantier för att Assange inte ska hamna i en "hemlig domstol" i USA. President Correa har också begärt att svensk polis förhör Assange på plats i London **eftersom han inte förmodas få en rättssäker process i Stockholm.**



Det vore lätt att vifta bort dessa påståenden med att de faller på sin egen orimlighet. Svenskt rättsväsende är inte utan fläckar, men bland de uppgifter **som cirkulerat i internationella medier** förekommer groteska överdrifter. Ändå verkar kampanjen ha varit märkligt framgångsrik: På många håll i världen tror man i dag att Sverige saknar ett oberoende och fungerande domstolsväsende.

Av den anledningen är det inte svårt att förstå att **det finns ett starkt motstånd** mot att skicka svensk polis till London. Det har blivit en prestigefråga att inte belöna **Assanges konstrande** med några särskilda åtgärder. Nu finns ett domstolsbeslut som slår fast att han bör utlämnas, och med detta borde det inte finnas så mycket mer att tillägga.

Men riktigt så enkelt är det inte. För i den andra vågskålen ligger ett antal polis-anmälningar, som fortfarande inte lett till beslut om eventuellt åtal. Att det har kunnat gå två år utgör i sig ett rättssäkerhetsproblem. För varje dag försvagas bevisläget. Det talar för att Sverige borde skicka polis till London för att hålla förhör, om nu detta är vad som krävs för att kunna få ett avslut i frågan om Assange ska bli föremål för rättslig prövning eller inte.

Man kan förstås invända att det inte skulle göra någon skillnad. Det ter sig osannolikt att Assange skulle vara mer intresserad av att komma till Sverige bara för att han genomgått ett förhör. Och den som inte tycker att Assange förtjänar någon special-behandling för att han råkar vara ovanligt känd och krånglig kan reta sig på en lösning som gör **avsteg från gängse praxis**.

Men då bortser man från att det är lika orimligt att de kvinnor som har anmält Assange tvingas vänta längre på att få sin sak prövad **för** att den som anklagas är mycket namnkunnig.

Så kanske det fungerar i länder som låter ett OS avgöra tidpunkten för att meddela beslut i ett politiskt asylärende. Men det borde det inte göra i en fungerande rättsstat.

Karin Svanborg-Sjövall  
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## **Julian Assange can be arrested in embassy, UK warns Ecuador**

*Ahead of decision on WikiLeaks founder's asylum claim, Quito accuses Britain of threat to trample international law*

*Damien Pearse  
The Guardian  
16 August 2012*

The diplomatic and political minefield that is the fate of Julian Assange is expected to come a step closer to being traversed when Ecuador's president, Rafael Correa, gives his decision on whether his country will grant the WikiLeaks' founder asylum around lunchtime on Thursday.

The decision— if it comes— will mark the end of a turbulent process that on Wednesday night saw Ecuador's foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, raging against perceived [???] threats from Britain to "storm" the embassy and warning that such a "dangerous precedent" would be met with "appropriate responses in accordance with international law".

The dramatic development came two months after Assange suddenly walked into the embassy in a bid to avoid being extradited to Sweden, where he faces allegations of sexual assault.

At a press conference on Wednesday, Patiño released details of a letter he said was delivered through a British embassy official in Quito, the capital of the South American country.

**The letter said: "You need to be aware that there is a legal base in the UK, the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987, that would allow us to take actions in order to arrest Mr Assange in the current premises of the embassy."**

**It added: "We need to reiterate that we consider the continued use of the diplomatic premises in this way incompatible with the Vienna convention and unsustainable and we have made clear the serious implications that this has for our diplomatic relations."**

On Wednesday night appeals were tweeted for Assange supporters to occupy the embassy to prevent British police from arresting him, and while there was a police presence outside the embassy, Scotland Yard insisted that officers were simply there to "police the embassy like any other embassy".

Patiño said he was "deeply shocked" by the diplomatic letter. Speaking to reporters later, he said: "The government of Ecuador is considering a request for asylum and has carried out diplomatic talks with the governments of the United Kingdom and Sweden. However, today we received from the United Kingdom a written threat that they could attack our embassy in London if Ecuador does not give up Julian Assange.

**"Ecuador, as a state that respects rights and justice and is a democratic and peaceful nation state, rejects in the strongest possible terms the explicit threat of the British official communication. This is unbecoming of a democratic, civilised and law-abiding state. If this conduct persists, Ecuador will take appropriate responses in accordance with international law.**

**"If the measures announced in the British official communication materialise they will be interpreted by Ecuador as a hostile and intolerable act and also as an attack on our sovereignty, which would require us to respond with greater diplomatic force.**

**"Such actions would be a blatant disregard of the Vienna convention on diplomatic relations and of the rules of international law of the past four centuries.**

**"It would be a dangerous precedent because it would open the door to the violation of embassies as a declared sovereign space." Under international law, diplomatic posts are considered the territory of the foreign nation.**



**The Foreign Office was quick to downplay the drama. A spokesman said Britain had merely sought to "clarify its position", according to international law.**

"Throughout this process we have drawn the Ecuadoreans' attention to relevant provisions of our law— for example, the extensive human rights safeguards in our extradition procedures, or the legal status of diplomatic premises in the UK," a spokesman said. "We are still committed to reaching a mutually acceptable solution."

Ecuador revealed that it would announce its decision regarding Assange's asylum request on Thursday at 1pm.

A Foreign Office spokeswoman said: "We have consistently made our position clear in our discussions with the government of Ecuador. The UK has a legal obligation to extradite Mr Assange to Sweden to face questioning over allegations of sexual offences and we remain determined to fulfil this obligation.

"We have an obligation to extradite Mr Assange and it is only right that we give Ecuador the full picture. Throughout this process we have drawn the Ecuadorians' attention to relevant provisions of our law, whether, for example, the extensive human rights safeguards in our extradition procedures, or the legal status of diplomatic premises in the UK. We are still committed to reaching a mutually acceptable solution."

Correa has said Assange could face the death penalty in the US, and for that reason he considers the asylum request a question of political persecution.

Analysts in Ecuador expressed doubts that Britain would raid the embassy. Professor Julio Echeverria of Quito's Flaco University said Britain "has a long-established tradition in Europe of respecting diplomatic missions", which under international law are considered sovereign territory.

A former Ecuadorean ambassador to London, Mauricio Gandara, told the Associated Press: "I refuse to believe in this threat because if asylum is granted the British government will not grant safe passage and Mr Assange could be in the embassy for a long time."

Assange denies the allegations against him, but fears he will be sent to the United States if he goes to Sweden. An offer to the Swedish authorities by Ecuador for investigators to interview Assange inside the London embassy was rejected.

A former computer hacker, Assange enraged Washington in 2010 when WikiLeaks published secret US diplomatic cables, has been taking refuge in the Ecuadorian embassy since 19 June.

If Ecuador does give Assange asylum, it is difficult to see how the WikiLeaks boss could physically leave the closely watched embassy and head to an airport without being arrested by British police.

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## **Carr confident Sweden would give Assange fair trial**

*Philip Dorling  
Canberra Times  
August 16, 2012*

Foreign Minister Bob Carr is confident Julian Assange will receive a fair trial if extradited to Sweden, despite a Swedish cabinet minister attacking the WikiLeaks publisher as a "sick" and a "pitiable coward".

**Swedish Social Affairs Minister Göran Hägglund** engaged in a Twitter diatribe yesterday in response to premature media reports that Ecuador President Rafael Correa had granted Assange political asylum.

**Mr Hägglund condemned Assange as "Sick. A coward who dare[s] not have his case tried by a court. If he had done what he is accused of, he is a wretch."**

**In an interview with Swedish newspaper Expressen, the minister said a grant of asylum by Ecuador would be "astonishing" and that Assange was a "miserable wretch".**

Assange sought asylum in the Ecuadorean embassy in London on June 19 after Britain's highest court rejected his final appeal against extradition to Sweden to face questioning about sexual assault allegations.

The WikiLeaks publisher fears extradition to Sweden will facilitate his extradition to the US on espionage charges arising from the alleged leaking of classified US military and diplomatic reports. President Correa is expected to announce his decision on Assange's asylum application soon.

Senator Carr denied that Mr Hägglund's remarks, and previous strident criticism of Assange by Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, had prejudiced Assange's prospects of a fair trial.

**"Mr Hägglund's reported remarks are a matter for him," Senator Carr said.** He remained satisfied with Swedish officials' assurances that Assange would be treated in accordance with due process.

*This story was found at: <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/national/carr-confident-sweden-would-give-assange-fair-trial-20120815-2498k.html>*

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## **Tensions mount ahead of Assange asylum decision**

*Philip Dorling  
Sydney Morning Herald  
August 16, 2012*

The Ecuadorean government will announce its decision on Julian Assange's appeal for political asylum at 10 o'clock tonight, Eastern Australian time. However, contrary to media and Twitter speculation, British police have not raided Ecuador's London embassy to arrest Assange to facilitate his extradition to Sweden.

The Ecuadorean government has expressed "shock" at what it described as a "written threat" by the British government to send police into Ecuador's London embassy to seize Mr Assange, who sought refuge there two months ago.

"We are deeply shocked by the British government's threats against the sovereignty of the Ecuadorean embassy and their suggestion that they may forcibly enter the embassy," a statement released by the Ecuadorean Foreign Ministry said late last night.

"This is a clear breach of international law and the protocols set out in the Vienna Convention. Throughout the last 56 days Mr Julian Assange has been in the embassy, the Ecuadorean government has acted honourably in all our attempts to seek a resolution to the situation. This stands in stark contrast to the escalation of the British government today with their threats to break down the door of the Ecuadorean embassy."

The reference to possible police entry into the embassy was contained in a British diplomatic note revealed by Ecuador's Foreign Minister, Ricardo Patino, at a press conference in Quito yesterday.

Amid the escalating tension, a government official in Quito has told The New York Times that Ecuador is prepared to allow Mr Assange to remain in its embassy in London indefinitely under a type of humanitarian protection.

The official said that the British government had made it clear it would not allow Mr. Assange to leave the country to travel to Ecuador, so even with a grant of asylum or similar protection, he would probably remain stuck in the embassy.

Assange sought asylum in the embassy in London on June 19 after his final appeal against extradition to Sweden to face questioning about sexual assault allegations was rejected by Britain's highest court.

The WikiLeaks publisher fears extradition to Sweden will facilitate his extradition to the United States on espionage charges arising from the alleged leaking of classified US military and diplomatic reports by US Army private Bradley Manning.

The note from the British Foreign Office was triggered by premature media reports that Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa had already granted Assange political asylum.

The Foreign Office note asserts Assange's continued presence at the Ecuadorean embassy is "incompatible with the Vienna Convention [on Diplomatic Relations] and unsustainable, and ... we have made clear the serious implications for our diplomatic relations".

**"You need to be aware that there is a legal base in the UK, the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987, that would allow us to take actions in order to arrest Mr Assange in the current premises of the embassy," the note says. "We sincerely hope that we do not reach that point, but if you are not capable of resolving this matter of Mr Assange's presence in your premises, this is an open option for us."**

The note indicates that Ecuador and Britain have been discussing a possible "jointly agreed text" to cover the public relations aspects of Assange's "voluntary" departure from the embassy.

However, these negotiations appear to have broken down with Mr Patino rejecting the British warning of possible police intervention as an “unacceptable act of hostility”.

**Mr Patino added “we’re not a British colony”** and said his country would be forced to respond if British police entered the embassy. He said he would seek an urgent summit of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Union of South American Nations and the Organisation of American States to discuss the “threat” to Ecuador’s sovereignty.

London's Metropolitan Police has maintained a continuous presence outside the embassy for the past two months. Police have taped off an area around the embassy building and positioned themselves in the interior fire escape and interior foyer but have not entered the embassy itself.

Shortly before 1pm Australian time, WikiLeaks released a statement saying that in a message to the Ecuadorian government the UK had “threatened to forcefully enter the Ecuadorian embassy in London and arrest Julian Assange”.

The statement claimed that the UK had said such action would be permissible under the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987.

It said UK authorities had made the warning because it had become aware Ecuador was planning on granting Mr Assange asylum.

Condemning the threat, the Wikileaks statement said: “Any transgression against the sanctity of the embassy is a unilateral and shameful act, and a violation of the Vienna Convention, which protects embassies worldwide.”

Wikileaks called for the resignation of UK Foreign Secretary William Hague if he was involved in approving the police action.

**And WikiLeaks cited the 1967 resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 2312, which states ‘the grant of asylum. . . is a peaceful and humanitarian act and that, as such, it cannot be regarded as unfriendly by any other State’.**

“We remind the public that these extraordinary actions are being taken to detain a man who has not been charged with any crime in any country,” the statement added.

**Australian National University international law expert Don Rothwell described the UK threat as extraordinary and without precedent in modern history.** Professor Rothwell said in a statement: “It highlights how serious the United Kingdom government is about extraditing Assange to Sweden where he is wanted for questioning over sexual assault.

“If the United Kingdom revoked the Embassy’s diplomatic protection and entered the Embassy to arrest Assange, Ecuador could rightly view this as a significant violation of international law which may find its way before an international court.”

Whatever happens, Mr Assange’s chances of finding safe haven appear to rapidly diminishing. “Irrespective of the outcome of this diplomatic impasse between Ecuador and the United Kingdom, the prospects of Assange enjoying any level of protection,

even if he was granted asylum by Ecuador, now appear very remote given the determination of the UK to extradite him to Sweden."

Reports from a "citizen journalist" outside the embassy that police had already launched a raid appear incorrect, and WikiLeaks has not made any such claim.

**British Crown Prosecution Service guidelines states that diplomatic premises "are inviolable and may not be entered [by police] without the consent of the Ambassador or Head of Mission".** Britain has not revoked the diplomatic status of the Ecuadorean embassy.

Late last night the British Foreign Office issued a statement that said "we are still committed to reaching a mutually acceptable solution" with Ecuador.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard told a press conference in Canberra this morning that the Australian government was not in a position to comment on reports that British police were moving to arrest Assange.

Attorney-General Nicola Roxon also said the government had yet to receive any formal advice on Assange's asylum application to Ecuador. She said she had learnt of the latest information through the media.

Despite calls for Australian government intervention into Assange's circumstances, Ms Roxon insisted that the matter was an issue between Assange and Ecuador, "and increasingly it seems it is a matter between Ecuador and the United Kingdom".

The level of public expectation that the government must intervene in the Assange case was far greater than the actual powers available to the Commonwealth, Ms Roxon said.

"Our role in this is only a diplomatic one, a consular one to make sure Mr Assange has support that he needs for consular issues. It's not something where we have any legal role where we can play."

Australian diplomatic cables released under freedom of information legislation show that a senior Swedish justice ministry official assured Australian diplomats in December last year that Assange's legal case, "including any possible extradition request from a third country, would proceed in accordance with due process under Swedish law".

The Swedish, British and Australian governments have all denied knowledge of any US intention to seek Assange's extradition.

However, other declassified Australian diplomatic cables show that in December 2010 the Australian embassy in Washington reported that the US Justice Department had confirmed WikiLeaks and Assange were targets of an espionage investigation of "unprecedented scale and nature".

Last month the Justice Department publicly confirmed that a criminal investigation into WikiLeaks was continuing.

The Australian government claims to have urged Washington to ensure that any effort to extradite the WikiLeaks publisher is conducted through "all of the proper processes".

Ms Roxon's office told Fairfax Media in May that she had made repeated representations concerning Assange, including in separate discussions with US ambassador Jeffrey Bleich, US Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and US Deputy Attorney-General James Cole.

**However, the Attorney-General's Department has now advised that it has a record of only one discussion between Ms Roxon and US officials that dealt, at least in part, with Assange** — a meeting with Mr Cole in Washington on May 15.

The department has refused to disclose the record of the meeting under freedom of information on the grounds that "release of this material could undermine Australia's relationship with the United States, a trusted ally, and could disrupt the free flow of information between our nations".

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/tensions-mount-ahead-of-assange-asylum-decision-20120816-24a8a.html>

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## **Ecuador grants asylum to Julian Assange**

*Press conference with Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño Aroca (English translation)*

*WikiLeaks Press  
16 August, 2012*

### **Declaration by the Government of the Republic of Ecuador on Julian Assange's asylum application**

*Note: links inserted in brackets have been added by WLPpress for reference*

On June 19, 2012, the Australian national Mr. Julian Assange appeared at the premises of the Ecuadorian Embassy in London to request that the Ecuadorean State provide him with diplomatic protection, thus invoking the existing Diplomatic Asylum rules. The applicant had made his asylum request based on his fear of eventual political persecution by a third country, the same country whom could use his extradition to the Kingdom of Sweden to enable an expedited subsequent extradition.

The Government of Ecuador, faithful to the asylum procedures and with the utmost attention to this case, has reviewed and evaluated all aspects of this case, particularly the arguments presented by Mr. Assange to support the fear he feels regarding this situation as a threat to his life, personal safety and freedoms.

It is important to note that Mr. Assange has taken the decision to seek asylum and protection of Ecuador over alleged allegations of "espionage and treason," which "instigate fear of the possibility of being handed over to the United States of America by British, Swedish or Australian authorities," said Mr. Assange, since the USA is chasing him for releasing compromising information sensitive to the U.S. Government. The applicant mentions that he "is a victim of persecution in various countries, which is deduced not only from their ideas and actions, but of his work of publishing

information which compromises the powerful, uncovers the truth and therefore exposes corruption and abuses of human rights of citizens around the world.”

Therefore, according to the applicant, the indictment for crimes of a political nature is the basis for his asylum request, because in his judgement he is facing a situation involving an imminent danger which he cannot escape. In order to assess his fear of possible political persecution, and that this persecution could end up becoming a situation which curtails and violates his rights, integrity, and could become a risk to his personal safety and freedom, the Government of Ecuador has considered the following:

Julian Assange is an award-winning communications professional internationally known for his struggles for freedom of expression, press freedom and human rights in general;

Mr. Assange shared privileged documents and information generated by various sources that affected employees, countries and organizations with a global audience;

That there is strong evidence of retaliation by the country or countries that produced the information disclosed by Mr. Assange, retaliation that may endanger his safety, integrity, and even his life;

That, despite Ecuador’s diplomatic efforts, countries which have been asked to give adequate safeguards for the protection and safety for the life of Mr. Assange have refused to facilitate them;

That Ecuadorian authorities are certain of the possibility that Mr. Assange could be extradited to a third country outside the European Union without proper guarantees for their safety and personal integrity;

That legal evidence clearly shows that, given an extradition to the United States of America, it would be unlikely for Mr. Assange to receive a fair trial, and likely that he would be judged by special or military courts, where there is a high probability of suffering cruel and degrading treatment, and be sentenced to life imprisonment or capital punishment, which would violate his human rights;

That while Mr. Assange must answer for the investigation in Sweden, Ecuador is aware that the Swedish prosecutor has had a contradictory attitude that prevented Mr. Assange the full exercise of the legitimate right of defense;

Ecuador is convinced that the procedural rights of Mr. Assange have been infringed upon during the investigation;

Ecuador has observed that Mr. Assange lacks the protection and assistance that should be received from the State of which he is a citizen;

That, following several public statements and diplomatic communications by officials from Britain, Sweden and the USA, it is inferred that these governments would not respect international conventions and treaties, and would give priority to domestic law, in violation of explicit rules of universal application and,

That, if Mr. Assange is remanded to custody in Sweden (as is customary in this country), a chain of events would begin that would prevent further protective measures from being taken to avoid possible extradition to a third country.

Thus, the Government of Ecuador believes that these arguments lend support to the fears of Julian Assange, and it believes that he may become a victim of political persecution, as a result of his dedicated defense of freedom of expression and freedom of press as well as his repudiation of the abuses of power in certain countries, and that these facts suggest that Mr. Assange could at any moment find himself in a situation likely to endanger life, safety or personal integrity. This fear has driven him to exercise the right to seek and receive asylum in the Embassy of Ecuador in the UK.

Article 41 of the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador clearly defines the right of asylum. Under this provision, the rights of asylum and refugee status are fully recognized in Ecuador in accordance with international law and instruments of human rights. According to this constitutional provision:

“Persons who find themselves in a situation of asylum and refuge shall enjoy special protection to ensure the full exercise of their rights. The State shall respect and ensure the principle of non-refoulement [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-refoulement>], and shall provide emergency legal and humanitarian assistance.”

Similarly, the right to asylum is enshrined in Article 4.7 of the Foreign Service Act of 2006 (Ley Orgánica del Servicio Exterior), which establishes the ability of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Integration of Ecuador to hear cases of diplomatic asylum, in accordance with laws, treaties, and international norms and laws.

It should be stressed that our country has stood out in recent years to accommodate a large number of people who have applied for territorial asylum or refugee status, having unconditionally respected the principle of non-refoulement and non-discrimination, while it has taken steps to provide refugee status in an expeditious manner, taking into account the circumstances of applicants, mostly Colombians fleeing armed conflicts in their own country. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has praised Ecuador's refugee policy, and highlighted the important fact that the country has not confined these people to camps, but has integrated them into Ecuadorian society, with full enjoyment of their human and natural rights.

Ecuador places the right of asylum in the category of universal human rights and beliefs, therefore, that the effective implementation of this right requires international cooperation that our countries can provide, without which it would be fruitless, and the institution would be totally ineffective. For these reasons, and recalling the obligation of all States to assist in the protection and promotion of human rights as provided by the United Nations Charter, we invite the British Government to lend its assistance in achieving this purpose.

To that effect, the state of Ecuador can confirm, following analysis of the legal institutions related to asylum, that the foundation of these rights has set out fundamental principles of general international law, the same as for its universal scope and importance, because of its consistence with the general interest of the entire international community, and full recognition by all states. These principles, which are set forth in various international instruments are as follows:



a) Asylum in all its forms is a fundamental human right creating obligations erga omnes, ie “for all” states.

b) Diplomatic asylum, refuge (or territorial asylum), and the right not to be extradited, expelled, delivered or transferred, are comparable human rights, since they are based on the same principles of human protection: non-refoulement and non-discrimination without any adverse distinction based on race, color, sex, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status or any other similar criteria.

c) All these forms of protection are governed by the principles pro person (i.e. more favorable to the individual), equality, universality, indivisibility, interrelatedness and interdependence.

d) The protection occurs when the State granting asylum, required refuge, or powers of protection, consider that there is a risk or fear that the protected person may be a victim of political persecution, or is charged with political offenses.

e) The State granting asylum qualifies the causes of asylum and extradition case, weigh the evidence.

f) No matter which of its forms or modality, asylum always has the same cause and lawful object, i.e. political persecution, which makes it permissible, and to safeguard the life, personal safety and freedom of the protected person, which is its legitimately intended purpose.

g) The right of asylum is a fundamental human right, therefore, belongs to jus cogens, i.e. the system of mandatory rules of law recognized by the international community as a whole, for which no derogation is permitted, making null all treaties and provisions of international law which oppose it.

h) In cases not covered by existing law, the human person remains under the protection of the principles of humanity and the dictates of public conscience, or are under the protection and rules of the principles of jus gentium [[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jus\\_gentium](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jus_gentium)] derived from established customs, the principles of humanity and from dictates of public conscience [<http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/full/470?opendocument>].

i) The lack of international agreement or domestic legislation of States cannot legitimately be invoked to limit, impair or deny the right to asylum.

j) The rules and principles governing the rights to asylum or refuge, no extradition, no handing over, no expulsion and no transfer are convergent, to the extent necessary to enhance the protection and provide it with maximum efficiency. In this sense, they are complementary to the international human rights law, the right of asylum and refugee law, and humanitarian law.

k) The rights of protection of the human being are based on ethical principles and universally accepted values and therefore have a humanistic, social, solidaric, peaceful and humanitarian character.

- 1) All States have a duty to promote the progressive development of international human rights through effective national and international action.

Ecuador has judged that the laws applicable to the asylum case of Mr. Julian Assange comprise the entire set of principles, standards, mechanisms and procedures provided for international human rights instruments (whether regional or universal), which include among their provisions the right to seek, receive and enjoy asylum for political reasons, the conventions governing the right of asylum and refugee law, and which recognize the right not to be delivered, returned, or expelled when credible fear of political persecution exists; conventions governing extradition law recognize the right not to be extradited when this measure covers political persecution, and conventions governing humanitarian law, recognize the right not to be transferred when there is a risk of political persecution. All these forms of asylum and international protection are justified by the need to protect this person from possible political persecution, or a possible accusation of political crimes and / or crimes related to the latter, which in the opinion of Ecuador, not only endanger Mr. Assange, but also pose a serious injustice committed against him.

It is undeniable that states, having agreed to numerous and substantive international instruments (many of them legally-binding), have the obligation to provide protection or asylum to persons persecuted for political reasons and have expressed their desire to establish a legal institution to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms based on a general practice accepted as law, which confers on such obligations a mandatory nature, *erga omnes* [[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erga\\_omnes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erga_omnes)], linked to the respect, protection and progressive development of human rights and fundamental freedoms that are part of *jus cogens* [[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peremptory\\_norm](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peremptory_norm)]. Some of these instruments are mentioned below:

- a) United Nations Charter of 1945, Purposes and Principles of the United Nations: the obligation of all members to cooperate in the promotion and protection of human rights;
- b) Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948: right to seek and enjoy asylum in any country, for political reasons (Article 14);
- c) Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, 1948: right to seek and enjoy asylum for political reasons (Article 27);
- d) Geneva Convention of August 12, 1949, relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War: the protected person should in no case be transferred to a country where they fear persecution for his political views (Article 45);
- e) Convention on the Status of Refugees 1951 and Protocol of New York, 1967: prohibits returning or expelling refugees to countries where their lives and freedom would be threatened (Art. 33.1);
- f) Convention on Diplomatic Asylum, 1954: The State has the right to grant asylum and classify the nature of the offense or the motives of persecution (Article 4);
- g) Convention on Territorial Asylum of 1954: the State is entitled to admit to its territory such persons as it considers necessary (Article 1), when they are persecuted for their beliefs, political opinions or affiliation, or acts that may be considered

political offenses ( Article 2), the State granting asylum may not return or expel a refugee who is persecuted for political reasons or offenses (Article 3); also, extradition is not appropriate when dealing with people who, according to the requested State, be prosecuted for political crimes , or common crimes committed for political purposes, or when extradition is requested obeying political motives (Article 4);

h) European Convention on Extradition of 1957, prohibits extradition if the requested Party considers that the offense is a political charge (Article 3.1);

i) 2312 Declaration on Territorial Asylum of 1967 provides for the granting of asylum to persons who have that right under Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including persons struggling against colonialism (Article 1.1). It prohibits the refusal of admission, expulsion and return to any State where he may be subject to persecution (Article 3.1);

j) Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties of 1969, provides that the rules and principles of general international law imperatives do not support a contrary agreement, the treaty is void upon conflicts with one of these rules (Article 53), and if there arises a new peremptory norm of this nature, any existing treaty which conflicts with that provision is void and is terminated (Article 64). As regards the application of these Articles, the Convention allows States to claim compliance with the International Court of Justice, without requiring the agreement of the respondent State, accepting the court's jurisdiction (Article 66.b). Human rights are norms of jus cogens.

k) American Convention on Human Rights, 1969: right to seek and enjoy asylum for political reasons (Article 22.7);

l) European Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism of 1977, the requested State is entitled to refuse extradition when there is a danger that the person is prosecuted or punished for their political opinions (Article 5);

m) Inter-American Convention on Extradition of 1981, the extradition is not applicable when the person has been tried or convicted, or is to be tried in a court of special or ad hoc in the requesting State (Article 4.3), when, under the classification of the requested State, whether political crimes or related crimes or crimes with a political aim pursued, and when, the circumstances of the case, can be inferred that persecution for reasons of race, religion or nationality; that the situation of the person sought may be prejudiced for any of these reasons (Article 4.5). Article 6 provides, in reference to the right of asylum, that "nothing in this Convention shall be construed as limiting the right of asylum, when appropriate."

n) African Charter on Human and Peoples of 1981, pursued individual's right to seek and obtain asylum in other countries (Article 12.3);

o) Cartagena Declaration of 1984, recognizes the right to seek refuge, not to be rejected at the border and not to be returned.

[<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6b36ec.html>]

p) Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union 2000: establishes the right of diplomatic and consular protection. Every citizen of the Union shall, in the

territory of a third country not represented by the Member State of nationality, have the protection of diplomatic and consular authorities of any Member State, under the same conditions as nationals of that State (Article 46).

The Government of Ecuador believes it is important to note that the rules and principles recognized in the international instruments mentioned above and in other multilateral agreements take precedence over domestic law of States, because these treaties are based on universal rules guided by intangible principles, whereof deriving greater respect, protection and fulfillment of human rights against unilateral attitudes of such States. This would compromise international law, which should instead be strengthened in order to consolidate the respect of fundamental rights in terms of integration and ecumenical character.

Furthermore, since Assange applied for asylum in Ecuador, we have maintained high-level diplomatic talks with the United Kingdom, Sweden and the United States.

In the course of these conversations, our country has sought to obtain strict guarantees from the UK government that Assange would face, without hindrance, an open legal process in Sweden. These safeguards include that after facing his legal responsibilities in Sweden, that he would not be extradited to a third country; that is, ensuring that the Specialty Rule

[<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200203/cmstand/d/st030114/am/30114s01.htm>] is not waived. Unfortunately, despite repeated exchanges of messages, the UK at no time showed signs of wanting to reach a political compromise, and merely repeated the content of legal texts.

Assange's lawyers invited Swedish authorities to take Assange statements in the premises of the Embassy of Ecuador in London. Ecuador officially conveyed to Swedish authorities its willingness to host this interview without interference or impediment to the legal processes followed in Sweden. This measure is absolutely legally possible. Sweden did not accept.

On the other hand, Ecuador raised the possibility that the Swedish government establish guarantees to not subsequently extradite Assange to the United States. Again, the Swedish government rejected any compromise in this regard.

Finally, Ecuador wrote to the U.S. government to officially reveal its position on Assange's case. Inquiries related to the following:

If there is an ongoing legal process or intent to carry out such processes against Julian Assange and/or the founders of the WikiLeaks organization;

Should the above be true, then under what kind of legislation, and how and under what conditions would such persons be subject to under maximum penalties;

Whether there is an intention to request the extradition of Julian Assange to the United States.

The U.S. response has been that it cannot provide information about the Assange case, claiming that it is a bilateral matter between Ecuador and the United Kingdom.

With this background, the Government of Ecuador, true to its tradition of protecting those who seek refuge in its territory or on the premises of its diplomatic missions, has decided to grant diplomatic asylum to Mr. Assange, based on the application submitted to the President of the Republic, transmitted in writing in London, dated June 19, 2012, and supplemented by letter written in London dated June 25, 2012, for which the Government of Ecuador, after a fair and objective assessment of the situation described by Mr. Assange, according to his own words and arguments, endorsed the fears of the appellant, and accepts that there are indications which lead to the conclusion that he may face political persecution, or that such persecution could occur if timely and necessary measures are not taken to avoid it.

The Government of Ecuador is certain that the British Government knows how to assess the justice and righteousness of the Ecuadorian position, and consistent with these arguments, it is confident that the UK will offer safe passage guarantees necessary and relevant to the asylum, so that their governments can honor with action the fidelity owed to law and international institutions that both nations have helped shape along their common history.

It also hopes to maintain unchanged the excellent ties of friendship and mutual respect which bind Ecuador and the United Kingdom and their people, as they are also engaged in promoting and defending the same principles and values, and because they share similar concerns about democracy, peace, and well being, which are only possible if the fundamental rights of everyone are respected.

*This text is translated from the official Spanish transcript of today's press statement issued by Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño Aroca, explaining Ecuador's decision to grant asylum to Julian Assange. This translation was crowd-sourced with the help of @DUVFree, BCK, BM, and other anonymous volunteers. Thanks for your contribution!*

<http://wikileaks-press.org/press-conference-with-foreign-minister-ricardo-patino-aroca-ecuador-grants-asylum-to-julian-assange-english-translation/>

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## **Ecuador Endorses Julian Assange's Fears, Grants Asylum**

*Kevin Gosztola  
Firedog Lake  
August 16, 2012*

The government of Ecuador has officially granted asylum to WikiLeaks founder and editor-in-chief Julian Assange. Earlier this morning, Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino made the announcement, describing the process undertaken before a decision was made by the government and declared the government endorsed the “fears,” accepted that Assange could face political persecution and measures, such as asylum, are necessary to avoid this persecution.

The decision did not hinge upon whether Assange could be granted safe passage to Ecuador or not. The Ecuador government indicated its hope that the United Kingdom would respect Ecuador's decision and allow **Assange— now a political refugee—** the right to leave the Ecuador embassy in the UK for Ecuador.

The government said the “foundation” of the asylum application was the “political offenses” Assange was accused of committing. These “offenses” are what placed Assange in imminent danger. He read off a list of points that show why the situation could end up being one of “prejudice” and violation of Assange’s rights, integrity and risk to personal safety and freedom.” **Here is the list:**

Julian Assange is an award-winning communications professional internationally for his struggle for freedom of expression, press freedom and human rights in general;

That Mr. Assange shared with the global audience was privileged documentary information generated by various sources, and affected employees, countries and organizations;

That there is strong evidence of retaliation by the country or countries that produced the information disclosed by Mr. Assange, retaliation that may endanger their safety, integrity, and even his life;

That, despite diplomatic efforts by Ecuador, countries which have required adequate safeguards to protect the safety and life of Mr. Assange, have refused to facilitate them;

That is certain Ecuadorian authorities that it is possible the extradition of Mr. Assange to a third country outside the European Union without proper guarantees for their safety and personal integrity;

**That legal evidence clearly shows that, given an extradition to the United States of America, Mr. Assange would not have a fair trial, could be tried by special courts or military, and it is unlikely that is applied to cruel and degrading , and was sentenced to life imprisonment or capital punishment, which would not respect their human rights;**

**That while Mr. Assange must answer for the investigation in Sweden, Ecuador is aware that the Swedish prosecutor has had a contradictory attitude that prevented Mr. Assange the full exercise of the legitimate right of defense;**

**Ecuador is convinced that they have undermined the procedural rights of Mr. Assange during the investigation;**

**Ecuador has found that Mr. Assange is without protection and assistance to be received from the State which is a citizen;**

That, following several public statements and diplomatic communications by officials from Britain, Sweden and USA, it is inferred that these governments would not respect the conventions and treaties, and give priority to domestic law school hierarchy, in violation of rules express universal application and,

That, if Mr. Assange is reduced to custody in Sweden (as is customary in this country), would start a chain of events that would prevent the further protective measures taken to avoid possible extradition to a third country.

It is important to note here that Ecuador approached the Swedish authorities, urged them to come question Assange in the Ecuador embassy in the UK and even asked that they ensure he would not be extradited to the US if he ended up in the UK. Sweden did not offer any diplomatic assurance that Assange would not eventually be extradited to the US while in custody over sexual allegations.

**The government of Ecuador laid out various conventions, treaties and other tenets of international law that gives them the right and authority to grant refugee status** (because they were keenly aware that they would be accused of acting inappropriately).

**Here is what the government came up with to bolster the right they have to grant asylum:**

a) United Nations Charter of 1945, Purposes and Principles of the United Nations: the obligation of all members to cooperate in the promotion and protection of human rights;

b) Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948: right to seek and enjoy asylum in any country, for political reasons (Article 14);

c) Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, 1948: right to seek and enjoy asylum for political reasons (Article 27);

d) Geneva Convention of August 12, 1949, relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War: in no case be transferred to the protected person to a country where they fear persecution for his political views ( Article 45);

e) Convention on the Status of Refugees 1951 and Protocol of New York, 1967: prohibits returning or expelling refugees to countries where their lives and freedom would be threatened (Art. 33.1);

f) Convention on Diplomatic Asylum, 1954: The State has the right to grant asylum and classify the nature of the offense or the motives of persecution (Article 4);

g) Convention on Territorial Asylum of 1954: the State is entitled to admit to its territory such persons as it considers necessary (Article 1), when they are persecuted for their beliefs, political opinions or affiliation, or acts that may be considered political offenses ( Article 2), the State granting asylum may not return or expel a refugee who is persecuted for political reasons or offenses (Article 3); also, extradition is not appropriate when dealing with people who, according to the requested State, be prosecuted for political crimes , or common crimes committed for political purposes, or when extradition is requested obeying political motives (Article 4);

h) European Convention on Extradition of 1957, prohibits extradition if the requested Party considers that the offense charged is a political (Article 3.1);

i) 2312 Declaration on Territorial Asylum of 1967 provides for the granting of asylum to persons who have that right under Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including persons struggling against colonialism (Article 1.1). It

prohibits the refusal of admission, expulsion and return to any State where he may be subject to persecution (Article 3.1);

j) Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties of 1969, provides that the rules and principles of general international law imperatives do not support a contrary agreement, the treaty is void upon its conclusion conflicts with one of these rules (Article 53), and if a new peremptory norm of this nature, any existing treaty which conflicts with that provision is void and is terminated (Article 64). As regards the application of these Articles, the Convention allows States to claim compliance with the International Court of Justice, without requiring the agreement of the respondent State, accepting the court's jurisdiction (Article 66.b). Human rights are norms of jus cogens.

k) American Convention on Human Rights , 1969: right to seek and enjoy asylum for political reasons (Article 22.7);

l) European Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism of 1977, the requested State is entitled to refuse extradition when there is a danger that the person is prosecuted or punished for their political opinions (Article 5);

m) Inter-American Convention on Extradition of 1981, the extradition is not applicable when the person has been tried or convicted, or is to be tried in a court of special or ad hoc in the requesting State (Article 4.3), when, under the classification of the requested State, whether political crimes or related crimes or crimes with a political aim pursued, and when, the circumstances of the case, can be inferred that persecution for reasons of race, religion or nationality; that the situation of the person sought may be prejudiced for any of these reasons (Article 4.5). Article 6 provides, in reference to the right of asylum, that "nothing in this Convention shall be construed as limiting the right of asylum, when the appropriate".

n) African Charter on Human and Peoples of 1981, pursued individual's right to seek and obtain asylum in other countries (Article 12.3);

o) Cartagena Declaration of 1984, recognizes the right to shelter, unless rejected at the border and not be returned.

p) Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union 2000: establishes the right of diplomatic and consular protection. Every citizen of the Union shall, in the territory of a third country not represented by the Member State of nationality, the protection of diplomatic and consular authorities of any Member State, under the same conditions as nationals of that State (Article 46).

It is clear that Ecuador has a right to grant asylum to Assange. The country went even further, however. It stated Ecuador has a tradition in recent years of "accommodating" a "large number of people who have applied for territorial asylum or refugee status." A number of Colombians, for example, have fled armed conflict. According to the High Commissioner for Refugees, Ecuador's "refugee policy" has been praised, they highlighted the fact that the "country has not been confined to camps for these people, but have been integrated into society, full enjoyment of their human rights and guarantees."



Now, there probably was never any worry that Assange would have trouble integrating into Ecuadorian society but it is established: Ecuador considers asylum to be one of many human rights that should be available to people. It also believes that countries should act in cooperation to grant refugee status to humans in danger. "The effective implementation of this right requires international cooperation" and, without such cooperation, the institution of asylum would be "totally ineffective."

Ecuador has positioned itself, with this announcement, as a country that respects international law and human rights. It sees what Assange has done as editor-in-chief of WikiLeaks as something worth supporting. President Rafael Correa and others in the Ecuador government support the transparency it brought to the world, probably because it exposed how powers were conspiring against Ecuador and other Latin American countries previously. It exposed what people inside the country were doing in conspiracy against Correa's administration.

The focus of media attention will undoubtedly shift to whether Assange can possibly ever make it out of the embassy in the UK to some vehicle and leave for Assange. There is going to be plenty of glib postings about what Assange can do now that he may be stuck indefinitely in the embassy. But, realize that what UK is doing and has done by using coercion against Ecuador and threatening to storm the embassy yesterday is astounding and deserves discussion. Whether it is respectful of human rights to not allow Assange safe passage should be a focus of discussion if not the focus of discussion.

<http://dissenter.firedoglake.com>

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## **Ecuador grants asylum to Assange and condemns Britain's 'threatening and intimidating' language**

*Jerome Taylor  
The Independent  
16 August 2012*

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has been granted political asylum by Ecuador after taking refuge in the country's embassy in London. The announcement will increase the already strained relationship between the UK and the South American country, which has been warned that the situation could have "serious implications" for diplomacy.

The news came after Ecuadorian officials at the besieged embassy, where WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is staying, today expressed their dismay that relations between the two countries had deteriorated to such an extent.

Officials laid the blame for the fallout squarely at the feet of Britain, arguing that the Foreign Office had begun using "threatening and intimidating" language when discussing Mr Assange's fate.

Officials in Quito insist that negotiations were progressing over the past few weeks as Ecuador sought to receive assurances from both Britain and Sweden that Mr Assange would not be extradited to the USA if he was moved to Stockholm.

But on Wednesday they received the first indication that Britain was losing patience with the Latin American nation. Officials in the Ecuadorian foreign ministry were first informed by telephone and then by letter that London could use powers under a 1987 act to enter the embassy and seize Mr Assange.

**"That was the first time we were even told about such legislation," said an embassy official** who asked not to be identified.

The official said tensions were raised further on Wednesday evening when four police vehicles containing around 50 officers pulled up outside the embassy.

**"This is absolutely in breach of the friendly and diplomatic dialogue we were holding and we consider it a threat to our sovereignty," the official said.**

Ecuador has said it will respond vigorously to any attempt by the UK police to enter the embassy. They have been receiving legal advice from a British QC who insists that the 1987 legislation could not be used to enter the Ecuadorian Embassy in Mr Assange's case.

**The advisor, who has asked not to be named, said he believed the legislation was only applicable in instances where Britain felt the safety of the public or national security was in danger.** He gave the example of when the Libyan embassy was used in the late 1980s to shelter the killer of PC Yvonne Fletcher.

Any attempt to enter the embassy and arrest Mr Assange would be a "highly improper" use of the legislation, the advisor said.

Motley collection of disparate groups gathered outside embassy and chanted "We are not a British colony"

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## **Julian Assange asylum: Ecuador is right to stand up to the US**

*The United States would paint itself as a promoter of human rights, but any right to make that claim is long gone*

Mark Weisbrot  
The Guardian  
16 August 2012

Ecuador has now made its decision: to grant political asylum to Julian Assange. This comes in the wake of an incident that should dispel remaining doubts about the motives behind the UK/Swedish attempts to extradite WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange. On Wednesday, the UK government made an unprecedented threat to invade Ecuador's embassy if Assange is not handed over. Such an assault would be so extreme in violating international law and diplomatic conventions that **it is difficult to even find an example of a democratic government even making such a threat, let alone carrying it out.**

When Ecuadorian foreign minister Ricardo Patiño, in an angry and defiant response, released the written threats to the public, the UK government tried to backtrack and say it wasn't a threat to invade the embassy (which is another country's sovereign territory). But what else can we possibly make of this wording from a letter delivered by a British official?

"You need to be aware that there is a legal base in the UK, the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987, that would allow us to take actions in order to arrest Mr Assange in the current premises of the embassy. We sincerely hope that we do not reach that point, but if you are not capable of resolving this matter of Mr Assange's presence in your premises, this is an open option for us."

**Is there anyone in their right mind who believes that the UK government would make such an unprecedented threat if this were just about an ordinary foreign citizen wanted for questioning— not criminal charges or a trial— by a foreign government?**

Ecuador's decision to grant political asylum to Assange was both predictable and reasonable. But it is also a ground-breaking case that has considerable historic significance.

First, the merits of the case: Assange clearly has a well-founded fear of persecution if he were to be extradited to Sweden. It is pretty much acknowledged that he would be immediately thrown in jail. Since he is not charged with any crime, and the Swedish government has no legitimate reason to bring him to Sweden, this by itself is a form of persecution.

**We can infer that the Swedes have no legitimate reason for the extradition, since they were repeatedly offered the opportunity to question him in the UK, but rejected it, and have also refused to even put forth a reason for this refusal.** A few weeks ago the Ecuadorian government offered to allow Assange to be questioned in its London embassy, where Assange has been residing since 19 June, but the Swedish government refused— again without offering a reason. This was an act of bad faith in the negotiating process that has taken place between governments to resolve the situation.

Former Stockholm chief district prosecutor Sven-Erik Alhem also made it clear that the Swedish government had no legitimate reason to seek Assange's extradition when he testified that the decision of the Swedish government to extradite Assange is "unreasonable and unprofessional, as well as unfair and disproportionate", because he could be easily questioned in the UK.

But, most importantly, the government of Ecuador agreed with Assange that he had a reasonable fear of a second extradition to the United States, and persecution here for his activities as a journalist. The evidence for this was strong. Some examples: an ongoing investigation of Assange and WikiLeaks in the US; evidence that an indictment had already been prepared; statements by important public officials such as Democratic senator Diane Feinstein that he should be prosecuted for espionage, which carries a potential death penalty or life imprisonment.

Why is this case so significant? **It is probably the first time that a citizen fleeing political persecution by the US has been granted political asylum by a democratic**

**government seeking to uphold international human rights conventions.** This is a pretty big deal, because for more than 60 years the US has portrayed itself as a proponent of human rights internationally— especially during the cold war. And many people have sought and received asylum in the US. *[Sweden in the 1960s granted U.S. army deserters refuge without formally designating them as political refugees. --A.B.]*

The idea of the US government as a human rights defender, which was believed mostly in the US and allied countries, was premised on a disregard for the human rights of the victims of US wars and foreign policy, such as the 3 million Vietnamese or more than one million Iraqis who were killed, and millions of others displaced, wounded, or abused because of US actions. That idea— that the US should be judged only on what it does within its borders— is losing support as the world grows more multipolar economically and politically, Washington loses power and influence, and its wars, invasions, and occupations are seen by fewer people as legitimate.

At the same time, over the past decade, the US's own human rights situation has deteriorated. Of course prior to the civil rights legislation of the 1960s, millions of African-Americans in the southern states didn't have the right to vote, and lacked other civil rights— and the consequent international embarrassment was part of what allowed the civil rights movement to succeed. But at least by the end of that decade, the US could be seen as a positive example internally in terms of the rule of law, due process and the protection of civil rights and liberties.

**Today, the US claims the legal right to indefinitely detain its citizens; the president can order the assassination of a citizen without so much as even a hearing; the government can spy on its citizens without a court order; and its officials are immune from prosecution for war crimes.**

It doesn't help that **the US has less than 5% of the world's population but almost a quarter of its prison inmates**, many of them victims of a "war on drugs" that is rapidly losing legitimacy in the rest of the world. Assange's successful pursuit of asylum from the US is another blow to Washington's international reputation. At the same time, it shows how important it is to have democratic governments that are independent of the US and— unlike Sweden and the UK— will not collaborate in the persecution of a journalist for the sake of expediency. Hopefully other governments will let the UK know that threats to invade another country's embassy put them outside the bounds of law-abiding nations.

**It is interesting to watch pro-Washington journalists and their sources look for self-serving reasons that they can attribute to the government of Ecuador for granting asylum.** Correa wants to portray himself as a champion of free speech, they say; or he wants to strike a blow to the US, or put himself forward as an international leader. But this is ridiculous.

**Correa didn't want this mess and it has been a lose-lose situation for him from the beginning.** He has suffered increased tension with three countries that are diplomatically important to Ecuador— the US, UK and Sweden. The US is Ecuador's largest trading partner and has several times threatened to cut off trade preferences that support thousands of Ecuadorian jobs. **And since most of the major international media has been hostile to Assange from the beginning, they have used the asylum request to attack Ecuador,** accusing the government of a "crackdown" on the media at

home. As I have noted elsewhere, this is a gross exaggeration and misrepresentation of Ecuador, which has an uncensored media that is mostly opposed to the government. And for most of the world, these misleading news reports are all that they will hear or read about Ecuador for a long time.

Correa made this decision because it was the only ethical thing to do. And any of the independent, democratic governments of South America would have done the same. If only the world's biggest media organisations had the same ethics and commitment to freedom of speech and the press.

Now we will see if the UK government will respect international law and human rights conventions and allow Assange safe passage to Ecuador.

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## **Julian Assange: Why Ecuador is offering asylum**

*Arturo Wallace  
BBC Mundo Andean  
16 August 2012*

It was the decision pretty much everyone expected, although in Ecuador not everybody will approve. [*When does "everybody" approve of anything? --A.B.*]

The Ecuadorean government said it had granted Mr Assange asylum because it shared his fears of political persecution and the possible consequences of an eventual extradition to the United States.

"There are serious indications of retaliation from the country or countries that produced the information published by Mr Assange; retaliation that could endanger his safety, integrity and even his life," said the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ricardo Patino.

"The evidence shows that if Mr Assange is extradited to the United States, he wouldn't have a fair trial. It is not at all improbable he could be subjected to cruel and degrading treatment and sentenced to life imprisonment or even capital punishment," he added.

Most supporters of the Wikileaks founder share this belief. And Mr Assange knew he could count Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa among those supporters, even before he walked into the Ecuadorean embassy in London.

But according to Santiago Basabe, a professor at the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences, Mr Correa's reasons go beyond his declared interest in protecting Mr Assange's rights.

"It is important to understand that this event was the conclusion of a very long negotiation between Mr Assange and the Ecuadorean government," he said. "Many see Mr Assange as somebody who has fought for freedom of speech and freedom of opinion, which are also key components of the Ecuadorean government official discourse.

"By granting him asylum, the government was trying to prove it really cares about freedom of opinion and freedom of the press, at a moment when Ecuador has been strongly criticised, both nationally and internationally, for the way the national government understands democracy," Prof Basabe added. *[See Mark Weisbrot's response to this sort of thing in the foregoing article. --A.».]*

In Ecuador, however, not everybody is convinced the country's international image will be better off as a result. The private media and a large majority of opinion makers— **traditionally opposed to President Correa** — warned that Ecuador had very little to win from a positive response to Mr Assange's request.

For instance, Ecuador has been trying to secure a commercial agreement with the European Union and many fear that picking a fight with the United Kingdom and Sweden will not help. And they will certainly try to use the whole issue against Mr Correa as he seeks re-election in February 2013.

Former President Lucio Gutierrez has even suggested that Mr Correa's real intention is to use Mr Assange's hacking skills to steal the elections.

But according to Mr Basabe, Mr Correa does not need to resort to such strategies to stay in power. "The possibility of President Correa losing the February voting is very low," he said, while also noting that a small **majority** of Ecuadoreans supported Mr Assange's asylum request anyway. *[A much smaller minority is opposed. --A.B.]*

And the possibility of the British authorities storming into the Ecuadorean embassy in London to capture Mr Assange, raised on Wednesday by Foreign Minister Patino, has provided Correa supporters with a powerful rallying cry.

"This a decision of a sovereign government, which doesn't have to ask for British permission to act," said Rosana Alvarado, a representative in the National Assembly of the official Alianza Pais party. "I hope the Ecuadorean people will remain united and reject any form of colonialism," said Paco Velasco, also from Alianza Pais.

To a large extent, however, repercussions will depend on the reaction of the British and Swedish governments — and, of course, of the United States.

And very few people seem to believe the Wikileaks founder will ever make it to South America. *[What is the basis of that perception? --A.B.]*

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## Sweden slams Ecuador's asylum decision

*The Local*  
16 Aug. 2012

Sweden on Thursday rejected Ecuador's claim that Wikileaks founder Julian Assange would not get a fair trial as a reason for granting him political asylum, and summoned Quito's envoy to explain. *[It was not the main reason. --A.B.]*

"Our firm legal and constitutional system guarantees the rights of each and everyone.

We firmly reject any accusations to the contrary," Foreign Minister Carl Bildt said on his Twitter account.

Separately, Swedish foreign ministry spokesman Anders Jörle said: "The Ecuadoran ambassador is expected at the ministry as soon as possible. The accusations that (the Ecuadoran foreign ministry) has formulated are serious and it is unacceptable that Ecuador would want to halt the Swedish judicial process and European judicial cooperation."

Assange sought refuge in the Ecuadoran embassy in London on June 19 after a British court ruled he could be extradited to Sweden for questioning about allegations of rape and sexual assault.

On Thursday, Ecuadoran Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino said Quito decided to grant him asylum as London, Stockholm and Washington refused to guarantee that Assange would not be sent on to the United States where he fears trial for the release of a trove of classified US documents by his whistleblowing website.

The lawyer representing the two Swedish women who filed the original complaints against Assange said he was puzzled by Ecuador's decision.

"I find it very difficult to understand why," lawyer Claes Borgström told AFP. "He managed to change the focus. He is accused of rape and sexual assault but he managed to get people to talk only about Wikileaks and the United States," the lawyer said.

Claiming that Quito was politically motivated in making its decision, Borgström said: "All this is revolting for my clients who have been considered for two years as conspirators."

The lawyer meanwhile praised Britain's determination to extradite Assange to Sweden, despite Ecuador's decision, while Swedish prosecution said it has no direct impact on its work on the case.

"The fact that Julian Assange was given asylum today changes nothing to the state of the Swedish preliminary investigation," the prosecution said in a statement.

"Assange is in the Ecuador embassy in London, which is on British territory [???]. The case still concerns Britain and the prosecutor therefore cannot unveil any information," it said.

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## 2012-08-16: Twitter @ 19:00



**swedenvsassange** @swedenvsassange

16h

Hours before Ecuador announces its decision UK threatens to enter embassy and take #Assange by force. Will UK respect Ecuador's sovereignty?

--



**Jen Robinson** @suigenerisjen

16h

FM Patino says Ecuador will call urgent summit of OAS & UNASUR over British threat to embassy [bit.ly/RRru6K](https://bit.ly/RRru6K)  #Assange

 retweetad av swedenvsassange



**Jen Robinson** @suigenerisjen

15h

Ecuador-UK diplomatic incident over threats to embassy re asylum-seeker #Assange - an Australian citizen. No word from our govt? #auspol

 retweetad av swedenvsassange



**WikiLeaks** @wikileaks

15h

MT @danvmathews: Even when Soviet tanks rolled into Budapest 1956 they stopped short of entering an embassy to apprehend Mindszenty


 retweetad av swedenvsassange



**Maher Arar** @ArarMaher

14h

Imagine what's happening in London wrt #Assange is happening in Tehran wouldn't we witness an uproar by mainstream media.

 retweetad av swedenvsassange



**Thomas R. Hart** @ThomasRHart

11h

Hey kids! Remember when the UK was so "outraged" #China tried to get a dissident from the #USA embassy on no #charges? Oh well. #Assange

 retweetad av swedenvsassange



**swedenvsassange** @swedenvsassange

5h


Does anyone now seriously argue UK diplomatic assurances are an option for #Assange, or that UK would oppose extradition to US? #Assange



**Glenn Greenwald** @ggreenwald

5h

So maybe the concern that Western govts will act wildly and even lawlessly to get Assange is not, as it turns out, "paranoia"

 retweetad av swedenvsassange





**Glenn Greenwald** @ggreenwald

4h

Every article on this should include that Ecuador offered: Assange will go to Stockholm tomorrow if no extradition to the US- Sweden refused

retweetad av swedenvsassange



**WikiLeaks** @wikileaks

3h

New York Times's major article, responding to Assange asylum, alleges that Mr. Assange neglected to flush a toilet once. We're not joking.

retweetad av swedenvsassange



**Ian Welsh** @iwalsh

3h

Pinochet had dogs trained and women raped by them, but Britain wouldn't extradite him.

retweetad av swedenvsassange

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## A 'Fundamental Human Right': Ecuador Grants Assange Political Asylum

*SPIEGEL ONLINE*  
2012-08-16

Ecuador on Thursday said it would grant political asylum to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, who has been holed up in the country's embassy in London for weeks now. Britain says it still intends to extradite the whistleblower to Sweden, where he faces questioning over allegations of sexual offenses.

After months of house arrest in Britain as he awaited possible extradition to Sweden to face questioning over allegations of sexual offenses, politicians in Ecuador have said WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is to be granted political asylum in the South American country. The announcement came during a press conference by Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño in the capital city of Quito. The foreign minister described asylum as a "fundamental human right."

The decision comes in contradiction to the stance taken by Britain, which has said it wants to extradite Assange to Sweden.

Assange has been residing at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London since June 19 in order to prevent his extradition. Public prosecutors in Sweden want to question Assange about accusations that he sexually harassed two women during the summer of 2010 and also raped one of them. The Australian citizen has denied the allegations.

The British Foreign Office said in a statement sent over Twitter that it was "disappointed" by the decision in Quito. "Under the law, with Mr. Assange having

exhausted all options of appeal, UK authorities are under binding obligation to extradite him to Sweden." The British government said it would carry out its obligation and that the Ecuadorean decision would not change that. "We remain committed to a negotiated solution that allows us to carry out our obligations under the Extradition Act."

Earlier, a Foreign Office official said the British government would not permit Assange to leave the country, even if Ecuador provided him with asylum. The official said Assange would be detained by British officials as soon as he left the embassy.

Assange is trying to avoid extradition to Sweden because, he has claimed, he fears the government there will in turn extradite him to the United States, where he could face charges relating to the WikiLeaks release of hundreds of thousands of classified US government documents, most originating from the Pentagon or the State Department. The documents, which were reported on by a group of prominent international media that included SPIEGEL, shed light on the US role in Afghanistan, Iraq and other global hot spots.

Patiño said Thursday he had received written notice from British officials that they would "assault" the embassy in London if Ecuador didn't hand Assange over. "We are not a British colony," he said. "Those times are passed." He said any storming of the embassy would be viewed as "hostile and intolerable and, as well, an attempt on our sovereignty which would oblige us to respond with the greatest diplomatic force." The British Foreign Office denied it had made any threats against Ecuador. In a statement, officials said: "Throughout this process we have drawn the Ecuadorians' attention to relevant provisions of our law."

The Ecuadorean foreign minister said that Assange could face a real threat of political persecution as well as the death penalty if he were extradited to the United States due to the publication of the WikiLeaks cables.

Scores of police were sent to provide reinforcement at the Ecuadorean Embassy in London on Thursday as the decision was announced.

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/ecuador-grants-asylum-to-wikileaks-founder-julian-assange-a-850458.html>

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Julian Assange och Ecuadors utrikesminister Ricardo Patino.

Foto: Kirsty Wigglesworth / AP, Rodrigo Buenida / AFP

## "Asyl till Assange bara slag i luften"

► **Folkrättsexperten Ove Bring:** Så snart Assange lämnar ambassaden kan brittiska myndigheter gripa honom. Om inte förr så på flygplatsen. [🕒14](#)

► **Assange får asyl i Ecuador.** Beskedet kom på torsdagen. [🕒101](#)

► **Ecuadors utrikesminister:** Assange beviljas asyl.

► **Julian Assange:** En betydande seger för mig och mitt folk. [🕒5](#)

► **Wikileaks:** Rätt beslut av Ecuador, och modigt.

### "Asyl till Assange är ett slag i luften"

Ecuadors beslut om att ge Julian Assange asyl är ett slag i luften, menar folkrättsexperten Ove Bring. Fortfarande gäller att Assange ska gripas och utlämnas till Sverige så snart han lämnar den ecuadorianska ambassaden i London.

Utrikesminister Ricardo Patino meddelade på torsdagseftermiddagen att Wikileaks grundare Julian Assange har beviljats asyl i Ecuador. Assange befinner sig just nu på landets ambasad i London.

Sedan tidigare finns ett beslut om att brittiska myndigheter ska utlämna Assange till Sverige där det pågår en förundersökning med anledning av två kvinnors anklagelser mot honom om sexbrott. Assange fruktar att han i slutändan skulle utlämnas till USA där han har många fiender efter att Wikileaks publicerat stora mängder hemliga dokument från den amerikanska krigsmakten.

– Brittiska myndigheter har kvar sina förpliktelser enligt EU-rätten att utlämna Assange till Sverige. Beslutet om asyl förändrar inte den situationen och är på så sätt ett slag i luften, säger Ove Bring, professor emeritus i folkrätt, till DN.se.

Visserligen är Assange enligt Bring immun och oåtkomlig för det brittiska rättsväsendet så länge han är kvar på Ecuadors ambassad. Men för att verkligen åtnjuta den asyl han beviljats måste han ta sig till Ecuador— och det kommer enligt Bring inte att gå.

– Så snart Assange lämnar ambassaden kan brittiska myndigheter gripa honom. Om inte förr kan man göra det när han kliver ur diplomatbilen på flygplatsen.

Ett gripande inne på ambassaden har inget stöd i gällande rätt, enligt **Bring som starkt betvivlar påståendena om att brittiska myndigheter skulle ha hotat med att göra det.**

– De behöver ju inte göra så, de kan ju bara vänta ut honom.

Däremot skulle Assange vara fri att resa till Ecuador efter att hans sak prövats i Sverige. **Och enligt Bring är det mycket troligt att förundersökningen aldrig leder ens till åtal eftersom ord tycks stå emot ord. [I så fall varför åker inte åklagaren till London för att förhöra honom? --A.B.]**

Utrikesminister Patino hävdade att man försökt utverka garantier från Sverige om att Assange inte skulle lämnas ut i händelse av en begäran från USA. Enligt Ove Bring vore det helt orimligt att Sverige lämnade sådana garantier.

– Vem skulle garantera det? Högsta domstolen kan inte föregripa sin egen prövning. Om det kommer en sådan begäran måste den hanteras på sedvanligt sätt.

– Sedan kan ju regeringen stoppa en utlämning även om HD har sagt ja men den kan inte ge några garantier i det här skedet. Det skulle innebära att regeringen körde över rättsväsendet och sade att det betyder ingenting. Så fungerar det inte i en demokrati, säger Ove Bring.

• *Hans Rosén*

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SvD: 16 augusti 2012

## **Folkrättsexpert: "Asyl löser inte Assanges problem"**

Assanges politiska asyl i Ecuador har enligt folkrättsexperten Ove Bring ingen betydelse. "Det är ett gigantiskt slag i luften", säger han. Svenska åklagarmyndigheten meddelar att beslutet inte påverkar den svenska förundersökningen.

En europeisk arresteringsorder finns sedan tidigare utfärdad mot Julian Assange. När han nu fått politisk asyl i Ecuador menar hans advokat Per E Samulesson att den ordern inte kan genomföras. Helt felaktigt, menar Ove Bring, professor emeritus i folkrätt.

– Det stämmer inte. Ecuador har som enskild stat tagit ett eget beslut, omvärlden behöver inte respektera det beslutet. Först om Julian Assange skulle befinna sig i Ecuador kommer man att respektera det, USA skulle inte invadera Ecuador för att få ut honom.

Det rättsliga läget är enligt Ove Bring samma som före beslutet.

– Det är ett beslut som inte betyder något. Det är ett gigantiskt slag i luften, det löser inte Assanges problem. Han är fortfarande hänvisad till sitt diplomatiska skydd på Ecuadors ambassad. Så fort han försöker utnyttja att han fått asyl så måste han lämna ambassaden och komma ombord på ett flygplan.

I ett sådant läge skulle den brittiska polisen därmed ha all möjlighet att gripa honom.

– Storbritannien har fortfarande möjlighet att leva upp till sin förpliktelse enligt EU-rätten att föra honom till Sverige, och i ett sådant läge kommer man att göra det.

Överåklagaren Marianne Ny kommenterar inte beskedet och Åklagarmyndighetens pressansvariga Britta von Schoultz säger att läget i den svenska förundersökningen inte förändras. I nuläget är det enligt henne inte aktuellt att genomföra ett förhör med Assange i Storbritannien vilket hans advokater har velat.

– Det har inte varit det hittills och åklagaren har där **gjort ett övervägande i utredningen och bedömt** att det finns skäl för att han behöver vara tillgänglig i Sverige under den fortsatta förundersökningen. Det är den bedömning som åklagaren fortfarande gör, säger Britta von Schoultz.

Ove Bring tror inte att den hållningen kommer att ändras.

– Det finns möjlighet till bevisupptagning utomlands men då skulle det ha skett i ett mycket tidigare läge. Den svenska åklagaren tycker nog att det skulle vara ett väldigt olyckligt prejudikat för det svenska rättväsendet att man kan tvinga sig fram och få en gräddfil till rättväsendet i Sverige.

Det enda Julian Assange kan göra nu för att slippa bli transporterad till Sverige är enligt Ove Bring att stanna inom ambassadens murar.

– **Så länge han har tillstånd kan han stanna där på sin gummimadrass. Det fanns en ungersk kardinal som blev kvar på amerikanska ambassaden i Ungern under 15 år efter revolutionen 1956, jag vet inte om det är vad Julian Assange har tänkt sig. [Då har han inte lyssnat på vad Assange och sina advokater har upprepade gånger förklarat. --A.B.]**

Ove Bring bedömer inte att sannolikheten för att USA ska begära ut Assange ökar om skulle befinna sig i Sverige jämfört med i Storbritannien.

– USA har ju mer utvecklade relationer med Storbritannien än med Sverige, så det är väldigt svårt att förstå logiken i den rädslan.

Hans bedömning är att det enda Sverige kan göra nu är att avvakta och att sköta sina relationer med Storbritannien så att de håller bevakning över när och om han lämnar Ecuadors ambassad.

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SvD: 16 augusti 2012

### **Borgström: "Näst intill otroligt"**

Claes Borgström, advokat för de två kvinnor som anklagar Assange, är inte nöjd med beslutet.

– Efter alla turer som varit är ingenting längre otroligt, men det är nästintill. Att Julian Assange kan få politisk asyl i Ecuador när det handlar om att han ska överlämnas till Sverige för att lagföras här är ofattbart, säger han till TT.

Claes Borgström har inte hunnit kontakta sina klienter efter beskedet men säger att det är djupt beklagligt ur deras synvinkel.

– De har väntat och väntat **och själva fått löpa gatlopp** utan att ha gjort något annat än att vara brottsoffer. Om det nu slutar med att Assange försvinner till Ecuador så blir det ingen prövning av den misstanke som hovrätten ändå har kommit fram till föreligger. En sådan prövning hade kunnat medföra en viss upprättelse för mina klienter.

Britta von Schoultz, pressansvarig på Åklagarmyndigheten, säger att flera förundersökningsåtgärder är möjliga när en misstänkt befinner sig utomlands. I det här fallet valdes, efter domstolsbeslut, att en europeisk arresteringsorder skulle utföras.

– Bedömningen har gjorts att den misstänkte av utredningsskäl behöver vara tillgänglig här i Sverige under förundersökningen.

**En anledning är, enligt von Schoultz, att Julian Assange ändå skulle behöva infinna sig i tingsrätten om ärendet leder till åtal. [Det har jag aldrig tidigare hört. Jämför med Ove Brings bedömning av fallet här ovan. --A.B.]**

– Därför har ett förhör i Storbritannien i det här ärendet inte varit aktuellt, säger hon.

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SvD: 16 augusti 2012

## Wikileaks: Ett mycket glädjande besked

Wikileaks talesperson Kristinn Hrafnsson tycker att beskedet var bra.

- Det är mycket glädjande att Ecuador har beslutat att ge Julian Assange asyl och att landet inte vek ned sig för hoten och mobbningen Storbritannien har använt sig av, säger han, enligt nyhetsbyrån AFP.

- Jag hoppas att de brittiska myndigheterna är förnuftiga nog att inte ta sig in på ambassaden utan lov. Det hade varit riskfyllt för diplomatiska relationer världen över.

Beskedet att Assange beviljats asyl mottas lugnt av demonstranter TT talar med utanför Ecuadors Londonambassad.

- Det som borde hända nu är att Storbritannien respekterar Ecuadors beslut och ambassadens suveränitet. Men jag är inte säker på att blir så, säger Amaru Qhispe, som tillsammans med en grupp latinamerikaner skanderar sitt stöd till Assange.

Folkmassan följer noggrant polisens rörelser vid ambassaden. När en grupp poliser samlas vid en sidodörr är en grupp demonstranter, och ännu fler fotografer, snabbt framme.

Stämningen är dock lugn, förutom det trafikkaos folksamlingen orsakar i dessa normalt så stillsamma kvarter.

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SvD: 16 augusti 2012

## Advokaten: "Vi hade räknat med asyl"

För Assanges svenska advokat Per E Samuelsson kom beskedet om asyl inte som någon större överraskning. "Vi hade räknat med asyl", säger advokaten som nu hoppas på att den svenska åklagaren åker till London och genomför ett förhör på ambassaden.

När Julian Assange nu fått politisk asyl i Ecuador förändras rättsläget menar wikileaksgrundarens svenska advokat Per E Samuelsson.

- Åklagarens arresteringsorder kan inte längre verkställas eftersom han har beviljats politisk asyl. Där har läget blivit ett helt nytt. Här kolliderar två rättsregler, Storbritannien är skyldig att transportera honom till Sverige på grund av arresteringsordern **samtidigt är Storbritannien skyldig att respektera Ecuadors beslut.**

Per E Samuelsson tycker att nästa steg borde vara att den svenska åklagaren reser till London och förhör Assange där.

- Åklagaren borde anpassa sig till det nya läge som har uppstått. Min åsikt är att de borde göra det näst bästa, även om de inte får Assange överlämnad så ska de göra det

vi har begärt så många gånger — nämligen åka till London och förhöra honom där. Det måste ligga i allas intresse att den här polisutredningen nu går framåt, låt oss alla åka till London.

Enligt honom har Ecuadors ambassad i London redan tidigare meddelat att de tillåter svenska representanter att komma dit.

Assanges advokat kallar diskussionen om att Assange skulle försöka lämna Storbritannien en "pseudofråga" som inte alls behöver bli aktuell.

– Jag tycker inte att man behöver spekulera i att ambassaden ska invaderas eller att Assange ska hitta på något sätt att transportera sig i bil.

**Per E Samuelsson har fått i uppdrag av Assange att understryka att asylansökan inte var en åtgärd riktad mot Sverige utan mot USA.**

– Han vill inte ta risken att komma till ett polisförhör i Sverige om det sker till priset av att han hamnar i livstids fängelse i USA.

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DN: 2012-08-16

## **Claes Borgström: Plågsam väntan för mina klienter**

Tyvärr har vi fått lära oss att man inte kan förutse vad som händer i det här fallet, säger Claes Borgström, juridiskt ombud för de båda svenskor som i augusti 2010 anmälde Wikileaksgrundaren för sexuella övergrepp.

Borgström konstaterar att asylbeslutet innebär att den långa väntan hans klienter redan fått utstå— två år har passerat sedan anmälan gjordes— ytterligare förlängs.

– De är brottsoffer i detta, men har själva blivit angripna från Wikileaks sida och anklagade för att delta i en konspiration tillsammans med USA och CIA och allt det där, säger Claes Borgström.

Har du själv hunnit tala med dina klienter?

– Ja, och för dem var inte beslutet helt oväntat.

– Självt kan jag bara å deras vägnar beklaga Ecuadors agerande.

Claes Borgström understryker dock att sista ordet inte är sagt:

– Att ge Julian Assange asyl är att missbruka asylinstrumentet. Han ska överlämnas till Sverige och medverka i rättsproceduren— konstigare än så är det inte. **Att han under vägen lyckats dupera en regering är djupt olyckligt.**

• *Kalle Holmberg*

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Graphics created by Somers Bean  
<http://somersebean.blogspot.com.au>

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## **America's Vassal Acts Decisively and Illegally: Former UK Ambassador**

*Craig Murray  
Information Clearing House  
August 16, 2012*

I returned to the UK today to be astonished by private confirmation from within the FCO [Foreign and Commonwealth Office] **that the UK government has indeed decided — after immense pressure from the Obama administration — to enter the Ecuadorean Embassy and seize Julian Assange.**

This will be, beyond any argument, a blatant breach of the Vienna Convention of 1961, to which the UK is one of the original parties and which encodes the centuries — arguably millennia — of practice which have enabled diplomatic relations to function. The Vienna Convention is the most subscribed single international treaty in the world.

**The provisions of the Vienna Convention on the status of diplomatic premises are expressed in deliberately absolute terms. There is no modification or qualification elsewhere in the treaty.**

### Article 22

1. The premises of the mission shall be inviolable. The agents of the receiving State may not enter them, except with the consent of the head of the mission.

2.The receiving State is under a special duty to take all appropriate steps to protect the premises of the mission against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any disturbance of the peace of the mission or impairment of its dignity.

3.The premises of the mission, their furnishings and other property thereon and the means of transport of the mission shall be immune from search, requisition, attachment or execution.

Not even the Chinese government tried to enter the US Embassy to arrest the Chinese dissident Chen Guangchen. **Even during the decades of the Cold War, defectors or dissidents were never seized from each other's embassies.** *Murder in Samarkand* relates in detail my attempts in the British Embassy to help Uzbek dissidents. This terrible breach of international law **will result in British Embassies being subject to raids and harassment worldwide.**

**The government's calculation is that, unlike Ecuador, Britain is a strong enough power to deter such intrusions. This is yet another symptom of the "might is right" principle in international relations, in the era of the neo-conservative abandonment of the idea of the rule of international law.**

The British Government bases its argument on domestic British legislation. But the domestic legislation of a country cannot counter its obligations in international law, unless it chooses to withdraw from them. If the government does not wish to follow the obligations imposed on it by the Vienna Convention, it has the right to resile from it— which would leave British diplomats with no protection worldwide.

I hope to have more information soon on the threats used by the US administration. William Hague had been supporting the move against the concerted advice of his own officials; Ken Clarke has been opposing the move against the advice of his. I gather the decision to act has been taken in Number 10.

There appears to have been no input of any kind from the Liberal Democrats. That opens a wider question— there appears to be no "liberal" impact now in any question of coalition policy. It is amazing how government salaries and privileges and ministerial limousines are worth far more than any belief to these people. **I cannot now conceive how I was a member of that party for over thirty years, deluded into a genuine belief that they had principles.**

• *Craig Murray is an author, broadcaster and human rights activist. He was British Ambassador to Uzbekistan from August 2002 to October 2004 and Rector of the University of Dundee from 2007 to 2010.*

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article32198.htm>

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## Live Blog: UK-Ecuador Standoff Over Asylum for Julian Assange

*Kevin Gosztola  
Firedag Lake  
August 16, 2012*

This morning, after being holed up in Ecuador embassy in London for over fifty days, the WikiLeaks founder and editor-in-chief Julian Assange was granted diplomatic asylum. Ecuador Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino delivered the announcement, which explained the basis for the decision.

The country characterized Assange as “an award-winning communications professional internationally known for his struggle for freedom of expression, press freedom and human rights in general.” He had shared “privileged documents and information generated by various sources that affected employees, countries and organizations with a global audience.” As a result, evidence of retaliation “by the country or countries that produced the information disclosed” could occur that might “endanger his safety, integrity and even his life.”

Ecuador had engaged in diplomatic efforts to ensure there were adequate “safeguards for the protection and safety” for Assange. Countries approached, such as the UK, Sweden and the United States, refused to “facilitate them.” They also decided “legal evidence” showed, if Sweden were to allow Assange to be extradited to the US, he “would be judged by special or military courts,” which would mean he faced a “high probability of suffering cruel and degrading treatment” and could “be sentenced to life imprisonment or capital punishment, which would violate his human rights.”

Certainly, Assange needed to answer to the investigation into sexual allegations against him in Sweden, but **Ecuador had noted the Swedish prosecutor had a “contradictory attitude” that was preventing Assange from exercising his “legitimate right of defense.”** Assange’s “procedural rights” had been infringed upon and, also, Australia had not provided much protection or assistance from infringe-ments of his rights. Britain, Sweden and USA also would not respect international conventions or treaties and would give “priority to domestic law, in violation of explicit rules of universal application.” If taken into custody in Sweden, a chain of events could unfold that would prevent him from being protected from extradition to a “third country.” Therefore, there was evidence and a reasonable basis to grant asylum.

To this, the British government responded, “We will not allow Mr Assange safe passage out of the UK, nor is there any legal basis for us to do so. The UK does not accept the principle of diplomatic asylum. It is far from a universally accepted concept: the United Kingdom is not a party to any legal instruments which require us to recognise the grant of diplomatic asylum by a foreign embassy in this country. Moreover, it is well established that, even for those countries which do recognise diplomatic asylum, it should not be used for the purposes of escaping the regular processes of the courts. And in this case that is clearly what is happening.”

Yet, if there is no legal basis for Ecuador to grant asylum, why was it able to list off sixteen examples of international law in the announcement that it believed gave them authority and, in fact, a duty to respond to Assange’s asylum request in the manner which the country did?

“No one, least of all the Government of Ecuador, should be in any doubt that we are determined to carry out our legal obligation to see Mr Assange extradited to Sweden,” the Foreign Office declared. **“He faces serious charges** in a country with the highest standards of law and where his rights are guaranteed. We believe that should be assurance enough for Ecuador and any supporters of Mr Assange.” But, Assange actually has not been charged. He faces mere allegations. (And, the allegations are not simply an equivalent of charges. If that were true, media organizations would not be correcting stories where they improperly state Assange has been charged with rape.)

Furthermore, Augusto Pinochet, that great Chilean dictator, raped women with dogs and rats. Spain wanted to extradite him. The UK government, citing “mental health reasons” later challenged by Chile, released him from house arrest. Now, the British government wants to make professions about how it must abide by some legal obligation and extradite Julian Assange to Sweden. They now want to claim they would be violating principle by not allowing him safe passage to Ecuador.

The lawyer that sought Pinochet’s extradition? His name was Baltasar Garzon. Now, Garzon, a former Spanish judge, is representing Assange on matters related to his asylum request. He probably knows a bit about the “obligation” a country like the UK has to extradite a person wanted for “serious charges.”

10:08 PM EST AP report on the notion that the Ecuador government granted asylum to show it is “morally superior.” Includes a quote from a US congressman, who is most likely one of many elected keepers of the Washington Consensus that Latin American countries now increasingly challenge:

U.S. Rep. Eliot Engel, a ranking member of the U.S. House’s Western Hemisphere subcommittee, has met Correa several times and believes he understand the wager.

“He’s a very smart guy and this wasn’t done in a vacuum,” Engel, a New York Democrat, said. **“The reason is to kind of be the head of the poke-the-United States-in-the-eye group.”**

He was referring to the alliance that includes Cuba, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Argentina and President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, whose longevity is in question after a bout with cancer.

10:00 PM EST Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) takes advantage of the announcement to highlight the state of press freedom in Ecuador. Human rights advocates have suggested it is ironic that Assange would seek asylum in Ecuador.

8:20 PM EST Former British ambassador to Libya Oliver Miles asks, “Do Assange and the Ecuadoreans have the stomach for 15 years of co-habitation?” He also declares, “I expect the outcome to be that the Ecuadoreans will hand over or be closed down.”

7:45 PM EST Joshua Keating of Foreign Policy has a post on “how WikiLeaks blew it.” It includes standard issues raised to condemn the organization: WikiLeaks is “anti-American,” Assange had a program on Russia Today, Ecuador is anti-press freedom,

etc. Then there are a few criticisms that are much closer to being truly problematic, such as the suggestion that it has hyped the release of Stratfor emails and “Syria Files.” Then, there’s the well-known issue many have that WikiLeaks is now all about that “crazy white-haired Aussie,” Julian Assange.

Keating calls what the world has witnessed the fall of an “empire of secrets.” When examined more closely, although rational, it is a greatest hits collection of all the things that ever bothered pundits or commentators. It entirely overlooks any examination of how the targeting of WikiLeaks by the US might have played a role in the decline of WikiLeaks.

7:40 PM EST The Scotsman has a timeline on Julian Assange’s struggle to escape “US justice.”

7:26 PM EST In Case You Missed It: Earlier, as The Guardian reports in its coverage of the standoff, “The lawyer of two Swedish women who made allegations of sexual assault against Assange denounced Ecuador’s move as ‘absurd.’ Claes Borgstrom told reporters that the move was an abuse of the asylum instrument, the purpose of which is to protect people from persecution and torture if sent back to one’s country of origin. ‘He doesn’t risk being handed over to the United States for torture or the death penalty. He should be brought to justice in Sweden,’ she said.”

7:15 PM EST Tom Hayden writes on the “geopolitics of asylum” for The Nation. ...Any policy of isolating Assange may have failed now, as the conflict becomes one in which Ecuador—and a newly independent Latin America—stand off against the US and UK. Ecuador’s president Rafael Correa represents the wave of new nationalist leaders on the continent who have challenged the traditional US dominance over trade, security and regional decision-making. Correa joined the Venezuelan-founded Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas in June 2009, and closed the US military base in Ecuador in September 2009. His government fined Chevron for \$8.6 billion for damages to the Amazon rainforest, in a case which Correa called “the most important in the history of the country.” He survived a coup attempt in 2010.

It is very unlikely that Correa would make his asylum decision without consulting other governments in Latin America. An aggressive reaction by the British, carrying echoes of the colonial past, is likely to solidify Latin American ranks behind Quito, making Assange another irritant in relations with the United States...

6:30 PM EST There is a factual error circulating. I’ve made this error as well. The Ecuador government granted Assange diplomatic asylum, not political asylum. The difference is described here in an AP story:

Significantly, Ecuador did not grant political but rather diplomatic asylum to Assange.

“Political asylum would imply that Great Britain is persecuting him or threatens to persecute him,” said Robert Sloane, international law professor at Boston University. By granting diplomatic asylum, Ecuador is keeping the door open to political negotiations. Sloane said that the type of asylum does not confer any diplomatic status or special privileges on Assange.

At this moment, both the New York Times and Washington Post are just two of the numerous media outlets reporting that Assange was granted “political asylum.” That misrepresents the situation and makes it seem like the UK might be incorrect when they talk about not recognizing “diplomatic asylum.”

6:20 PM EST From State Department spokesperson Victoria Nuland:

QUESTION: All right. And then just back to the Assange thing, the reason that the Ecuadorians gave— have given him asylum is because they say that they agree with his claim that he would be— could face persecution, government persecution, if for any reason he was to come to the United States under whatever circumstances. Do you find that that’s a credible argument? Does anyone face unwarranted or illegal government persecution in the United States?

MS. NULAND: No.

QUESTION: No?

MS. NULAND: No.

QUESTION: And so you think that the grounds that— in this specific case, the grounds for him receiving asylum from any country or any country granting asylum to anyone on that basis that if they happen to show up in the United States they might be subject to government persecution, you don’t—

MS. NULAND: I’m not going to comment on the Ecuadorian thought process here. If you’re asking me whether there was any intention to persecute **rather than prosecute**, the answer is no. Okay?

**QUESTION: Okay. Well, wait. Well, hold on a second. So you’re saying that he would face prosecution?**

**MS. NULAND: Again, I’m not— we were in a situation where he was not headed to the United States; he was headed elsewhere.**

QUESTION: Right.

MS. NULAND: So I’m not going to get into all of the legal ins and outs about what may or may not have been in his future before he chose to take refuge in the Ecuadorian mission. But with regard to the charge that the U.S. was intent on persecuting him, I reject that completely.

*The State Department would reject that. Assange released an entire cache of diplomatic cables that sent the department into a panic. Of course, the spokesperson rejects the idea that Assange might face persecution. Anything planned for Assange would be prosecution and justified. — K.G.*

QUESTION: Do you have any thoughts at all on the decision by Ecuador to grant diplomatic asylum to Mr. Assange?

MS. NULAND: This is an issue between the Ecuadorans, the Brits, the Swedes. I don't have anything particular to add.

*What she really means is the US government has nothing the government wants to add. Ecuador sent questions to US on any possible case against Assange and did not receive satisfactory answers. So, it is not true that this whole affair is limited to the "Ecuadorans," Brits and Swedes. — K.G.*

QUESTION: You don't have any interest at all in this case other than as of a completely neutral, independent observer of it?

MS. NULAND: Well, certainly with regard to this particular issue, it is an issue among the countries involved, and we are not planning to interject ourselves.

QUESTION: But Assange (inaudible).

QUESTION: Have you not interjected yourselves at all?

MS. NULAND: Not with regard to the issue of his current location or where he may end up going, no.

*Mostly true. They do not want to get involved because it could become an issue if the ongoing criminal investigation into WikiLeaks ever led to a need to extradite Assange. — K.G.*

QUESTION: Well, there has been some suggestion that the U.S. is pushing the Brits to go into the Ecuadorian Embassy and remove him.

MS. NULAND: I have no information to indicate that there is any truth to that at all.

*She has no information to share with us. Might as well have said "can neither confirm nor deny." — K.G.*

QUESTION: Does— and the Brits— Foreign Secretary Hague said that the Brits do not recognize diplomatic asylum. I'm wondering if the United States recognizes diplomatic asylum given that it is a signatory to this 1954 OAS treaty which grants or which recognizes diplomatic asylum, but only presumably within the membership of the OAS. But more broadly, does the U.S. recognize diplomatic asylum as a legal thing under international law?

MS. NULAND: Well, if you're asking me for a global legal answer to the question, I'll have to take it and consult 4,000 lawyers, but—

QUESTION: Contrasting it with political asylum, this is different— diplomatic asylum.

MS. NULAND: With regard to the decision that the Brits are making or the statement that they made, our understanding was that they were leaning on British law in the assertions that they made with regard to future plans, not on international law. But if you're asking me to check what our legal position is on this term of art, I'll have to take it, Matt, and get back to you.

QUESTION: Yeah, just whether you recognize it outside of the confines of the OAS and those signatories. And then when you said that you don't have any information to suggest that you have weighed in with the Brits about whether to have Mr. Assange removed from the Embassy, does that mean that there hasn't been any, or just that you're not aware of it?

MS. NULAND: My information is that we have not involved ourselves in this. If that is not correct, we'll get back to you.

*This distinction the British government is making between "political asylum" and "diplomatic asylum" is artful. It is being reported by all media as "political asylum." That is what Assange applied for, but British officials keep saying the asylum is "diplomatic," not "political." It's all a crafty way of casting what Ecuador announced today. — K.G.*

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## The Assange Witch Hunt

Annie Machom  
August 16, 2012

A storm of diplomatic sound and fury has broken over Ecuador's decision to grant political asylum to Wikileaks founder, Julian Assange. The UK government has threatened to breach all diplomatic protocol and international law and go into the embassy to arrest Assange.

The UK justifies this by citing the 1987 Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act, a law apparently put in place following the 1984 shooting of WPC Yvonne Fletcher from the Libyan Embassy in London. The murder resulted in an 11-day siege, and the embassy staff eventually being expelled from the country. Nobody has yet been brought to justice for this murder.

It is hard to equate the gravity of the crime that brought about the 1987 legislation — the murder of a policewoman — with Assange's situation. Despite the screaming headlines, let us not forget that he is merely wanted for questioning in Sweden. Nevertheless, the UK is prepared to overturn all diplomatic protocol and create a dangerous international precedent to "get their man", despite there being a clear lack of justification under the terms of the '87 Act.

**Many people in the western media remain puzzled about Assange's fear of being held captive in the Swedish legal system. But can we really trust Swedish justice when it has been flagrantly politicised and manipulated in the Assange case, as has been repeatedly well documented. Indeed, the Swedish justice system has the highest rate per capita of cases taken to the ECtHR for flouting Article 6 — the right to a fair trial.**

If Assange were extradited merely for questioning by police — he has yet to be even charged with any crime in Sweden — **there is a strong risk that the Swedes will just shove him straight on the next plane to the US under the legal terms of a "temporary**



**surrender**". And in the US, a secret Grand Jury has been convened in Virginia to find a law — any law — with which to prosecute Assange. Hell, if the Yanks can't find an existing law, they will probably write a new one just for him.

So why all the sound and fury? What is this really all about?

Wikileaks is a groundbreaking new form of hightech, award-winning journalism that has exposed corrupt practices across the world over the years. And crucially, in this war-torn, weary and financially broken world, it offers a secure conduit to whistleblowers who want to expose institutional crime and corruption for the public good.

Whistleblowers want to get their information out there, they want to make a difference, they want a fair hearing, and they don't want to pay too high a personal price for doing so. Is that too much to ask?

By going public about serious concerns they have about their workplace, they are jeopardising their whole way of life: not just their professional reputation and career, but all that goes with it, such as the ability to pay the mortgage, their social circle, their family life, their relationship... Plus, the whistleblower can potentially risk prison or worse.

So, with these risks in mind, they are certainly looking for an avenue to blow the whistle that will offer a degree of protection and allow them to retain a degree of control over their own lives. In the old days, this meant trying to identify an honourable, campaigning journalist and a media organisation that had the clout to protect its source. While not impossible, that could certainly be difficult, and becomes increasingly so in this era of endemic electronic surveillance.

Today the other option is a secure, high-tech publishing conduit such as Wikileaks. This provides anonymity and a certain degree of control to the modern whistleblower, plus it allows their information to reach a wide audience without either being filtered by the media or blocked by government or corporate injunctions.

As someone who has a nodding acquaintance with the repercussions of blowing the whistle on a secret government agency, I have long seen the value of the Wikileaks model — and I also understand quite why governments feel so threatened by it. After all, no government or mega-corporation wants freedom of information and transparency forced upon it, nor an informed citizenry questioning its actions.

Our governments like to spout the phrase "if you have done nothing wrong, you have nothing to hide" as they roll out yet another intrusive surveillance measure.

Wikileaks has turned that right back at them — hence this modern-day witchhunt.

[http://anniemachon.ch/annie\\_machon/2012/08/the-assange-witch-hunt.html](http://anniemachon.ch/annie_machon/2012/08/the-assange-witch-hunt.html)

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## Ecuador Grants Asylum to Assange, Defying Britain

WILLIAM NEUMAN and MAGGY AYALA  
*N.Y. Times*  
August 16, 2012

CARACAS, Venezuela — Ecuador said on Thursday that it had decided to grant political asylum to Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks. Mr. Assange has been holed up for two months in the Ecuadorean embassy in London, where the police scuffled with and arrested some of his supporters on Thursday.

The announcement was made by the Ecuadorean foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, at a news conference in Quito, where the government set a defiant tone over pressure from Britain. Just before the announcement, President Rafael Correa said: “No one is going to terrorize us!”

Mr. Patiño said he hoped Britain would permit Mr. Assange to leave the embassy in London for Ecuador — a request Britain has rejected, saying it has a legal obligation to extradite Mr. Assange to Sweden, where he is wanted to face questioning about allegations of sexual misbehavior.

The minister said his government had taken the decision after the authorities in Britain, Sweden and the United States had refused to give guarantees that, if Mr. Assange were extradited to Sweden, he would not then be sent on to America to face other charges.

The British Foreign Office said it was disappointed by the Ecuadorean announcement but remained committed to a negotiated outcome to the standoff.

Those close to Mr. Assange have said one reason he does not want to be sent to Sweden is that he fears being charged with crimes in the United States for the release in 2010 of thousands of secret documents and diplomatic cables relating to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as to American relations with other governments.

An Ecuadorean official said late Wednesday that the British government had made it clear it would not allow Mr. Assange to leave the country to travel to Ecuador, so even with a grant of asylum or similar protection, he would probably remain stuck in the embassy.

In advance of the announcement from Quito, supporters of Mr. Assange gathered outside the embassy in London on Thursday, refusing police orders to move across the road until officers bundled three of them into police vans and arrested them.

On Wednesday, Mr. Patiño, the foreign minister, said that the British authorities had threatened to barge into the country’s embassy in London if officials did not hand over Mr. Assange. “Today we have received from the United Kingdom an explicit threat in writing that they could assault our embassy in London if Ecuador does not hand over Julian Assange,” Mr. Patiño said at a news conference in Quito, adding defiantly, “We are not a British colony.”

Mr. Assange arrived at the embassy on June 19, seeking to avoid extradition to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning over accusations that he sexually assaulted two women.

The embassy is in a modest apartment in a redbrick block just behind the Harrods department store in the upscale Knightsbridge neighborhood.

Mr. Assange, said Jérémie Zimmerman, a friend who has spoken with him recently, has found the narrowing of his horizons hard. "It is quite difficult not to be able to get out in the street for all this time," he said. "He lived for so many years free, without even a home to limit him. And now he is isolated."

The WikiLeaks founder sleeps on an air mattress in a small office that has been converted to a bedroom, according to accounts of those who have visited him. He has access to a computer and continues to oversee WikiLeaks, his lieutenants have said. Reporters outside the building have seen food being delivered from nearby restaurants.

His presence is a challenge for employees of the embassy. One British government official, citing a conversation with a member of the embassy staff, said that the situation was surreal.

**Mr. Assange, who previously lived a nomadic existence staying in the homes of friends, has developed a reputation as a unique houseguest.** Daniel Domscheit-Berg, who ran WikiLeaks with Mr. Assange until the two had a falling-out in 2010, accused Mr. Assange in a memoir of staying for several months, uninvited, and of abusing his cat.

**In an interview with The New York Times in early 2011, Mr. Domscheit-Berg added that Mr. Assange had refused to flush the toilet during his entire stay.** Mr. Assange has countered that Mr. Domscheit-Berg, and others who have given personal accounts along these lines, are motivated by malice.

A diplomat familiar with Mr. Assange's situation said that he spent his time in a back room, which gets no direct sunlight. Several weeks ago he had a bad cold and appeared depressed, the source said.

"He can't get outside to see the sun," his mother, Christine Assange, said in a recent interview conducted in Quito for BBC Mundo, a BBC Web site. "I'm worried about his health, as I would be for anybody who is having to stay indoors and not get exercise and have sunlight."

She said some of Mr. Assange's friends have encouraged him to put on music and dance as a way of getting physical activity and that they had also brought sunlamps.

Under diplomatic protocol, Mr. Assange was thought to be off limits while in the embassy. But the BBC reported Wednesday that British officials had raised the notion of revoking the diplomatic immunity of the Ecuadorean Embassy, allowing British officials to enter.

A spokeswoman for Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office declined to make the government's correspondence with the Ecuadoreans public. But in a statement, the Foreign Office said it had consistently made its position clear in discussions.

"The U.K. has a legal obligation to extradite Mr. Assange to Sweden to face questioning over allegations of sexual offenses, and we remain determined to fulfill this

obligation," the statement said. British officials have "drawn the Ecuadoreans' attention to relevant provisions of our law," the statement said, but the government is "still committed to reaching a mutually acceptable solution."

Although WikiLeaks has shrunk substantially during the 20 months of Mr. Assange's legal battle in Britain, losing many of its most skilled computer experts along with several of Mr. Assange's closest associates in building the organization, it has continued to issue statements about his plight *[not to mention, apparently, all the new material that it has released --A.B.]*.

On Thursday, ahead of the Ecuadorean decision, it issued a new, unsigned statement describing Britain's warning that it might suspend the embassy's immunity as part of an action to arrest Mr. Assange as a "resort to intimidation" and a breach of the Vienna Convention governing diplomatic relations between states.

"We remind the public that these extraordinary actions are being taken to detain a man who has not been charged with any crime in any country," the statement said. It added: "We further urge the U.K. government to show restraint, and to consider the dire ramifications of any violation of the elementary norms of international law."

It struck many as odd that Mr. Assange, who shot to fame as a fighter for media freedom, chose Ecuador as a potential refuge. Mr. Correa has presided over a crackdown on journalists there *[nonsense --A.B.]*.

But when Mr. Assange arrived at the embassy, he issued a statement saying that Mr. Correa had invited him to seek asylum in Ecuador during an interview for Mr. Assange's TV show on Russia Today, an English-language cable channel financed by the government of Vladimir V. Putin *[as the BBC is financed by the government of David Cameron; also, the programme is independently produced --A.B.]*.

<http://pastehtml.com/view/c8fh3hjiw.html>

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## **"Back Off": Assange Attorney Michael Ratner Urges U.K., U.S. to Respect Asylum Decision, Int'l Law**

*Democracy Now!*  
16 Aug. 2012

AMY GOODMAN: We're going to go back to Phoenix in a moment to speak with Javier Sicilia, the Mexican poet, but right now we're going to turn directly back to Michael Ratner, president emeritus of the Center for Constitutional Rights, legal adviser to Julian Assange and WikiLeaks. The news conference, as it continues, the foreign affairs minister of Ecuador has announced that Julian Assange has been granted asylum by Ecuador. Michael Ratner, if you can talk about the significance of this? Again, Julian Assange now in the Ecuadorean embassy in London, he has been granted asylum by the country of Ecuador. What does this mean?

MICHAEL RATNER: Well, Amy, personally, first of all, I'm just—I'm really thrilled and moved. I mean, Julian Assange has been under such incredible pressure, with the

threats to go in and get him, with prosecutions by the U.S., etc., that this is an incredibly courageous move by Ecuador. I mean, you have to think about it. Julian Assange, in doing what he and WikiLeaks did, stood up to the great powers of the world. And now you see Ecuador, again, standing up to the great powers. And so it's an amazing act, really, and we should just applaud and support Ecuador for doing what was legally required here, which is to give Julian Assange asylum for his role as a journalist and a publisher of WikiLeaks.

What does it mean? Well, what it means is, first of all, is the British ought to just back off, and the U.S. ought to just back off. He has a legal right to asylum under the refugee convention. Under the U.N. declarations, there cannot be any adverse consequences for countries granting asylum. It's considered a humanitarian act. And for the British to say that they're going to go into the embassy and get out someone who's been granted asylum would turn the refugee convention and asylum completely on its head. It's unheard of. **As far as I know, it's never been done before that you've gone into an embassy to pull out someone granted asylum. The British are only doing this as bullies— bullies most likely for the United States.**

What it also means to me is, once he's been given asylum, which is this great moment, really— I mean, it's just a long road still to get Julian Assange his freedom and to get the right to publish again without adverse consequences, but it's a great moment. He also, in my view, has a right to leave that embassy, get on a plane and go to Ecuador. Will the British ever honor that, with the kinds of threats they're making against Julian Assange? I doubt it right now. But that's pretty— that's the law, to me. You're given asylum. The British can't pick him up and then send him to a country where he will then be persecuted. And that's what the road is. He'll be going to Sweden, if they pick him up, and then to the United States. And it's as if you're sending someone back into the hands of those who are persecuting him. They can't do it, and they should not only back off the embassy, they should ensure that he is allowed free passage out of the United Kingdom.

AMY GOODMAN: Michael Ratner, when—if someone who's granted political asylum, as Julian Assange now has, if he got into a car to go to the airport, what is that territory considered, the actual car?

MICHAEL RATNER: You know, I think that's an open question at this point. I think it should still be considered under the diplomatic protection of the Ecuadorean embassy. I think there's enough law to say that. But the additional point here is the one I'm making, is once you've been given asylum, it's not like you can be then picked up by a country and sent into the hands of your persecutor. Whether it's in the car, whether it's on the streets, wherever you are, it's illegal to do so. And it's illegal for the British to go into that embassy. It's illegal for them to stop Julian Assange trying to get to Ecuador. Whether a bully of a country like the U.K., with the U.S. behind it, will listen and understand and adhere to what the law is, at this point, is not clear, considering the saber rattling and what I would call the gunboat diplomacy, if you want to even call it diplomacy, but the gunboat, that the British are essentially using against Julian Assange and Ecuador.

AMY GOODMAN: You know, we were just talking about death squads in El Salvador. Actually, in 1980, when the archbishop of— the archbishop El Salvador was killed in El Salvador, Óscar Romero, just a few months before, January 31st, 1980, in Guatemala, Rigoberta Menchú, the Nobel Peace Prize winner's father, Vicente Menchú, had taken refuge in the Spanish embassy in Guatemala City, and he and many others were killed as the Guatemalan forces burned the Spanish embassy to the ground. Michael Ratner?

MICHAEL RATNER: Yeah, Amy, I'm familiar with that, as you are, and it's an incredible— what it says is the kinds of governments that do what the British are doing are basically inhuman and have blood stains on them for generations for doing this. Blood stains for generations. So the— if the British are acting like that, then they're essentially acting— is the equivalent of what the Guatemalans did to Rigoberta Menchú's father.

AMY GOODMAN: So, right now, this is actual political asylum. He stays in the London embassy. What about Sweden's demands that he be extradited? And what does this mean for him now? He's been there for several months, Michael Ratner.

MICHAEL RATNER: Well, first of all, this— it's an incredible plus for Julian Assange and WikiLeaks and for the work they doing— work they're doing. It shows that, under political asylum, that being a truth teller, being a publisher of truth, is something that is protected by fundamental international law, and particularly the refugee convention. So on its first level, it just really gives an imprimatur of positiveness to what WikiLeaks has done over the last couple of years. Very important.

The second thing it does is it really makes Julian Assange into an internationally protected person, telling the world, "Leave your hands off him. You can't take him into Sweden and then push him into the United States," where the Ecuadorean government has essentially found, and found— really dramatically found— that he will not receive a fair trial in the United States, that if he— that he will be treated like Manning has been treated. He will be treated really like the Guantánamo detainees have been treated. He will be treated under a system that is—that, to the extent it ever offered a fair trial, certainly doesn't offer it anymore. That's an incredible indictment of the United States. But Ecuador is saying, "Julian Assange is now a protected person under international law. You cannot come into our embassy and get him." And, in fact, he has the right to leave that embassy and go to Ecuador.

Let's just see how this plays out, because, of course, Ecuador is a small country. It has just stood up— and we should understand that— it has just stood up to the most powerful countries in the world, the U.K. and the United States. Let's hope that the rule of law, that the understanding of what the asylum convention meant in 1951, what asylum means today, will be adhered to by the British.

AMY GOODMAN: Michael Ratner, the significance of Baltasar Garzón becoming one of the attorneys for Julian Assange, the well-known Spanish judge and prosecutor, who was consulting with the Ecuadorean government in Quito? What about his presence as part of your team?

MICHAEL RATNER: Well, he— a part of our team would be an understatement, Amy. Baltasar Garzón really is the head of the team and the one that is really— has the ability and the political ability to move in area— in Latin America and around the world to be able to negotiate and think politically what the next steps are for Julian Assange.

But what's really interesting about Baltasar Garzón's case is how similar what happened to him are related to what's happened to Julian Assange. **Baltasar Garzón lost his job as a judge in Spain because he wanted to be a truth teller, open up the 140,000 disappeared in the Spanish Civil War in the '30s. And the conservatives, the Falange, the right wing in Spain, didn't want him to do that, and they then came up with excuses to knock— to get him tried and get him knocked off the bench.** He's a truth teller in the same way that Julian Assange and WikiLeaks are truth tellers. So, in a

certain way, Julian Assange and Baltasar Garzón are joined at the hip. Baltasar Garzón, in my work with him on this case, he has been extraordinary, incredibly supportive, doing everything he can to ensure that Julian Assange will get the asylum— will get asylum— will get asylum and that he will be protected. And he understands the diplomacy of it.

AMY GOODMAN: Well, Michael Ratner, I want to thank you very much for being with us, president emeritus of the Center for Constitutional Rights, legal adviser to Julian Assange and WikiLeaks. I know you're getting calls from around the world. Again, the announcement: Ecuador has granted political asylum to Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder. He's in the embassy right now in London, where he can stay. Ecuador has agreed he can stay, but the British government, the authorities— through the night, the question was, would they raid the embassy? And that continues to be a question. Of course, we'll continue to cover this situation. Final words, Michael, as we leave you to deal with the world's media trying to find out the latest analysis on what's taking place.

MICHAEL RATNER: Well, it's an incredibly moving and important day for Julian Assange. I mean, we have been sitting here, waiting and waiting and hoping, hoping for this moment for Julian, for WikiLeaks, for a free press. And so, it's incredibly important. And now our— for all of us, is supporting Ecuador's decision to give Julian Assange asylum and to push back the British and U.S., who want to try and extract him and put him on trial as a scapegoat for their own crimes. Incredibly important day and moving day for Julian Assange, WikiLeaks and free press.

AMY GOODMAN: Michael Ratner, thanks so much for joining us. We're going to go to break. When we come back, we go back to Phoenix, because there is a caravan going across the country to challenge the war on drugs, led by Mexican poet Javier Sicilia, who—he will be in the interview seat. Stay with us.

[http://www.democracynow.org/2012/8/16/back\\_off\\_assange\\_attorney\\_michael\\_ratner](http://www.democracynow.org/2012/8/16/back_off_assange_attorney_michael_ratner)

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## **Ecuadoreans back Rafael Correa's decision to offer Julian Assange asylum**

*Majority back controversial move, but some are concerned over the ramifications for trade deals with the EU and US*

*Irene Caselli  
The Guardian  
16 August 2012*

While Ecuador might be surprised by the UK's reaction over the Ecuadorean embassy situation in London, it is one that is likely to be used politically by president Rafael Correa, who is likely to run for election again next February. *[So, there's nothing wrong with the UK's "reaction"? --A.B.]*

Earlier this year, Correa [*among others --A.B.*] boycotted the Summit of the Americas, a meeting of heads of state from across the Americas, because of the refusal by the United States and Canada to allow a declaration of support for Argentina's claim to the Falkland Islands. He called the United Kingdom a colonial power and also suggested imposing sanctions against the country for not wanting to negotiate with Argentina over the islands.

On Thursday, foreign affairs minister Ricardo Patiño said the UK's reaction amounted to a strong threat: "It is basically saying, 'We are going to beat you savagely if you don't behave ... but if you behave, we may not beat you savagely,'" he said.

Patiño has been foreign affairs minister since 2010. He represents one of the hardliners within Correa's government, who is pushing for a Venezuela-like line. Patiño was involved in a scandal at the beginning of Correa's administration in 2007, and had to resign from his post as finance and economy minister at the time. Some videos showed him meeting investment bankers discussing how the bankers and Ecuador could profit from threatening to default on debt— a decision that Ecuador took in 2008. [*Therefore, the asylum decision must be corrupt? --A.B.*]

Since Correa came to power, Ecuador has become an increasingly polarised country [*as opposed to some preceding condition of harmony? --A.B.*] and this is reflected in the reaction to the decision. For many supporters of Correa, granting Assange asylum was positive and gave the government strength vis-a-vis foreign governments.

"This is the decision of a country that does not ask for permission to the Brits to react, of a country that does not care about fear or intimidation that the foreigners are trying to impose on us about this decision," Rosanna Alvarado, a congresswoman from Correa's party, told state-run paper El Ciudadano.

Some hardliners protested outside the UK embassy in Quito on Wednesday night and many cheered outside the foreign affairs ministry when Patiño made the announcement.

Even people that are somewhat critical of Correa were in favour of Ecuador's position. [*Are they also "hardliners"? --A.B.*] "The United Kingdom and other developed countries don't usually allow small countries like Ecuador to challenge their decisions," said Marcelo Román from his home in northern Quito. "Ecuador's decision is a sovereign decision and foreign governments have to respect it."

Román said that even if Correa uses the situation to garner more political support at home, it is important for Ecuador to assert itself internationally.

But others in the country are worried. Business people are worried about the possible reaction that could come from the United States in light of a trade agreement that is up for renewal between the two countries.

Bernardo Acosta, professor of economics at Quito's San Francisco University and former vice-president of the Ecuadorean Chamber of Industries, said this decision might affect Ecuador's trade relations with both the European Union and the United States. Ecuador is currently negotiating a new agreement with the EU and a trade pact with the US is also up for review.



**Ecuador's main exports are oil, shrimp and bananas and the US and the EU are Ecuador's main trade partners.**

"This might be the last straw," said Acosta. "Ecuador is a small country with a small internal market and it needs a strong export policy. But such decisions can lead to more isolation and close off more markets," he told the Guardian.

There are also worries within diplomatic corps. There has been a spat between Correa's political appointees and career diplomats within the foreign affairs ministry. The latter feel that Patiño is pushing a political line without taking into account the rules of diplomacy.

In an editorial for El Comercio newspaper, former foreign affairs minister and former head of the UN High Commission for Human Rights, José Ayala Lasso, said there would be "political effects" if Ecuador were to grant Assange asylum.

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## **Julian Assange: from Stockholm to Knightsbridge — and then Ecuador?**

*Media and police surround embassy in west London as both Britain and Sweden protest at asylum decision*

*Rajeev Syal and Lizzy Davies  
The Guardian  
16 August 2012*

Beneath a whirl of police helicopters, freedom of information campaigners and the world's media gathered around Ecuador's embassy in Knightsbridge on Thursday to watch the next extraordinary scenes from Julian Assange's life unfold.

The 41-year-old founder of WikiLeaks, whose notoriety and ability [???] to polarise rarely fails to draw a crowd, was waiting to hear whether he would be granted asylum. He had already spent 54 days in the building as he sought to avoid extradition to Sweden to face questioning over allegations of sexual misconduct.

His supporters had claimed that any such move could result in him facing a further trial in the United States, and maybe the death penalty, for releasing thousands of damaging internal government documents via his campaigning website.

The decision to grant him asylum came in a televised address by Ricardo Patiño, the foreign minister, who supports Assange's fears of political persecution, and was greeted with cheers.

"Asylum is a fundamental human right," Patiño said. "The Ecuadorean government is defending its right to protect Assange and we have decided to grant him political asylum."

Assange, quick to spot an opportunity for drama, emerged from his room for the first time in weeks to thank officials and journalists, before adding: "Things will get more stressful now."

Ecuador's decision leaves the country at loggerheads not just with Britain— which has threatened to revoke the embassy's diplomatic status and raid the building— but with Sweden, which summoned the Latin American state's ambassador in protest.

The story began in August 2010, at a time when Assange was beginning to be seen as an important player by activists campaigning for greater freedom of information. His WikiLeaks website was yet to release 251,000 diplomatic cables, which were later printed in a select few media outlets, including the Guardian.

However, he had already been responsible for disclosing footage of airstrikes on citizens in Baghdad and was being lauded as a major figure in international journalism.

On 11 August 2010, Assange arrived in Sweden on a speaking trip partly arranged by "Miss A", a member of a political party. He had never met her before, but had arranged that he would stay in her apartment while she was out of town. Days later, they reportedly had sex.

Three days later and still in Sweden, Assange met another woman, "Miss W", at another seminar. Again, he went back to her home and again, they are said to have had sex.

The two women then made contact and discussed aspects of the encounter. Both women reportedly said that what started as consensual sex became non-consensual [*incorrect --A.B.*] and that Assange had deceived them about the use of condoms.

On 20 August 2010, Sweden issued an arrest warrant for Assange. Karin Rosander, head of communications for the prosecutor's office, said there were two separate allegations— one of rape and one of molestation.

Campaigners for Assange claimed that there was a possibility of a bigger conspiracy at work. One message on the WikiLeaks Twitter feed said the group had been warned to expect "dirty tricks"— an allegation that lawyers for the two women say is offensive and wrong.

Soon afterwards, the arrest warrant was temporarily withdrawn, prompting an appeal by lawyers for the two women. In September, the case was reopened, prompting further claims of conspiracy by Assange's supporters.

The same month, the Stockholm district court approved a request to detain Assange for questioning on suspicion of rape, sexual molestation and unlawful coercion. Assange's British lawyer, Mark Stephens, said his client offered to be interviewed at the Swedish embassy in London or at Scotland Yard or via video, but that the offer had not been taken up.

Two months later, police issued an international arrest warrant for Assange; Interpol soon issued a "red notice" for his detention. Assange was forced to give himself up to police in London and was remanded in custody.

Following the publication of the diplomatic cables in November 2010, Assange's cause attracted high-profile supporters willing to pay for his defence and bail. Socialite

Jemima Khan, film director Ken Loach and publisher Felix Dennis posted bail totalling £200,000 to Westminster magistrates court, with a further £40,000 as promised sureties, to secure the WikiLeaks' founder's freedom when he first faced extradition proceedings in 2010.

In February 2011, a UK judge ruled that Assange should return to Sweden.

Assange's team fought the ruling through successive courts until this June this year when the supreme court dismissed Assange's bid to reopen his appeal against extradition, branding it "without merit".

The following week, Assange surprised and angered many of his former supporters by walking into the Ecuadorean embassy and applying for political asylum in breach of his bail conditions.

Khan, who had given £20,000 towards his bail, said on Twitter that the women deserved a response to their allegations.

"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," she wrote. *[She also wrote that she understood Assange's decision, then strongly criticized the sort of distortion-by-omission demonstrated here and unfortunately typical of The Guardian's reporting on the case. --A.B.]*

Ecuadorean officials say its government has been engaged in ongoing discussions in Quito and London with the British government over Assange's fate since he entered their embassy. They claim they have sought assurances that he will not be handed over to the US by Sweden or Britain— assurances which have not been given.

On Wednesday, they claim that the British government issued a threat to enter the Ecuadorean embassy to arrest Assange. The Foreign Office says it reminded Ecuador that it has the power to revoke the diplomatic immunity of an embassy on UK soil and says Britain has a legal obligation to extradite him.

The decision to grant asylum is unlikely to end the stand-off over his future as Assange, having breached the terms of his bail, faces arrest as soon as he steps outside the embassy premises.

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PRESS RELEASE

August 16, 2012

Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR)

press@ccrjustice.org

## **CCR Attorneys Applaud Ecuador's Decision to Grant Asylum to Julian Assange**

WASHINGTON - Today, in response to Ecuador's decision to grant political asylum to Wikileaks founder Julian Assange, Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) Executive Director Vincent Warren issued the following statement:

“We applaud Ecuador for granting asylum to Julian Assange. Ecuador’s action rightly offers protection to a journalist and publisher who faces persecution from the U.S. It thereby strengthens the global commitment to human rights, including government accountability and freedom of the press. We hope that Assange’s contributions to a robust democratic society are belatedly recognized by the U.S., which prides itself in its commitment to a free press.

“Granting asylum is a humanitarian act and the UN General Assembly has unanimously declared that it should not be construed as unfriendly by other countries. The U.S., Sweden and the U.K. have adopted and reiterated this very principle many times. It is imperative, therefore, that no diplomatic consequences should befall Ecuador over this decision.

“We are deeply troubled by the reported U.K. threats to storm the Ecuadoran Embassy and arrest Assange, in clear violation of the Vienna Convention’s protection of the inviolability of sovereign embassy properties, and by the menacing police presence outside the embassy. We call on the British government to explicitly and immediately confirm that it will honor international and diplomatic commitments.”

*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.*

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## **After this, Julian Assange has very few friends left in Sweden**

*Assange’s flight from Sweden, a decent democracy, into the arms of Ecuador’s megalomaniac president is incomprehensible*

*Karin Olsson  
The Guardian  
16 August 2012*

Julian Assange's circus has pulled off another breathtaking stunt: he has won political asylum in Ecuador. Assange's flight from Sweden, a decent democracy with a largely excellent justice system, takes ever more absurd forms. After the decision of Ecuador's foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, the Swedish Twitterverse filled with mocking jokes.

Assange has few fans left here. On the contrary, his unholy alliance with Ecuador's political leadership casts a shadow over what was, despite everything, his real achievement: to reveal shattering news through the revolutionary medium of WikiLeaks.

Patiño praised Assange as a fighter for free expression, and explained that they had to protect his human rights. But Ecuador is a country with a dreadful record when it comes to freedom of expression and of the press. Inconvenient journalists are put on trial. Private media companies may not operate freely.

President Rafael Correa is patently unable to tolerate any truths that he does not own. Reporters Without Borders has strongly and often criticised the way that media freedoms are limited in Ecuador. Assange is a plaything for the president's megalomania.

Most of the women in Sweden who dare to report experiences of sexual assault to the police, despite the exposure that this brings, will find that the case is dropped because it is her word against his, and the other evidence is slight or non-existent. That is quite probably what would happen in this case, if Assange only dared come to Sweden for questioning. There is no reason to believe the fantastic conspiracy theories which say that the women's accusations are just a way to get at Assange.

The press chief of the Swedish foreign ministry said on Thursday that the fear of Ecuador's foreign minister that Assange would be sent on to the US by the Swedes, and even be executed, are utterly groundless. Both Swedish law and Sweden's obligations under the European convention on human rights mean Assange could not be extradited to the US if he were wanted for a crime which might lead to the death penalty.

There is a Swedish extradition treaty with the US, but the process of extradition is long and very complicated. So far there is not even a charge against Assange in the US, which would be the first step in the process. We don't even know that the American justice system wants to try Assange.

Ironically enough, it would probably be easier for the Americans to get Assange from England, since the two countries are much closer to each other in many ways. But it's been a very long time since Assange did anything sensible.

*This article was translated by Andrew Brown*

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/aug/16/julian-assange-few-friends-left-sweden>

*[Note: Ms. Olson is the "culture editor" of Expressen, an odious tabloid which according to opinion polls is the least trusted of major news media in Sweden; just over 10% assign it any credibility. This is the second time that Ms. Olson has been enlisted by The Guardian, apparently through the brilliant offices of Andrew Brown, to sling mud at Assange. The quality of her work should speak for itself. —A.B.]*

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## **Julian Assange asylum row puts UK in catch-22 situation**

*De-recognise the Ecuadorean embassy and arrest Assange, or leave him sitting inside? Either way the implications are huge*

*Peter Beaumont  
The Guardian  
16 August 2012*

The prospect of police breaking into the Ecuadorean embassy in London any time soon to arrest Julian Assange and extradite him to Sweden for questioning on allegations of sexual offences does not seem very imminent.

Despite the dramatic announcement on Thursday by Ecuador's foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, that his country granted asylum to the WikiLeaks founder, little in reality has changed. Assange is unable to leave the embassy as he would still face immediate arrest.

Instead, the latest episode of the Assange stalemate is only responsible for a deepening diplomatic row between the UK and Ecuador, with London claiming it has a "legal duty to extradite" Assange and Ecuador claiming that means London is threatening to break in and grab the Australian.

With both sides boxed into their respective corners what is likely in the short term, as legal experts have been quick to make clear, is recourse again to the courts.

What have changed significantly, however, are the diplomatic implications, less importantly for Britain's relationship with Ecuador, than for the fact that London will want to avoid setting an international precedent that might be used one day against one of its own missions abroad. But the British government is facing a catch-22 situation, being equally anxious— as former diplomat Oliver Miles pointed out in the *London Review of Books*— to avoid setting the opposing precedent of allowing Assange to remain as a fugitive within the embassy in defiance of a European arrest warrant. *[People have been seeking asylum all over the world to avoid various forms of "justice" for centuries. —A.B.]*

This very prospect was raised by Britain's former ambassador to Moscow, Tony Brenton, in an interview with the BBC.

"I think the Foreign Office have slightly overreached themselves here," he said. "If we live in a world where governments can arbitrarily revoke immunity and go into embassies then the life of our diplomats and their ability to conduct normal business in places like Moscow, where I was, and North Korea becomes close to impossible."

The letter sent by the British embassy in Quito to the Ecuadorean government— and disclosed by Ecuador— makes reference to the "legal base" under which the British government believes it could arrest Assange. It refers specifically to the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987, a dry and technical piece of legislation governing the law of how ministers should handle the designation of both diplomatic premises and former premises. Indeed, **it has been used before to evict squatters from a Cambodian embassy building.**

Significantly, it details how— although not in what circumstances save for issues of public safety and national security— the foreign secretary can "de-recognise" a mission. Ecuador has said it would regard such an act as "hostile and intolerable".

"You need to be aware," the letter says, "that there is a legal base in the UK, the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987, that would allow us to take actions in order to arrest Mr Assange in the current premises of the embassy."

"We sincerely hope that we do not reach that point, but if you are not capable of resolving this matter of Mr Assange's presence in your premises, this is an open option for us."

As law lecturer Carl Gardner blogged on Wednesday, while the act gives ministers the "power of de-recognition" — which would allow Assange's arrest in the embassy regardless of whether Ecuador grants him asylum— quite how that process could play out is uncertain.

According to that law, "the secretary of state [can] withdraw his acceptance or consent in relation to land", meaning "it ... ceases to be diplomatic or consular premises for the purposes of all enactments and rules of law".

**The catch, however, is to be found in the following section, which states that any de-recognition must be consistent with international law**— in this case the 1961 Vienna convention on diplomatic relations which Ecuadorean sources at the embassy say they have acted in accordance with.

In other words, any attempt to de-recognise the embassy would in all likelihood need to be tested in the courts or by judicial review, a costly and lengthy process.

The same point was made by lawyer and New Statesman legal blogger David Allen Green. "As the UK government will be purporting to be exercising a statutory provision— in this case a power under the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987— then any executive action is in principle amenable to the jurisdiction of the high court for judicial review. Here it would be Ecuador challenging the UK government in a case that would raise complex points of domestic and international public law."

What is not clear, either from the act itself or the letter, is on what grounds the British government would feel it had for de-recognition to allow Assange's arrest, although the letter makes clear that the Foreign Office believes Ecuador is in breach of the 1961 Vienna convention.

One possibility is that the British government could attempt to invoke the convention's preamble, which insists that the specific purpose of "the immunities and privileges" that it lists are "not to benefit individuals but to ensure the efficient performance of the functions of diplomatic missions as representing states". That argument has not been tried before in the few instances where people have sought refuge in embassies.

However the convention— while accepting that the UK can declare members of the mission, or all of them, *persona non grata* "without explanation" — also insists in **Article 22: "The premises of the mission shall be inviolable. The agents of the receiving state may not enter them, except with the consent of the head of the mission."**

And so Assange stays put for now.

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## Julian Assange case: stay patient and do the right thing

*Refugee protection does not apply to the WikiLeaks founder and it is wrong of him to claim it*

*Editorial*

*The Guardian*

*16 August 2012*

As defined by the United Nations convention on refugees, a refugee is a person who "owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country". A little later on, the text of the convention specifically states that refugee status "shall not apply to any person with respect to whom there are serious reasons for considering that ... he has committed a serious non-political crime outside the country of refuge".

Whatever views one may have about Julian Assange as a WikiLeaks activist, it is clear that in legal and moral terms he cannot properly be described as a refugee. To be a refugee is to be in need of very specific protection, desperately won and deservedly cherished. **Refugee protection does not apply to Mr Assange and it is wrong of him to claim it.** As Charlie Chaplin said when a Nazi newspaper reporter once asked him in Berlin if he were Jewish, he does not have that honour. But the inappropriate nature of the claim goes further. Since Mr Assange is wanted by the courts in Sweden for the specific and proper purpose of answering two allegations of sexual assault, which is in anyone's language a serious non-political crime, it is also clear that he is specifically disbarred from being treated as a refugee.[???

None of this fundamental aspect of Mr Assange's status was discussed in any serious way on Thursday by the Ecuadorian foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, in his long statement on the case in Quito. Mr Patiño made plenty of other points before confirming Ecuador's decision to grant asylum to Mr Assange. Most of these were based on the claim that the United States wants to get its hands on Mr Assange because of WikiLeaks, that it may torture him, that his deportation to Sweden by the UK would bring this closer, and that Ecuador has a right to protect him. *[There was a lengthy list of references to the relevant international law. —A.B.]*

No one should be naïve about the US, but this is a fallacious chain of reasoning. The US has not said whether it wants to detain Mr Assange, though it has had plenty of time to do so. If it wanted his extradition, the US might logically be more likely to make use of Britain's excessively generous extradition treaty with the US— which has not happened— rather than wait until he was in Sweden, when both Sweden and the UK would have to sign off on any extradition application. And neither Sweden nor the UK would in any case deport someone who might face torture or the death penalty. *[Thank you for that assurance. —A.B.]* Ecuador's own human rights record is also far from exemplary, as Human Rights Watch has made clear. [Not clear at all; see the criticisms of HRW's analysis.—A.B.]

Yet two wrongs do not make a right. Just as Ecuador is wrong to pretend that Mr Assange is a refugee, so Britain is wrong to threaten to enter Ecuador's London



embassy. The Foreign Office may have been factually entitled to remind Ecuador this week that a 1987 act allows it, if permissible under international law, to enter the premises. But the reminder is more trouble than it is worth, and risks being massively counterproductive to this country's interests in places where fewer scruples apply. The threat was a mistake, allowing Ecuador to shift the argument away from the Swedish criminal charges. *[That is not its argument, as it made very clear. —A.B.]* Our diplomats in hostile or failing states would be put at unacceptable risk if this threat were carried out.

Thursday's events do not change the realities of the Assange extradition case. Mr Assange remains in this country. He is the subject of an extradition order that has been issued under due process. He cannot leave the embassy without being arrested— an embassy car is not diplomatically protected. Ecuador has found a way to tweak the tail of the imperialist lion, but the law is not on Ecuador's side and, in the end, the law should be upheld. Mr Assange should be extradited to answer Sweden's criminal allegations. *[He has repeatedly stated that he is very willing to do so. —A.B.]* In the meantime, Britain should concentrate on being patient and doing the right thing.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/aug/16/julian-assange-wikileaks-refugee-protection>

*[Alas, another sign of The Guardian's ongoing decay. —A.B.]*

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## Ännu en dag

*Carl Bildts blogg*  
2012-08-16

VID MEDELHAVET: Det vore nog inte alldeles sanningsenligt att hävda att de senaste veckorna har varit alldeles händelselösa sett från mitt perspektiv. Telefonledningarna har gått varma de flesta av dagarna....

Med en mångordig och i sina delar mycket märklig deklaration förklarade Ecuadors utrikesminister att man nu kommer att bevilja honom asyl.

Skälet sades vara att han utsätts för politisk förföljelse av det svenska rättsväsendet och att dess agerande t o m skulle hota hans liv. *[Nej, så lyder inte resonemanget. —A.B.]*

Att vi med skärpa tillbakavisar dessa anklagelser är en självklarhet.

Ecuadors ambassador kallades under eftermiddagen till UD för att åter informeras om det svenska rättsväsendet och för att höra vad vi tycker om de anklagelser som hans utrikesminister riktat mot oss.

Sanningen är ju att såväl Storbritannien som Sverige har oberoende rättssystem som tillämpar krav vad gäller skyddet för den enskildes rätt som sannolikt inte överträffas av några andra länder i världen.

Och att det här handlar om en undersökning i ett brottmål av bekant slag där ingen individ kan hävda andra rättigheter än någon annan.

Allas likhet inför lagen är en viktig princip.

*[Inget av detta har Ecuador eller Assange förnekat. —A.B.]*

Vad som kommer att hända nu återstår att se.

Vi har varit skarpa i vårt tillbakavisande av Ecuadors anklagelser mot oss.

Det kommer vi gärna att upprepa i olika sammanhang.

Den brittiska utrikesministern William Hague har klargjort att det brittiska rättssystemet efter omfattande prövning slagit fast att Assange skall utlämnas till Sverige och att detta är en förpliktelse man har en skyldighet att stå fast vid.

Samtidigt sitter han nu isolerad på Ecuadors ambassad i London.

Hur länge detta kan pågå, och hur det kommer att lösas, är inte min sak att bedöma.

Utrikesminister Hague har sagt att man strävar efter en diplomatisk lösning, men man har samtidigt erinrat också om brittisk lagstiftning.

Och vi har självfallet fullt förtroende för den brittiska regeringen i denna fråga.

<http://carlbildt.wordpress.com/2012/08/16/annu-en-dag/>

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## **Assange to appeal if Britain blocks exit**

*The Australian*  
August 17, 2012

WIKILEAKS founder Julian Assange will appeal to the International Court of Justice if Britain blocks his exit to Ecuador, renowned Spanish rights lawyer Baltasar Garzon says.

Garzon, who is helping Assange's defence, told Spanish newspaper El Pais that Britain had a legal obligation to allow his client to leave the country once Ecuador granted him diplomatic asylum.

**"What the United Kingdom must do is apply the diplomatic obligations of the Refugee Convention and let him leave, giving him safe conduct," the former judge said. "Otherwise, we will go to the International Court of Justice."**

Garzon, best known for trying to extradite Chile's Augusto Pinochet from London to Madrid on human rights charges in 1998, criticised Britain's threat to arrest Assange at Ecuador's London embassy, where he has taken refuge. **Garzon said this was a threat of "invasion".**

Britain is obliged to abide by the Refugee Convention and to respect the "risk being run by a person who is a victim of political persecution", he said, according to the paper's online edition.

Garzon was speaking from the Dominican Republic, where he was to attend the swearing-in of incoming president Danilo Medina, El Pais said.

The former judge, who was barred from the judiciary in Spain in February for exceeding his authority in probing a corruption case [*no, it was for challenging the dead hand of the Franco past*—A.B.], held a long conversation with Assange, 41, on Wednesday evening, the paper said.

"He was very confident that they would give him asylum, as they did. He seemed very calm and in good spirits. He knows he is in the right," Garzon was quoted as saying.

Garzon earlier this month told El Pais he was convinced the attempted extradition to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning in a sexual assault case, was a ploy.

The Spanish lawyer said he believed it was a way of allowing the United States to exact "political revenge" by extraditing Assange and trying him for leaks that affected US government institutions, published on his whistleblowing site WikiLeaks.

Garzon reportedly said he believed Assange's life was in danger because there were people who wanted to stop him releasing further sensitive information.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/breaking-news/assange-to-appeal-if-britain-blocks-exit/story-fn3dxix6-1226452208998>

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## **The Latin Mouse that roared at the British bulldog**

*Philip Dorling*  
*The Age*  
*August 17, 2012*

ECUADOR has decided to grant diplomatic asylum to Julian Assange. The decision comes as no surprise. What comes next is much more difficult to predict.

There could be a protracted impasse in which Assange remains in Ecuador's London embassy until further negotiations secure a resolution to his complicated circumstances.

Or Britain could be impatient and precipitate a diplomatic breach by sending police into the embassy to seize the WikiLeaks publisher to fulfil the UK's legal obligation to extradite him to Sweden.

Ecuador's feisty President Rafael Correa was probably always going to agree to Assange's asylum bid. When interviewed by the WikiLeaks publisher this year he expressed sympathy for Assange, including a shared dislike of US foreign policy and welcomed him to the "club of the persecuted".

Nonetheless, with a keen sense of the importance and forms of international humanitarian law, the Ecuadoreans obliged Assange to submit a large dossier setting

out the grounds for his fears that if extradited to Sweden he might then be extradited to the US to face essentially political charges arising from the alleged leaking of secret US military and diplomatic reports by US Army private Bradley Manning.

**If there was still doubt about which decision President Correa would make, it should have been dispelled by the UK's ill-advised response to reports that Ecuador had already decided to grant asylum.**

Telling Correa's strongly nationalist government that the UK reserved the right to violate the diplomatic immunity of its London embassy was bound to trigger a strident response, and it certainly did with Ecuadorean Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino fuming about "written threats" and declaring that Ecuador was no colony to be "mocked" and "beaten savagely" into submission by the UK.

Ecuador never was part of the British Empire, though British capital once played a big role in the republic's economy, and anti-colonialist rhetoric directed against the Anglosphere still resonates strongly in Quito.

What hopes Britain had of negotiating a "jointly agreed text" to cover public relations aspects of Assange's "voluntary" departure from the embassy probably disappeared in a flash.

What next? More negotiations and a protracted impasse? Assange certainly isn't going anywhere. He would be arrested the moment he stepped outside the embassy. But he has always known a ticket to Quito would never be forthcoming from this manoeuvre.

**Instead, as a clever strategist, he has succeeded in putting his claims of political persecution back in the spotlight. He has already bought himself two more months of freedom of speech, something he values highly, and he would easily prefer a room in Ecuador's embassy to a Swedish prison.**

Assange may further delay his extradition to Sweden, and in the meantime more of the likely US prosecution case against him will emerge in Bradley Manning's court martial.

British Crown Prosecution Service guidelines state that diplomatic premises are inviolable and may not be entered [by police] without consent of the ambassador or head of mission.

Britain has not revoked the diplomatic status of the Ecuadorean embassy and would be loath to do so and send police into the embassy. It would set an appalling precedent that could be exploited by numerous regimes to pursue asylum seekers who seek refuge.

But that step may come. The UK, Sweden **and the US** may all eventually decide enough is enough. Whatever happens, Assange appears certain to stay in the headlines for some time.

<http://www.theage.com.au/action/printArticle?id=3561192>

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## Julian Assange's Fears About Extradition to the United States Affirmed

Kevin Gosztola  
Firedog Lake  
August 17, 2012

How do supporters of WikiLeaks founder and editor-in-chief Julian Assange make the leap that he is more likely to be extradited to the United States from Sweden than the United Kingdom? That is a common question and, certainly, a key question for anyone who remains skeptical of whether Assange should have been granted asylum by Ecuador.

The answer is Sweden is pursuing a legal case against Assange, a case that has not been pursued entirely in a reasonable manner. For example, Mark Weisbrot noted in his Guardian article yesterday former Stockholm chief district prosecutor Sven-Erik Alhem "made it clear that the Swedish government had no legitimate reason to seek Assange's extradition when he testified that the decision of the Swedish government to extradite Assange is 'unreasonable and unprofessional, as well as unfair and disproportionate,' because he could be easily questioned in the UK." If the US government were to announce a request to extradite Assange, it would be interfering with an astounding [outstanding?] legal matter that Swedish authorities would have to decide whether to suspend or not.

Another bigger question is why Assange continues to claim the US has plans or intentions to "persecute" or, to use a term that is more neutral, prosecute him. Snide commentators, sneering correspondents, and elite-minded former government officials discount any suggestion that the US might extradite Assange from Sweden. They do not even bother to take into account the existence of an empaneled grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia, in the Eastern District that is investigating anyone who can be connected to the WikiLeaks organization.

Now, The Age, based in Australia, has published a report that features some critical details on the United States government's plans for Assange. It describes Australian Foreign Affairs Department documents that were obtained under freedom of information laws and **show that the Australian diplomatic service "takes seriously the likelihood that Assange will eventually be extradited to the US on charges arising from WikiLeaks obtaining leaked US military and diplomatic documents."** Australia's ambassador to the US Kim Beazley sought "high-level US advice on 'the direction and likely outcome of the investigation' and "reiterated' an Australian government request for "early advice of any decision to indict or seek extradition" of Assange.

The diplomatic cables identify "a wide range of criminal charges the US could bring against Assange, including espionage, conspiracy, unlawful access to classified information and computer fraud." They indicate "Australian diplomats expect that any charges against Assange would be carefully drawn in an effort to avoid conflict with the First Amendment free speech provisions of the US constitution."

**Additionally, Australian diplomats have apparently been informed of "several connections between Manning and WikiLeaks," which prosecutors have uncovered**

**that would form the “basis of a conspiracy charge.”** The diplomats have found any investigation would “target” the “founders, owners or managers of WikiLeaks” for espionage.

The diplomats were not able to confirm whether the “sealed indictment” Stratfor had was authentic, but suggested what the US private intelligence company might have had in possession was a “draft indictment used by prosecutors to ‘game out’ possible charges.”

Center for Constitutional Rights attorney Michael Ratner, who is a member of the WikiLeaks legal team, considers the details to be “pretty extraordinary revelations.” It **shows Australian government officials to be “hypocrites if not liars” because they have claimed “they don’t know anything about a US prosecution or extradition.”**

It affirms Assange’s fears, along with what Ratner has been saying all along, by showing the US is seeking Assange’s prosecution and extradition.

“It confirms that the seeking of asylum is about the prosecution he is faced with in the United States,” Ratner told Firedoglake. **“It has nothing to do with Sweden. This is about the US persecuting him and going after him** for extradition and this confirms in cables that the Australian government knew about it, dissembled about it and is not protecting one of its own citizens.”

Yesterday, in a typical demonstration of the imperial delusions which the United States government operates under, State Department spokesperson Victoria Nuland was asked during a press briefing whether Assange “could face persecution” if he “was to come to the United States under whatever circumstances.” The reporter asked, “Do you find that that’s a credible argument? Does anyone face unwarranted or illegal government persecution in the United States?”

Nuland reflexively said no. When the reporter inquiringly said, “No?” She bluntly said “no” again. As the reporter continued to press her, she dropped a major hint, “If you’re asking me whether there was any intention to persecute rather than prosecute, the answer is no. Okay?”

The reporter caught her and said, “Okay. Well, wait. Well, hold on a second. So you’re saying that he would face prosecution?” To which she said, “We were in a situation where he was not headed to the United States; he was headed elsewhere.” But that doesn’t mean he would not, at some point in the future, be reeled into the clutches of US justice (which, according to Nuland, would never in present-day America “persecute” anyone— women, immigrants, people of color, gays, Muslims, etc— no one).

The new information uncovered by an Australian media organization makes it highly doubtful that the issue of asylum is only a matter between Ecuador, Sweden and the UK.

**“The US is clearly the hand that’s behind this,” Ratner suggested. “There’s no doubt about it in my mind. And this confirms that they’ve been after him, according to these cables, for a year and a half if not more.” Ratner said it is “utterly bogus” to say “the US isn’t involved.”**

What is occurring in the shadows between Australia, Ecuador, Sweden, the UK and the US is the kind of activity which Pfc. Bradley Manning likely sought to reveal when he allegedly released US diplomatic cables to WikiLeaks. Based on the letter Ecuador was given that threatened the country's London embassy with a possible invasion if Assange was not handed over for extradition to Sweden, it is evident the kind of coercion and underhanded diplomacy WikiLeaks uncovered continues to occur. Bullying or pressure is intended to prevent Assange from reaching Ecuador.

The grand jury is not some conjured conspiracy theory made up to suit Assange's desire to escape legal processes in Sweden. It exists. It is part of a wide criminal investigation into Assange and others connected to WikiLeaks that is intended to produce indictments that could be acted upon. **The US Justice Department would not be investing resources into a case like this if it had no intention of eventually putting people on trial in the United States.**

Furthermore, the US government is in the midst of a court martial against Manning. They understand **Manning must be convicted successfully before they can bring in Assange. Sweden's desire to question Assange over sexual allegations is just the sideshow that must continue to unfold to keep Assange in a country whose government will cooperate with an extradition request when the US government is finally ready to make a meticulously prepared prosecution public to the world.** Failing to ensure the UK maintains their position and does not allow Assange safe passage to Ecuador is necessary to preventing complications that would likely be experienced if he was in Ecuador when it came time to exact what Assange's lawyer on matters related to asylum, Baltasar Garzon, has called "political revenge."

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## **Assange to appeal if Britain blocks exit**

AAP

August 17, 2012

WIKILEAKS founder Julian Assange will appeal to the International Court of Justice if Britain blocks his exit to Ecuador, renowned Spanish rights lawyer Baltasar Garzon says.

Garzon, who is helping Assange's defence, told Spanish newspaper El Pais that Britain had a legal obligation to allow his client to leave the country once Ecuador granted him diplomatic asylum.

"What the United Kingdom must do is apply the diplomatic obligations of the Refugee Convention and let him leave, giving him safe conduct," the former judge said. "Otherwise, we will go to the International Court of Justice."

Garzon, best known for trying to extradite Chile's Augusto Pinochet from London to Madrid on human rights charges in 1998, criticised Britain's threat to arrest Assange at Ecuador's London embassy, where he has taken refuge. Garzon said this was a threat of "invasion".

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Garzon was speaking from the Dominican Republic, where he was to attend the swearing-in of incoming president Danilo Medina, El Pais said.

The former judge, who was barred from the judiciary in Spain in February for exceeding his authority in probing a corruption case, held a long conversation with Assange, 41, on Wednesday evening, the paper said.

"He was very confident that they would give him asylum, as they did. He seemed very calm and in good spirits. He knows he is in the right," Garzon was quoted as saying.

Garzon earlier this month told El Pais he was convinced the attempted extradition to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning in a sexual assault case, was a ploy.

The Spanish lawyer said he believed it was a way of allowing the United States to exact "political revenge" by extraditing Assange and trying him for leaks that affected US government institutions, published on his whistleblowing site WikiLeaks.

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## Assange Is A True Democrat: Chomsky

*Last week NM spoke with US intellectual giant Noam Chomsky about Julian Assange, who is now the centre of a diplomatic nightmare in London. Tamara Fenjan reports*

*New Matilda  
17 Aug. 2012*

Julian Assange has been granted asylum by the Ecuadorian government, creating a diplomatic row between the Latin American nation and the United Kingdom, which remains intent to extradite him to Sweden to face allegations of sexual assault. While voices have been raised in Sweden and the UK, the US has so far declined to "interject" itself into the situation.

However, there is one American who has been loud and clear in his support of Assange — MIT linguistics professor and left-wing intellectual Noam Chomsky. Last week Chomsky told New Matilda he believes Assange is right to fear extradition to **Sweden, where if the USA asks for him to be extradited he would "be on the next flight"**.

"If Swedish interrogators want to interrogate him they can do it in London," Chomsky told NM. **"Everyone in their right mind knows that this is a stepping stone to the US."** He draws a parallel with Bradley Manning, the US soldier accused of having leaked thousands of classified documents to Wikileaks, and says that what to



happened Manning is a clear indication of how Assange will be treated if he is extradited to the United States.

Manning has been held in a military prison for almost a year and a half without trial — most of that time in solitary confinement.

"There is no doubt that the purpose of all this is to get [Manning] to say something about Assange, who will also be treated the same way if he ever comes to the US... Therefore, a decent country at this time — if there is one — would grant him political asylum," Chomsky said.

Chomsky says of the Swedish legal system "that one can not rely on it, which is not so surprising." Sweden cooperated with the Nazis during World War II and is now working with the Americans, he points out. "Sweden cooperates with whoever is in power... **suppose that Syria asks Sweden to extradite somebody to Syria whom they accuse works with the rebels — would Sweden do it? No!**"

"By right [Assange] ought to get a medal of honour. He's performing his responsibilities as a citizen of a democratic society and people ought to know what their representatives are doing "

The question now is whether UK police will storm the Ecuadorian embassy, located in London's Knightsbridge. Wikileaks reports via Twitter that this morning "there are still over 35 police surrounding the Ecuadorian embassy", and has issued a statement condemning "in the strongest possible terms the UK's resort to intimidation".

"A threat of this nature is a hostile and extreme act, which is not proportionate to the circumstances, and an unprecedented assault on the rights of asylum seekers worldwide," the organisation said.

Assange's fears seem to be corroborated by private confirmation given to Craig Murray, a respected former UK ambassador and human rights activist:

"I returned to the UK today to be astonished by private confirmation from within the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office] that the UK government has indeed decided — after immense pressure from the Obama administration — to enter the Ecuadorean Embassy and seize Julian Assange.

"This will be, beyond any argument, a blatant breach of the Vienna Convention of 1961, to which the UK is one of the original parties and which encodes the centuries — arguably millennia — of practice which have enabled diplomatic relations to function. The Vienna Convention is the most subscribed single international treaty in the world."

Greens Senator Scott Ludlam spoke this week in support of Assange. Foreign Minister Bob Carr said the Federal Government would not "make representations one way or the other" regarding Assange's asylum claim.

<http://newmatilda.com/2012/08/17/assange-interview-chomsky>

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## No one else will protect Assange, so Ecuador will

*Greg Barns*

*AFP*

*17 August 2012*

Ecuador's decision to grant Julian Assange asylum, coming from a country which resents the toxic influence of the United States in Latin America, is no surprise.

But what is utterly bewildering and scandalous is the preparedness of the UK government to arrest Assange and ensure that he is handed over to the spineless Swedes by using a law designed to stop embassies being used to promote terrorist activity.

The UK government says the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act, passed in 1987, enables its government to declare that the Ecuadorian Embassy is simply UK territory and that its police can enter and arrest Assange, who it says has breached bail. And the foreign secretary William Hague said overnight that the UK government "will not allow Mr Assange safe passage out of the United Kingdom, nor is there any legal basis for us to do so".

Let's look at the 1987 Act first. This law was enacted in an era when the UK had difficulties with countries like Libya using embassies for terrorist activity or acts of violence. The Second Reading Speech on the Bill— which provides the explanation of what the purpose of the law is— was delivered by Baroness Young, the responsible minister on May 14, 1987.

A provision in the bill to allow the government to declare an embassy British territory on the grounds of national security was drafted because, Baroness Young said, "at present we would be unable to remove diplomatic status from premises which were being misused".

**"I have in mind here evidence over a long period of time that a mission was being used, for instance, in support of terrorist activity," she added.**

How could it be said that Julian Assange, facing breach of bail charges and sexual assault charges in the UK, is a matter of national security?

To send in British police to arrest Assange under the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act shows simply that the UK is prepared to abuse power in the way one might expect from an authoritarian regime.

It also creates a very dangerous precedent. If the nation that bangs on about how it is the bosom of the rule of law and fairness is able to act so capriciously to suit its friends in Stockholm, Canberra, and Washington, what is to stop other countries from running into embassies whenever someone inconvenient seeks asylum?

As for Mr Hague's statement that there is no legal basis to allow Mr Assange safe passage out of the UK, this is also highly questionable.

While there have been cases where safe passage out of a country has been refused—most famously in the case of the former Hungarian Cardinal Mindszenty, who was holed up in the US embassy in Hungary for 15 years because the latter nation would not let him leave after the 1956 uprising—if there are strong humanitarian grounds for safe passage after a successful asylum claim these should trump state sovereignty.

In Mr Assange's case, it is clear that there is a real risk of torture by the Americans and the chances of a fair trial in Sweden are minimal. On these grounds, Mr Hague can find the legal basis to allow a departure.

**Would the UK abuse its own legislative powers if the embassy in question was the US or Australia? No. It is determined to arrest Assange because it loathes the man who has exposed the dishonesty and duplicity of the US and its allies like the UK and Australia in their illegal war in Iraq.**

One can conclude from the UK's arrogance in this matter that it is still suffering the empire complex. It is treating a developing world country like Ecuador with the sort of contempt it treated its former African and Indian colonial subjects.

You can just hear the Oxbridge accents of the Foreign Office and their legal advisers. "These appalling Ecuadorians, what the hell do they think they are up to giving this fool Assange asylum? Send in the bobbies, will you, old chap?" appears to be the sentiment.

Australia, Assange's homeland, has also been condemned by Ecuador, and justifiably so. Like British PM David Cameron, our leader Julia Gillard has been equally contemptuous of fair play when it comes to Assange.

Gillard and her ministers— as well as Anglophile Liberal leader Tony Abbott— have continued to treat Assange as an international criminal who deserves nothing more than what they call consular assistance, which is simply being thrown a phone book of local lawyers for him to use if he is in trouble.

Will Attorney-General Nicola Roxon and her opposition number George Brandis take issue with the misuse by the UK of its law to arrest an Australian citizen granted asylum? Of course not.

They are too frightened to offend their American friends who would nab Assange from Sweden before you could say Volvo, and have him tortured alongside Bradley Manning, the former US army officer alleged to have provided material to WikiLeaks.

If you value freedom of speech and you think it's unhealthy that this freedom is curtailed by the United States and its satellites like the UK and Australia, then you will applaud Ecuador president Rafael Correa for staring down the forces of conservatism and repression.

- *Greg Barns is a barrister who has provided advice to the Assange campaign and is a director of the Australian Lawyers Alliance.*

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SvD: 17 augusti 2012

## **Brittisk rättsexpert: "Assange får alla att verka löjliga"**

Medan Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange trycker på en luftmadrass i kontorslokalerna där Ecuadors Londonambassad huserar ökar spänningarna mellan de inblandade länderna. SvD reder ut den diplomatiska härvan.

*Hur påverkas relationen mellan Sverige och Ecuador sedan Ecuador i torsdags beviljade Julian Assange politisk asyl?*

Redan i torsdags kallades Ecuadors ambassadör i Stockholm upp till Utrikesdepartementet.

– Vi hade synpunkter kring Ecuadors utrikesministers ganska grova syn på det svenska rättssystemet. De är grava anklagelser, säger UD:s presschef Anders Jörle.

Sveriges utrikesminister Carl Bildt säger till TT att ambassadören under mötet försökte dementera att Ecuadors utrikesminister Ricardo Patino riktat allvarliga anklagelser mot Sverige.

– Då visade vi den spanska texten och då hade han ju lite svårigheter att förklara vad det egentligen handlade om, säger Bildt till TT.

Om affären kommer att påverka relationen mellan Sverige och Ecuador långsiktigt beror på vad Ecuador gör nu, enligt Anders Jörle.

– Just nu ser inte vi framför oss att det ska få effekter på saker som handel. Det är en politisk diskussion.

Enligt Ove Bring, professor i internationell rätt vid Försvarshögskolan, är det svårt att bedöma vilka effekter ärendet kan få för relationen mellan Sverige och Ecuador.

– Men ett spänningstillstånd har nu inträtt mellan Sverige och Ecuador. Varje gång ett utrikesdepartement kallar upp en ambassadör är det något dramatiskt som har inträffat.

*Hur påverkas relationen mellan Storbritannien och Ecuador?*

Länderna befinner sig i ett låst läge sedan Ecuador kräver att Assange tillåts fri lejd ut ur Storbritannien, medan Storbritanniens utrikesminister William Hague sagt att så inte kommer att ske och att Storbritannien enligt sina egna lagar är skyldiga att överlämna Assange till Sverige.

Enligt den brittiske rättsexperten Joshua Rozenberg kommer det land som viker sig först att förlora ansiktet.

– Sedan Ecuador lovade den här mannen asyl och skydd är det väldigt svårt för dem att ge sig. De har målat in sig i ett hörn. [Eller medvetet tagit ett principiellt beslut. --A.B.] Assange får alla att verka väldigt löjliga.

Joshua Rozenberg tror inte att Storbritannien i slutändan bryr sig speciellt mycket om sin relation till Ecuador, eller att Ecuador bryr sig så mycket om Storbritannien. Han framhåller att länderna inte har några problem med varandra förutom Assange-ärendet, och att **det handlar mer om Ecuadors relation till USA**. Därför är han tveksam till att affären kommer att få långsiktiga effekter på relationen mellan länderna.

– **Ecuador har gjort det tydligt att det här har att göra med USA snarare än Storbritannien eller Sverige**, bland annat genom att motivera asylbeslutet med att Assange ska riskera dödsstraff i USA. Vilket är struntprat eftersom varken Sverige eller Storbritannien får lämna ut Assange till USA om han riskerar dödsstraff [*vilket är struntprat --A.B.*].

*Vad kan hända nu?*

William Hague har sagt att det finns en möjlighet att Storbritannien upphäver ambassadens diplomatiska status och går in och griper Assange. Men de flesta bedömare ser inte det som ett troligt scenario, och Joshua Rozenberg håller med.

– Jag tror att det enda Storbritannien kan göra nu är att ha tålamod och vänta. Möjligen kan de sätta diplomatisk press på Ecuador genom till exempel att kalla hem sin ambassadör i Ecuador eller dra in eventuellt stöd som Storbritannien ger till Ecuador. Till slut måste Assange också tröttna. Hur kul är det att tillbringa all tid i ett rum?

Det har spekulerats i om Assange kan smugglas ut ur ambassaden, men det tror inte Rozenberg.

– Det här är inget stort ambassadområde med murar, snarare ett vanligt kontor. Han har inte ens möjlighet att ta sig till en bil eller en helikopter utan att gripas.

*Hur ser de internationella reglerna kring vem som kan få politisk asyl ut?*

Asylbeslut bör baseras på internationella avtal, berättar Ove Bring, professor i internationell rätt vid försvarshögskolan. Det som brukar åberopas är flyktingkonventionen från 1951.

– Där har man möjlighet att skydda människor som är utsatta för förföljelse. Ecuador har antagligen tänkt i de termerna. Men deras verklighetsbeskrivning, att Assange utsatts för förföljelse av det svenska rättssamhället, blir märkligt, säger Ove Bring [*särskilt då de inte har påstått detta --A.B.*].

Han framhåller dock att Ecuadors regering har möjlighet att tolka situationen som de vill. Det är ovanligt att ett land ger en enskild individ politisk asyl, istället brukar man fatta beslut om att till exempel minoritetsgrupper anses förföljda.

– När man ger en enskild människa politisk asyl är det politiska överväganden som kommer in i bilden. Det finns ingen internationell konvention som är direkt anpassad efter detta och ställer krav på att regeringar ska göra på ett visst sätt. De har ett handlingsutrymme, även om 1951 års konvention finns i bakgrunden, säger Ove Bring.

• Karin Thurffjell

SvD: 17 augusti 201

## **Ecuador vill ha fri lejd för Assange**

Ecuador kommer att kontakta den brittiska regeringen igen för att försöka övertyga landet om att ge Julian Assange fri lejd, säger utrikesminister Ricardo Patino. Demonstranter utanför Ecuadors ambassad.

- De borde ge (fri lejd) och respektera Ecuadors suveräna beslut. Och om de inte gör det kommer vi att söka internationella juridiska vägar för att kräva ett beviljande av fri lejd. Vi tycker inte att det är rimligt att en medborgare tvingas bo en längre tid på en ambassad när en suverän regering har fattat beslut om politisk asyl, säger Patino i en intervju med BBC Mundo

**Patino ser det inte som troligt att de svenska anklagelserna om sexualbrott är den främsta orsaken till Sveriges krav på utlämning.**

**- Vi har kunnat fastslå klart och tydligt att det är andra faktorer som ligger bakom denna förföljelse av Mr Assange och därför har vi beslutat att bevilja politisk asyl.**

Ecuadors ambassadör i Sverige kallades upp till UD i går eftermiddag, säger UD:s presschef Anders Jörle. Ambassadören fick då träffa kabinetssekreterare Frank Belfrage.

- Han fick höra vad vi tycker, säger Jörle, som inte närmare vill beskriva samtalet.

Medan Ecuador nu försöker mobilisera stöd i framför allt Latinamerika, har Sverige för ögonblicket inga motsvarande planer på att driva ärendet på EU-nivå, säger Jörle.

- Vi får avvakta lite. Det förekommer lite olika diskussioner om detta.

Utrikesminister Carl Bildt säger till TT att Ecuadors ambassadör försökte dementera att hans utrikesminister hade riktat en rad grava anklagelser mot det svenska rättssystemet.

- Då visade vi den spanska texten och då hade han ju lite svårigheter att förklara vad det egentligen handlade om.

Från svenskt håll finns inte så mycket att göra just nu, anser Bildt.

- Vi har inte anledning att göra så mycket, vi får avvakta vad som händer.

Han tolkar Ecuadors försök att få stöd i hemmaregionen som att landet är pressat.

- Anledningen är väl att man känner sig trängd när man har tagit beslut som också internationellt uppfattas som synnerligen diskutabelt [*var då? --A.B.*] och man har uppenbarligen sökt konfrontation med både Storbritannien och Sverige av några politiska skäl— inrikespolitiska eller andra.

- Det där tar vi rätt lugnt på, fortsätter Bildt.

- De får alltid stöd av en grupp länder— Kuba, Venezuela och några till **som säkert tillhör doakören när det gäller den här typen av retorik.** Och sen finns alltid Argentina som av andra skäl är emot allt som Storbritannien gör. Men lite mer ansvarskännande och tyngre latinamerikanska aktörer håller nog en viss kylig distans till det här. *[Bildt får det helt fel, som vanligt. --A.B.]*

Ecuador säger sig ha försökt få garantier från Sverige att Assange inte skulle kunna överlämnas till USA, men inte fått det. Skälet till det är enkelt, förklarar Bildt.

- **Rättssystemet i Sverige är oberoende. Jag kan inte göra några uttalanden som binder rättssystemet på något sätt. Då skulle jag bryta mot den svenska grundlagen.** Och det där tror jag inte riktigt att de förstår, om jag ska vara riktigt ärlig. För jag tror att principen om rättssystemets oberoende är väl inte lika fast etablerad i Ecuador, om jag uttrycker saken med osedvanlig diplomatisk finess.

Han påpekar att det är svårt att finna länder med så solid tradition av rättsligt oberoende och skydd för individen.

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## Red Notice still active 2012-08-16

The screenshot shows the INTERPOL website header with the logo and tagline "CONNECTING POLICE FOR A SAFER WORLD". Below the header is a navigation bar with links: HOME, ABOUT INTERPOL, NEWS AND MEDIA, MEMBER COUNTRIES, and INTERPOL EXPERTISE. The main content area features a large image of Julian Assange on the left and a red INTERPOL emblem in the center. To the right of the emblem, the text reads: "16 August 2012 INTERPOL Red Notice for Julian Assange remains in force". Below this, a paragraph states: "LYON, France – INTERPOL confirms that its Red Notice, or international wanted persons alert, issued for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at Sweden's request in November 2010 remains valid. Confirmation that Mr Assange's Red Notice status remains in force follows Thursday's decision by authorities in Ecuador to grant asylum to Mr Assange, two months after h...". A "Read more" button is located below the text. At the bottom of the page, there is a carousel of smaller news items, including one about the INTERPOL Red Notice for Julian Assange, one about an INTERPOL operation leading to the arrest of a mastermind of a multimillion Euro car smuggling ring, and one about US-Dutch use of INTERPOL tools in investigations.

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## **'Not even in Cold War's darkest days': International law scrapped in anti-Assange crusade**

RT

August 16, 2012

Ecuador's move to grant Julian Assange political asylum has shown the true face of the current world order, highlighting more clearly than ever the line between the American Empire and the rest of the world, former CIA officer Ray McGovern told RT.

*RT: One of the main reasons Ecuador cited for granting asylum was not the Swedish case against Assange, but the danger of him being persecuted and possibly even executed in the US. What reaction from Washington do you expect?*

Ray McGovern: Well, this is a classic case of what has changed over the last 20 years. And that is simply that the shape of the world is now empire vs. the rest of you. What I say here now is that Caesar has spoken. Caesar is the law. Caesar is the United States and the satraps overseas— the UK in the first instance, and now Sweden in the other, do the bidding of the empire. The country that has refused to do the bidding of the empire, Ecuador, is playing a very interesting role here. Their foreign minister said this morning that "we are not a British colony, and the days of colonialism are over.

So what we see here is a playing out of the fact that there is a complete disrespect for international law. The embassy premises of all countries have heretofore been considered sacrosanct. The British Foreign Office is now saying 'well, we may forcibly enter.' This was unheard of even during the worst days of the Cold War. If someone sought refuge in the US embassy in Moscow or the Soviet embassy in the United States, despite the friction, despite the enmity between those two countries, international law was always honored. This is unprecedented.

*RT: According to Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Ricardo Patina, the UK's acts of aggression, blackmailing, and threats are in direct violation of the 1976 Council of Diplomatic Relations. Do you think that as London and Washington are in cahoots, Ecuador is considered to be meaningless, as it has a small military, and is not a significant economic power?*

RM: Well, that has been the attitude. Smaller countries do not really amount to much in Washington or London's view these days. What will be interesting is to see how much will come out in terms of the real game being played here. Nobody seems to remember that the prime accuser of Julian Assange— Anna Ardin in Sweden— used to work for extreme anti-Castro publications funded by the CIA. So there are links there [*which she may not have been aware of --A.B.*], and it doesn't require a conspiratorial attitude to see that the only way they can get at Julian Assange is by trumped-up charges of sexual indiscretions in a country that is hypersensitive to that, and they haven't even persuaded a judge in Sweden to make those charges.[???

They have had ample opportunity to go to the Ecuadorian Embassy in London and question Julian Assange. They said, 'we're not going to do that.' Now, why is that? The reason is, there is no case against Julian Assange. In my opinion, it's all very transparent. They want to extradite him to Sweden, and then to the United States to suffer the same indignities, the same torture of Bradley Manning— the person who allegedly gave those documents to Julian Assange— has faced. This is a violation of the First Amendment in our country and other amendments in our Bill of Rights, and I dare say that our founding fathers are rolling in their graves to see a [publisher] treated this way in violation of the right to make things known that are otherwise hidden.



## Why seizing Assange could break international law

*Mark Gollom  
CBC News  
Aug. 16, 2012*

The British government could find itself hauled before an international court if it moves in on the Ecuadorian embassy where WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has been granted political asylum.

"It's pretty simple under international law," Temple University international law professor Peter Spiro told CBC News. "Without the consent of the state whose embassy is implicated, the host state may not enter those premises."

"The U.K. has no right to enter the embassy. Even if Ecuador is violating some other obligation, that does not justify British authorities entering the premises without Ecuador's consent," Spiro said.

Assange, who has been holed up in Ecuador's embassy in London since June 19, is trying to avoid extradition from the UK to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning for alleged sexual misconduct. On Thursday, Ricardo Patino, the foreign minister of Ecuador, announced the decision to grant Assange asylum.

But the story took on a new twist when Britain threatened it may invoke a 1987 law and revoke Ecuador's diplomatic protection.

The rules governing the rights of foreign embassies were set out in the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic relations international treaty, of which Britain is a signator. The treaty states that "the premises of the mission shall be inviolable" and that agents of the home country "may not enter them, except with the consent of the head of the mission."

Spiro said the strongest argument for a host country to infringe on that inviolability would be in rare circumstances where a physical threat may be emanating from the embassy — like a fire, or a sniper.

"But just having someone seeking asylum? No. Because historically there are lots of cases of folks seeking so-called diplomatic asylum in embassies and the host state just pretty much has to put up with it," Spiro said.

**Even if one member of the embassy murdered another, the host country would still have no right to enter the premises, Spiro said.**

D.C.-based attorney Clemens Kochinke, who operates the website Embassy Law, said there is a general misconception that the soil on which the embassy stands is foreign territory.

"That's not true. **The soil on which the embassy is built belongs to the host country.** The host by way of treaty and general principle of international law grants the embassy immunity."

This means if authorities of a host country decided to enter the embassy without permission, it would not be considered an act of war or invasion. **Instead, it would be seen as a breach of an obligation that's owed under the treaty, Spiro said.**

But in the Assange case, Britain has cited a little-known law, the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act of 1987, which it said would allow it to arrest Assange within the embassy premises.

The law gives Britain the power to revoke the status of a diplomatic mission if the state in question "ceases to use land for the purposes of its mission or exclusively for the purposes of a consular post" — **but only if such a move is "permissible under international law."**

"We very much hope not to get this point," Britain wrote in a letter to Ecuadorean officials.

The law was passed after the 1984 siege of the Libyan embassy in London, which was sparked when someone inside the building fatally shot a British police officer, Yvonne Fletcher. An 11-day standoff ended with Britain severing diplomatic relations with Libya and expelling all its diplomats.

But British legislation may be given little credence in an international court, where Ecuador could go to seek some sort of recourse.

"The downside for the U.K. if they are perceived as violating international law is that they are perceived as being an international lawbreaker and that has potential consequences in reciprocal situations," Spiro said.

"The next time the U.K. is protecting someone from a host state's jurisdiction, that country could barge right in and say 'hey you guys did it in London, we're doing it here. It's going to be harder for the UK to invoke immunity if it has violated diplomatic immunity in a situation like this.'"

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## **Svenska journalister ljuger om Assange**

*Brita Sundberg-Weitman om mediebevakningen av Julian Assange*

SVT-Debatt  
17 augusti, 2012

*Tungvande svenska medier, som DN och SVT, har i fallet Assange upprepat sakfel på sakfel. Olika journalister uttalar sig också gång efter annan tvärsäkert om Assanges psyke i förkländande ordalag. Vad är poängen? Vad saken handlar om är ju ett rätts-ärende. Menar man att rättssäkerhet är något som bör förbehållas personer som man tycker är trevliga?*

DN:s ledare 15/8 "Låt rättvisa gå före plakatpolitik" är typisk. Assanges syfte med sin ansökan om asyl är enligt ledaren "att undkomma svenskt rättsväsende", alltså inte det han själv sagt: fruktan för tortyr och död i USA. "Innan Assange hann förhöras flydde

han dock landet” påstår DN, trots att Assange fanns tillgänglig för förhör i Sverige flera veckor, men då passade det inte åklagaren att förhöra honom, trots att hon visste att han som grundare av Wikileaks var en internationellt efterfrågad föredragshållare runt om i världen. Vidare påstår DN att det skulle innebära gynnande specialbehandling av Assange om han förhörts i London. **I själva verket skulle förhör i England vara normalt förfarande enligt väl etablerade regler om samarbete mellan bl a brittiska och svenska åklagarmyndigheter.**

Den svenska åklagarmyndigheten har ända från början behandlat Assange på ett sätt som till skada för honom avviker från normal praxis. Jouråklagaren beslöt den 20 augusti 2010 hastigt att anhålla och eftersöka honom, **trots att det vid den tidpunkten inte ens genomförts förhör med de två kvinnor som brottsmisstankarna gällde. Klart i strid mot lag och praxis gav jouråklagaren publicitet åt sitt beslut, med följd att det blev en världsnyhet.**

Ordinarie chefsåklagare upphävde beslutet redan nästa dag med motivering att det som kvinnorna beskrivit inte gav anledning att anhålla Assange. Sedan lyckades advokaten Claes Borgström förmå överåklagaren Marianne Ny att återuppliva misstankarna. **Hon har därefter sagt en sak i Sverige och en annan i England.** I Sverige uttalade hon att det var en öppen fråga om Assange skulle komma att åtalas eller ej och att det bara gällde att höra honom som ett led i en förundersökning. I de engelska domstolarna däremot uppgav hon att hon redan beslutit att åtala Assange, vilket är en grundförutsättning för att utfärda en europeisk arresteringsorder.

**I Sverige påstod hon vidare att det skulle vara olagligt att förhöra Assange i England. I de engelska domstolarna vägrade hon att ge någon förklaring till att Assange inte förhörts där. På sista tiden har den svenska åklagarmyndigheten medgett att det inte funnits något laga hinder mot att höra Assange i England. Har medierna reagerat? Inte vad jag sett.**

I SVT:s dokumentär ”Julian Assange — världens kärleksaffär” var frågeställningen: Hur kunde Assange få världen att ifrågasätta Sveriges trovärdighet och den svenska rättsstaten? Hur gick det till när Julian Assange förändrade bilden av Sverige som ett av världens mest rättssäkra länder?

Med den frågeställningen hade dokumentären utgångspunkten att all kritik mot Sveriges hantering av Julian Assange måste vara grundlös, och det gällde således att i Assanges person finna förklaringar till hur han kunnat få världen att ifrågasätta den svenska rättsstaten. Bland annat kom dokumentären in på en grupp journalisters idé att i en twitterkampanj, ”prataomdet”, uppmana allmänheten att ge offentlighet åt berättelser om sexuella erfarenheter ”som inte känts bra”. Kampanjen, som nogsamt fick uppföljning i press, radio och TV, framställdes lögnaktigt som en spontan ”massrörelse”.

Olika journalister uttalar sig gång efter annan tvärsäkert om Assanges psyke i förklenande ordalag. Enligt Jan Guillou är Assange ”ett litet äckel utan principer”. En samstämmig journalistkör vet berätta att Assange är paranoid och hänsynslös och har ett uppblåst ego. Vad är poängen? Vad saken handlar om är ju ett rättsärende. Menar man att rättssäkerhet är något som bör förbehållas personer som man tycker är trevliga?

• Brita Sundberg-Weitman, pensionerad lagman och docent i folkrätt

<http://debatt.svt.se/2012/08/17/svenska-journalister-ljuger-om-assange/>

# The Ecuador/UK Standoff Over Asylum for Julian Assange

*Kevin Gosztola  
Firedog Lake  
August 17, 2012*

WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange was granted diplomatic asylum by Ecuador yesterday. In the hours preceding the announced decision, the British government issued a letter that contained a threat against the Ecuador embassy in London, where Assange has been holed-up for nearly two months. The government indicated it might be willing to invoke a law and revoke the diplomatic immunity of the embassy so it could enter the premise and arrest Assange.

**The UK has denied that it made any sort of threat. But, today, the Organization of American States (OAS) met and voted on a resolution to convene the Foreign Ministers of all OAS member countries to respond to this threat in manner that defended the “inviolability” of diplomatic premises. The resolution passed over the objections of Canada and the United States.**

Here are some developments in the diplomatic standoff:

## **ALBA condemns the British government’s threat against the Ecuador embassy in London**

The Bolivarian Alliance for the People of our Americas (ALBA) released a statement soundly rejecting threats by the United Kingdom “against the integrity of the Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador in London, and against the sovereign right of Ecuador to manage their asylum policy.” It condemned the willingness of the country to “violate the Vienna Convention on the Privileges and Immunities” and ignore “international obligations.” ALBA characterized it as another “belligerent stance in addition to the treatment of the UK government on the case of the Falkland Islands and shows their lack of concern of relations with Latin America and the Caribbean,” and indicated a “special meeting of foreign ministers” was to be held.

## **How much of a mistake was UK’s threat against Ecuador?**

A former British ambassador, Oliver Miles, calls it a “big mistake.” **He also laughs at the idea that UK did not threaten the country, as it has claimed:** “If I tell you, ‘I’m not threatening you but I DO have a very large stick here,’ it’s a question of semantics.” A British former ambassador to Russia said they had “slightly overreached.” Any attempt to get Assange would likely violate a clear principle of international law.

Nikolas Kozloff wrote about the threat and said, “Merely hinting that it would resort to force and ‘go rogue’ in an effort to apprehend Assange, Britain has demonstrated its contempt for international law and diplomacy.” He described a prior example in history when an embassy’s diplomatic immunity was violated. Guatemala was “engulfed” in violence in the early 1980s and Indians entered the Spanish embassy. Security forces in Guatemala threw incendiary devices at the embassy and Molotov cocktails the Indians had carried inside went off killing the peasants. He does not

suggest this would happen but wonders if it would consider some kind of force in order to get Assange to leave the embassy.

### **Ecuador embassy in London complains of police intimidation**

From The Guardian, a “senior Ecuadorean diplomatic source” reported the police presence had “risen from two or three to around 50, with officers on the embassy’s fire escape and at every window.” The source described this as “‘an absolutely intimidating and unprecedented use of police’ designed to show the British government’s desire to ‘go in with a strong hand.’” But, the British Foreign Office is still willing to talk with Ecuador about their decision. The source reiterated to The Guardian: “Ecuador has been proposing that we would be prepared to accept an undertaking from the UK and Sweden that, once Julian Assange has faced the Swedish investigation, he will not be extradited to a third country: specifically the US. That might be a way out of it and Ecuador has always said it does not want to interfere with the Swedish judicial process.”

### **President of Ecuador’s office puts out press release celebrating history of helping refugees**

Part of Ecuador’s decision included a short description of the country’s history of helping asylum seekers. The President of the Republic of Ecuador has now chosen to emphasize some more aspects of this history. For example, in the 1970s, when there was a conflict between the Dominican Republic and Brazil, Ecuador’s embassy in Santo Domingo helped citizens fleeing the conflict. When Papa Doc Duvalier ruled Haiti, Ecuador sought to help those seeking asylum. They even had to involve Brazil so they could get refugees out of the country. Granting asylum to Assange is part of upholding human rights and being more inclusive.

### **CNN has a “primer” on diplomatic asylum**

One key part is worth attention because it includes content suggesting there is no right to diplomatic asylum. The article states, “The prevailing view that diplomatic asylum is not part of accepted international law was settled in a case between Peru and Colombia before the International Court of Justice in 1950.” It adds, “Victor de la Haya, a Peruvian, led an unsuccessful rebellion in Peru and was wanted by authorities there. He hid in the Colombian embassy in Lima and asked for, and received asylum from Colombia. Peru, however, refused to grant safe passage.” The court ruled unless treaties or agreements were in place between countries diplomatic asylum did not have to be recognized.

### **International Court of Justice is likely to hear case involving safe passage to Ecuador**

Baltasar Garzon, former Spanish judge and member of Assange’s defense, believes the UK is “legally required to allow Assange to leave.” The UK, Garzon contends, has “diplomatic obligations of the refugee convention,” which it must follow. Otherwise, the case will go to the International Court of Justice.

## President Correa explains decision to grant asylum in radio interview

The president of Ecuador, Rafael Correa, said in a radio interview that he was not in agreement with everything that Assange has done but “does that mean he deserves the death penalty, life in prison, to be extradited to a third country. Please! Where is the proportionality between the crime and the punishment? Where is due process?” He also stated, “The main reason why Julian Assange was given diplomatic asylum was because his extradition to a third country was not guaranteed, in no way was it done to interrupt the investigations of Swedish justice over an alleged crime. In no way.”

## State Department: US does not recognize “diplomatic asylum”

“The United States is not a party to the 1954 OAS Convention on Diplomatic Asylum and does not recognize the concept of diplomatic asylum as a matter of international law,” the State Department declared in a statement. “We believe this is a bilateral issue between Ecuador and the United Kingdom and that the OAS has no role to play in this matter.”

First off, no one should be able to say with a straight face this is a “bilateral issue” because Sweden wants to extradite him. The UK will make no negotiated decision without consulting Sweden. It will not pledge to Ecuador that it has received assurances from Sweden- Assange will not be extradited to the US without meeting with Swedish officials first. So, the US should at least call it a trilateral issue.

However, it is only a trilateral issue if the US does not care whether he ends up in Sweden or Ecuador. It is only something which they are not involved in if it doesn't matter whether it is easy to extradite him for trial over crimes, such as conspiracy to commit espionage, in the near future. Since The Age published details from Australian cables today showing the US has talked to diplomatic officials about extraditing Assange and that is still being pursued, it is clear sexual allegations in Sweden is just a prelude to a much more significant chain of events that are likely to be set in motion in 2014 or 2015, after it has convicted Pfc. Bradley Manning and the Justice Department has some leverage to issue indictments for WikiLeaks founders, managers and staffers.

## [Videos](#)

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## Assange Case Exposes 'International Hypocrisy'

SPIEGEL ONLINE  
2012-08-17

Ecuador may have granted WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange asylum, but it seems unlikely that he will ever make it to the South American country. More to the point, say German commentators, is the fact that both Ecuador and Britain **have granted Assange an even larger soap box.** *[Yes, that's all he really wants. --A.B.]*

For almost two years, WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has wiggled out of efforts to have him extradited to Sweden where he faces sexual assault charges. Now with the

decision of the Ecuadorian government to grant him asylum at its London embassy, Assange got another reprieve. What happens next is far from clear.

The British government has retaliated by threatening to invoke a little used law to remove the embassy's diplomatic status so that it can ship Assange to Sweden. The law was enacted in 1987 after a British police officer was shot outside a Libyan embassy. In doing so it would be violating the principles behind the 1961 Vienna Convention which deemed embassies as extra territorial areas so that diplomats could work undisturbed in foreign countries. Furthermore, London has promised to arrest Assange as soon as he sets foot on British soil, something he would have to do should he wish to travel to Ecuador.

Of course, the high stakes game of chicken isn't just over the Australian's alleged sex crimes. In releasing reams of classified communications, mainly US diplomatic cables and military documents from Iraq and Afghanistan, through his website WikiLeaks, Assange became an instant international outlaw. Assange has said he fears that once in Sweden he will be extradited to the US where he would face serious charges over the release of classified US government documents.

The German newspapers see the latest development in the Assange saga as a political power struggle pitting Great Britain against Ecuador, which is no stranger to human rights abuses [???]. Assange is just a small pawn in that larger game.

By granting Assange asylum, editorialists agree that the South American country is thumbing its nose at the rest of the world and that President Rafael Correa is flexing his muscle on the international stage. Meanwhile Great Britain's forceful response, they say, comes at the expense of established international norms. Julian Assange, they argue, isn't worth the trouble.

The conservative daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung writes:

"Whatever one thinks of Julian Assange and his deeds, he is neither Osama bin Laden nor a mafia boss. That's why, carefully put, it was a blunder that the British government challenged Ecuador by referring to a law that allows it to retrieve asylum seekers from embassies in individual cases.... By heading down that path, the British government has done Assange a favor. Now, he can continue working on his own myth."

"That a government such as Ecuador's, of all countries, can now pose as a defender of human rights is shameful, but that is in the end London's fault. Unfortunately, it has also meant that the fact that Assange is accused of raping a woman in Sweden has taken a back seat."

The leftist Die Tageszeitung writes:

"The case of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has become an unbelievable example of international hypocrisy. Both of the countries involved, Great Britain and Ecuador, are blameworthy."

"Far from the world's attention, the (Ecuadorian) government is evicting an ex-government worker from Belarus who has enjoyed three years of asylum status in Ecuador. The reason is that six weeks ago, Belarussian President Alexander Lukashenko was in Quito to sign a number of trade agreements and applied pressure. A short time later the man, Alexander Barankov, was arrested in Quito. **Against this background, the flowery words of Ecuador's foreign minister about the huge importance of political asylum don't hold much value.**"

"Great Britain, for its part, has openly threatened to storm the Ecuadorian embassy with police forces in order to arrest Assange. That makes an absurdity out of its own internationally supported position about the protection of diplomatic representatives and adherence to the Vienna Convention."

"That the British government is prepared to even suggest setting such a precedent is a tough blow. That they are giving Assange so much importance is surprising."

The center-left Süddeutsche Zeitung writes:

"Why does (Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa) have so much sympathy for an Australian named Julian Assange...? Because Correa sees the founder of the whistle blowing platform WikiLeaks as a soul mate. By publishing classified dispatches that have exposed the US above all, Assange has pleased Correa. He belongs alongside Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, Bolivia's Evo Morales and Cuba's Fidel Castro as the most important opponents of Washington. Secondly the temperamental Ecuadorian smells a chance to play a little world politics and show off the new self confidence of South America."

"Offering asylum is his right. Practically it will be much more complicated. Sweden is pushing for (Assange's) extradition not because of (WikiLeaks) but because of his alleged sexual assaults. From that point of view, he cannot formally be considered to be the victim of political persecution. In any case Correa is allowed to protect his embassy from encroachment by England. Yet he should display just as much respect for his critics at home."

The business daily Financial Times Deutschland writes:

"Julian Assange will likely send a thank you letter to the British government-- though not likely with Ecuadorian stamps. The founder of the whistle blowing platform WikiLeaks, who is hiding in the London embassy of the Andean nation, obtained political asylum in Ecuador. With that, he has received a lot of free PR from the blundering Brits who have catapulted the almost forgotten Australian back into the headlines. And he is even in his favorite roll as David fighting against the Goliaths of the world, mainly the US and Great Britain."

"Great Britain has helped Assange again portray himself as a victim of political persecution.... In truth Assange is fleeing from a long prison term in Sweden [*not even his Swedish critics believe that --A.B.*]. And the Ecuadorian government, above all President Rafael Correa, wants to poke at the unloved US by granting asylum to Assange. The relationship of the two countries has been tense for years."

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/german-newspapers-comment-on-assange-case-a-850625.html>

[Query: Have editorial writers all taken the same course in moronic speculation? --A.B.]

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## Julian Assange 'doing all right' amid Ecuador asylum row

*WikiLeaks founder spends comfortable night at Ecuadorean embassy in London as protesters plan show of solidarity*

Sam Jones  
The Guardian  
17 August 2012

The WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange spent a comfortable night in the Ecuadorean embassy in London after the South American country's decision to offer him asylum, and is said to be "doing all right", according to a diplomatic source.

More than a dozen Metropolitan police officers stood guard outside the redbrick Knightsbridge mansion block on Friday morning, accompanied by a handful of his supporters who are understood to be planning a show of solidarity and direct action tonight in protest at the British government's treatment of Assange.

A strong international media presence remained behind barriers outside, where gutters were full of beer cans and coffee cups.

One supporter, Tristan Woodward, said he had spent the night camped out opposite the embassy to show sympathy. "I'm here to support Julian Assange and WikiLeaks and to show my disgust at the British government's threat to a sovereign nation's embassy," he said. "It's completely wrong. People talk about the [assault] allegations, but [the UK government's reaction] seems over the top for someone who's supposed to have committed a crime."

Another supporter, Tammy Samede, said she had decided to keep watch on the embassy to make sure the government acted in accordance with international law. "To be honest, I'm not a fan of the British government for a lot reasons," she said. "But they're using the need to question him to get him out of here and get him to Sweden, who will extradite him to the US, who will probably imprison him forever or execute him."

Samede said that while the women who had made the assault allegations had every right to due process, the case should be dealt with "in the proper manner and not in the political manner". She said Assange had offered to answer questions by videolink, but British authorities seemed unwilling to let him.

Asked how long she would keep vigil, she said: "It's not the most comfortable place, but standing up for what's right is never comfortable. That's why [Assange] is stuck in a room without a window in the embassy."

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## Julian Assange extradition: Ecuador 'willing to co-operate' with Britain

*Pledge on protecting WikiLeaks founder from US could lead to deal, says source as embassy complains of 'intimidating' police*

Sam Jones and Rajeev Syal  
The Guardian  
17 August 2012

Ecuador is still willing to negotiate with the British government over the fate of Julian Assange, despite the Foreign Office's "threat" to arrest the WikiLeaks founder inside its embassy and the "intimidating" police presence in and around the building, according to a senior Ecuadorean diplomatic source.

The South American country's decision to grant political asylum to the 41-year-old Australian, who faces allegations of sexual assault in Sweden, has provoked a bitter political row between Quito and London.

The source complained that the UK government's written warning that it could use the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987 to arrest Assange inside the embassy had been accompanied by a large increase in the number of police officers at the Knightsbridge building.

**The police presence, it added, had risen from two or three to around 50, with officers on the embassy's fire escape and at every window. This was described as "an absolutely intimidating and unprecedented use of police" designed to show the British government's desire to "go in with a strong hand".**

However, the source said that Quito had been encouraged by a phone call made by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to the Ecuadorean ambassador on Thursday. "The FCO called the ambassador yesterday to confirm that it still had the will to talk and negotiate, so we'll keep talking," it added.

"The fact that they called the ambassador makes us think that the letter with the threat of using domestic legislation to make an incursion into the embassy and arrest somebody inside was a mistake— as was the intimidating increase in the number of police surrounding the embassy on the same day the letter was delivered."

It stressed that Ecuador was willing to co-operate with the British and Swedish authorities over the matter of Assange's extradition to Sweden. "In the negotiations with the FCO, Ecuador has been proposing that we would be prepared to accept an undertaking from the UK and Sweden that, once Julian Assange has faced the Swedish investigation, he will not be extradited to a third country: specifically the US. That might be a way out of it and **Ecuador has always said it does not want to interfere with the Swedish judicial process; we could facilitate it.**"

The source said the Ecuadorean government had been bolstered by the support it had received since deciding to grant asylum to Assange, adding: "We are moved by the overwhelming level of solidarity that Ecuador now has in the [Latin American] region."

**Asked how Assange was coping with the pressure of life in the small embassy, where he has been living for 55 days, the source said: "He's fine. He's not stressed**

**out.** Given the fact that he has been under pressure for so long and that his legal fight has gone through so many different levels, I think that for his safety he always had a last resort."

Scotland Yard declined to comment on the policing operation at the embassy, while an FCO source said the letter sent to the Ecuadorean authorities on Wednesday was not menacing and that the rights of the country's officials would continue to be respected by the government.

"The letter was not a threat," said the source. "There had already been many meetings with the Ecuador government. It was just that it was quite clear that they were close to making a decision and we wanted them to know the law. It was merely signposting the fact."

The foreign secretary, William Hague, was informed about diplomatic developments on the Assange case, although a spokeswoman declined to divulge further details, saying: "We are not providing a running commentary."

At a press conference on Wednesday, Ecuador's foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, released details of the contentious letter, which he said was delivered through a British embassy official in Quito.

The letter said: "You need to be aware that there is a legal base in the UK, the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987, that would allow us to take actions in order to arrest Mr Assange in the current premises of the embassy." It added: "We need to reiterate that we consider the continued use of the diplomatic premises in this way incompatible with the Vienna convention and unsustainable and we have made clear the serious implications that this has for our diplomatic relations."

Patiño said that Ecuador rejected the "explicit threat" made in the letter, adding: "This is unbecoming of a democratic, civilised and law-abiding state. If this conduct persists, Ecuador will take appropriate responses in accordance with international law. If the measures announced in the British official communication materialise they will be interpreted by Ecuador as a hostile and intolerable act and also as an attack on our sovereignty, which would require us to respond with greater diplomatic force."

Hague has denied suggestions that the FCO was threatening "to storm an embassy", saying: "We are talking about an act of parliament in this country which stresses that it must be used in full conformity with international law."

He has also said that Assange will not be allowed safe passage out of the UK despite the asylum decision, and that diplomatic immunity should not be used to harbour alleged criminals.

It is unclear whether Assange will address his supporters at the embassy on Sunday, as has been reported. He has described the granting of political asylum by Ecuador as a "significant and historic victory".

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## Ecuador claims moral high ground in Julian Assange case

*Decision to grant asylum to WikiLeaks founder goes down well with president's supporters, but critics condemn it as a damaging move*

Dan Collyns  
The Guardian  
17 August 2012

The decision of Rafael Correa, Ecuador's charismatic and often hot-tempered leader, to grant political asylum to Julian Assange has gone down well with his supporters, who see their small country taking the moral high ground. But for his critics, the move is typically provocative and damaging to the country's international standing.

Rosana Alvarado, a national assembly representative of Correa's Alianza Pais party, was at the forefront of 50-strong crowd of protesters who gathered near the office block housing the British embassy in Quito.

Alvarado said Ecuadoreans were people who had learned to survive and assert their sovereignty in an "upright and decent way". She said Ecuador wanted to protect Julian Assange, who had "taken on the big powers, the huge empires and economic interests to defend freedom of speech".

"We don't defend impunity," she added but stressed that Swedish officials turned down the opportunity to interview Assange at the Ecuadorean embassy in London.

**"The coincidences are very strange," she said of the allegations of sexual assault faced by Assange in Sweden. "I don't believe it could be an accident that a scandal of this kind surged when he was taking on the big powers for having revealed sensitive information."**

**It was a small but noisy protest. Chants ranged from "colonialism go home" to stronger expressions such as "England: colonial son of a bitch", which rhymes in Spanish.**

"This set-up trial [in Sweden] is just a farce so they can deliver Julian Assange to the United States and apply the death penalty," said Rosario San Roman, a journalist.

Despite his support for Assange's whistleblowing, Correa has had a troubled relationship with the Ecuadorean press. In February, Carlos Pérez, editor of the main opposition newspaper, El Universo, was granted 14 days asylum in Panama's embassy in Quito after the country's high court upheld a conviction of criminal defamation against him and other senior editors following a highly critical editorial column. Correa later pardoned them and waived a \$42 m damages award.

"There was no safe passage for Pérez when he sought asylum in the Panamanian embassy," said Ramiro Crespo, director of Analytica, a Quito-based thinktank. "There's a contradiction between the way [Correa] has treated Assange and his lack of respect for journalists and the political opposition at home. It would be nice if he didn't insult them and accuse them of corruption every Saturday." President Correa has a weekly programme on the state-owned channel.

Crespo described the asylum move as a "distraction" to draw attention away from Correa's domestic problems including legal security, the centralisation of executive power and freedom of expression. "Right now Ecuador is not a real democratic republic where there is a proper separation of powers."

He added that, in granting asylum to Assange, Correa had reinforced his "anti-Americanism and assertion of Ecuador's sovereignty" which went down well domestically, although it would probably have little impact on his already high popularity. **Opinion polls show Correa has a 70% approval rating**, largely due to his huge social spending in the poor nation of 14 million people. General elections are set for January 2013 and Correa is expected to win.

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DN: 2012-08-17

## Högt spel om Julian Assanges nya framtid

*Mexico City.* Julian Assange-affären riskerar nu att sluta i världspolitik. Ecuadors beslut om att ge Wikileaksgrundaren asyl sätter honom i centrum för en möjlig internationell konflikt. Frågan är också hur yttrandefrihetskämpen kommer att finna sig i ett land med så **begränsad pressfrihet** [*Mark Weisbrot har motbevisat denna konventionella visdom --A.B.*].

Julian Assange beskriver sig ofta som en förkämpe för pressfrihet och fri information. Det kan därför tyckas märkligt att han nu sökt och fått asyl i Ecuador—ett land som knappast räknas som ett föredöme vad gäller pressfrihet. Men förklaringen är enkel och ligger i dess regerings relation till USA.

På 2 800 meters höjd är Ecuadors huvudstad Quito en imponerande syn där den ligger i en dal omgiven av snöklädda bergstoppar. Det är hit—till landet som fått sitt namn av att det ligger på ekvatorn—som Julian Assange kan komma att förlägga sin och Wikileaks nya bas, om han lyckas med bedriften att ta sig från den ecuadorianska ambassaden i London till ett väntande regeringsplan.

När Assanges mor besökte Ecuador nyligen sade hon att hon tror att "Julian skulle trivas med det lugna livet i landet..." Men frågan är om Julian Assange kommer att nöja sig med ett stillasittande liv utanför det mediala strålkastarljuset.

Om inte, är risken stor att han snart hamnar på kollisionskurs också med Ecuadors vänsterpresident Rafael Correa, som de senaste åren knappast har utmärkt sig för sin respekt för pressfrihet.

För bara en månad sedan beslagtogs exempelvis sändningsutrustningen på den regeringskritiska radiostationen Radio Morena FM 98.1 av ecuadorianska myndigheter. Det var den sjuttonde radiostationen som stängdes på det viset i Ecuador enbart i år, uppger organisationen Reportrar utan gränser.

**Ecuadors regering hävdar att stationerna stängts av strikt administrativa skäl, som att de inte betalt sina sändningstillstånd, och att man strävar efter att tillåta en större**

**medial mångfald.** Men människorättsorganisationer som Human Rights Watch varnar för att stängningarna i själva verket är en del av ett större mönster, där regeringskritiker stämts för förtal och i vissa fall har dömts till fängelse. *[HRW har självt ofta kritiserats för att gå USA:s ärenden. --A.B.]*

Så varför har då Julian Assange valt att söka asyl i Ecuador? Svaret är enkelt: att han och president Correa funnit varandra i **en mer eller mindre befogad rädsla** för USA och dess underrättelsetjänster.

Den 49-årige ekonomen Correa valdes till Ecuadors president 2006, på en vänsterplattform som snabbt gjorde honom till en allierad med Hugo Chávez i Venezuela, Evo Morales i Bolivia och den radikalare delen av Latinamerikas vänster. **Han konfronterade den traditionella eliten i landet** *[den som nu flitigt citeras av den västerländska pressen --A.B.]*, ställde in betalningarna på statsskulden och lyckades stabilisera den krisande ekonomin.

På senare år har dock Correa fått allt mer högljudd kritik— och inte enbart från hans traditionella belackare inom den ekonomiska eliten. Delar av indianrörelsen i Ecuador anklagar honom för att ha svikit löften om att sätta stopp för gruvnäringen i landet och ge urfolken större inflytande.

**Det var dock när en polisstrejk förvandlades till ett kuppförsök mot Correa i september 2010, som regeringen började inta en allt hårdare linje mot regeringskritiska medier. Correa yttrade misstankar om att kuppförsöket orkestrerats från USA.**

I botten finns därför en misstänksamhet mot USA och dess underrättelsetjänster, något som Correa delar med många andra av de mer radikala vänsterpresidenterna på kontinenten. Liksom uppenbarligen med Assange.

Med det i åtanke var det sannolikt ett taktiskt misstag av Storbritanniens regering att först antyda att den kan låta storma Ecuadors ambassad. Det förvandlade i ett slag Assangefallet från en juridisk fråga till en politisk kris, **som nu hela Sydamerika riskerar att dras in i.**

• *Erik de la Reguera*

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DN 2012-08-17

## **"Han ska behandlas som alla andra"**

Ecuadors beslut om att ge Julian Assange asyl sätter krokben för den svenska rättsprocessen. De två kvinnor som anmält Wikileaksgrundaren för sexövergrepp *[det var polisen som gjorde det --A.B.]* riskerar nu att inte få något avslut på historien.

Samtidigt uppmanar Assanges advokat Per E Samuelson åklagaren att ändra strategi och genomföra förhöret på brittisk mark.

– Utredningen har hamnat i ett nytt läge nu. Då bör åklagaren göra det näst bästa i stället för det bästa, säger Per E Samuelson till DN.

Det är nu två år sedan som Julian Assange anmälades av två svenska kvinnor för våldtäkt och andra sexuella övergrepp.

Överåklagare Marianne Ny, som är förundersökningsledare i sexbrottsanklagelserna, vill för närvarande inte uttala sig om saken. Men advokat Claes Borgström, som företräder de två målsägarna, anser att det inte finns skäl för henne att ändra sig.

– Assange ska behandlas som alla andra brottsmistänkta och inte gå i någon gräddfil. I sådana här förhör behöver polisen jämföra vad Assange säger med kvinnornas berättelser **och genomföra flera förhör. De skulle behöva åka fram och tillbaka mellan Sverige och Storbritannien. Så kan det ju inte gå till. [Det här är mig veterligt en ny bortförklaring. --A.B.]**

Claes Borgström menar att Ecuadors beslut kan innebära att det inte blir någon rättslig prövning av fallet och att hans klienter inte kan få ett slut på historien.

– Assange är en egoistisk ynkrygg som struntar i kvinnorna. Hans tal om att han är rädd för att överlämnas till USA är bara ett försök att flytta fokus. Den faktiska risken finns inte, säger Claes Borgström till DN.

Per E Samuelson menar att risken finns att Sverige överlämnar Assange till USA.

– Han har en oro för att om han kommer till Sverige på ett polisförhör, så kan det sluta med livstids fängelse i USA. Jag kan förstå att man i det läget hellre söker politisk asyl. Han vill hemskt gärna att förhöret hålls med honom.

Per E Samuelson menar att beslutet om politisk asyl är riktat mot USA, inte mot Sverige.

Har Assange anledning att vara orolig för att han inte skulle få en rättvis rättegång i Sverige?

– Ja, både statsministern och socialministern har uttalat sig starkt negativt i det här fallet. Då måste man utgå ifrån att sådana uttalanden försvårar för en person att få en rättvis rättegång.

• *Stefan Lisinski*

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DN: 2012-08-17

## Lagen måste ha sin gång

*Ledare*

I går meddelade Ecuador att Julian Assange ges asyl. Landets regering motiverade beslutet med att Assange är en förkämpe för yttrandefrihet och att det finns tvivel

kring huruvida han skulle få en rättvis rättegång i Sverige. Avsaknaden av garantier från Sverige och Storbritannien om att Assange inte skulle lämnas ut till USA var ett huvudskäl till att han gavs asyl.

Det är tydligt att Ecuadors president Rafael Correa— det var han som först personligen uppmanade Assange att söka asyl— gillar stunden i det internationella strålkastarljuset. Liksom möjligheten att peka finger åt Europa och USA.

Men orden om yttrandefrihet och rättssäkerhet ekar falskt. Enligt demokratiorganisationen [*det är grovt högervidet --A.B.*] Freedom Houses senaste rapport om pressfrihet i världen karaktäriseras Ecuador av en "kultur av trakasserier mot journalister som delvis är ett resultat av president Rafael Correas öppna fientlighet gentemot medier". Och när korruptionsövervakaren Transparency International utvärderar domstolarnas oberoende i olika länder hamnar Ecuador på plats 130 av 142 (Sverige återfinns på tredje plats).

Rafael Correa är en av Hugo Chávez ideologiska själsfränder. För honom handlar asyl till Assange inte om rättvisa och yttrandefrihet utan om att han är en nagel i ögat på USA, och att Correa gärna vill vara detsamma.

Kravet på garantier om att Assange inte ska lämnas ut till USA är dessutom ovidkommande. Det enda som gäller nu är att han ska förhöras av svensk polis om brott han eventuellt har begått i Sverige.

Ecuador fördömde dessutom Storbritanniens besked om att det är möjligt för dem att gripa Assange inne på ambassaden. Bara det att britten antyder att de skulle kunna upphäva ambassadens diplomatiska immunitet är olyckligt. Men att de verkligen skulle göra det är mycket osannolikt eftersom det skulle etablera ett farligt prejudikat.

I praktiken innebär beskedet att Assange förmodligen blir kvar på Ecuadors ambasad i London. Det brittiska utrikesdepartementet betonade i går att asyl inte innebär att han får fri lejd ut ur landet. Om Assange lämnar ambassaden kommer han att gripas och utlämnas till Sverige. Möjligheterna att smuggla ut honom ur landet bör rimligen vara små.

Det innebär i sin tur att rättvisan alltjämt hindras från att ha sin gång. Julian Assange är anklagad för våldtäkt [*av mildare grad --A.B.*] och sexuellt ofredande av två kvinnor i Sverige. I snart två års tid har det varit omöjligt att slutföra utredningen mot honom eftersom han håller sig borta från det svenska rättsväsendet. Det innebär att de två kvinnornas rättigheter även fortsättningsvis befinner sig på undantag.[???]

I kölvattnet av beskedet om asyl lär det också finnas anledning för svenska myndigheter och regeringsföreträdare för viss självrannsakan.

Den mycket negativa bilden av det svenska rättsväsendet som spridits och på vissa håll fått fäste saknar grund. Sverige är en rättsstat och utredningen av Assange följer dess principer, liksom en eventuell rättegång skulle göra. Men svenska politiker har i vissa fall gjort ogenomtänkta uttalanden som gett vatten på kvarn för dem som hävdar att våra domstolar inte är oberoende.

Det skedde senast häromdagen då socialminister Göran Hägglund (KD) kallade Assange för ett "kräk". Det finns ingen orsak för svenska regeringsföreträdare att uttala sig om Assanges karaktär.



Dessutom är det så här i efterhand synd att åklagaren [*bland annat --A.B.*] inte närmare undersökte möjligheten att förhöra Assange på plats i London. Det är självklart att man inte vill ge honom särskild behandling eller belöna hans beteende. Men det viktigaste är att rättsprocessen får ha sin gång och att de två kvinnorna får sin sak prövad.

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## Galloway slams UK for Assange charges

*Press TV  
Aug. 18, 2012*

British MP and founding member of the Respect party, George Galloway, has slammed the UK government for supporting the United States over the issue of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.

According to the British Foreign Secretary, William Hague, the UK will not allow Assange, who has been granted political asylum in the Ecuadorean embassy in London, a safe passage to leave the country.

On the evening program Comment broadcasted by Press TV on Thursday 16 August, Galloway said that the allegations of sexual assaults against Assange were a poor excuse to capture him for the WikiLeaks incident.

The British MP also mentioned that it would create an international crisis and would count as a breach of international law if Assange is arrested by British police officers in case Ecuador decides to escort Assange in diplomatic Ecuadorean cars to catch an Ecuadorean flight to Ecuador.

Galloway stressed his views, saying, **"Is there anyone out there that thinks that Britain is doing this, would do that because of charges of sexual misconduct in Sweden? Is there anybody out there really thinks that? Or is it more likely that Britain has done this and will perhaps do the rest in the service of the United States of America, which is salivating at the possibility of getting their hands on the man who with WikiLeaks embarrassed American and British imperialism in front of the whole world?"**

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## Britain fights to win friends as Assange row intensifies

*South Americans rally round Ecuador after UK threat to storm its London embassy*

*Nigel Morris, Kevin Rawlinson  
The Independent  
18 August 2012*

The acrimonious stand-off over Julian Assange's attempt to avoid extradition on sexual assault allegations intensified last night as Britain and Ecuador battled to gain international support for their positions.

The South American nation tried to win backing from its neighbours by condemning the UK's threats to enter its London embassy to seize the WikiLeaks founder. Britain countered with calls to countries around the globe— but focusing on Latin America— to explain that it believes Ecuador's decision to grant political asylum to Mr Assange was flawed.

Relations between the UK and Ecuador went into meltdown when Quito revealed the threat to arrest Mr Assange, regardless of his residence in the embassy building in Knightsbridge, under a previously little-known legal power.

The Ecuadorean government retaliated by announcing it would accept Mr Assange's asylum claim. But the Foreign Secretary, William Hague, said he would not guarantee him safe passage out of the country and underlined his determination to return Mr Assange to Sweden to face allegations of sexual assault.

There was no prospect of an early resolution to the stalemate yesterday, though the Foreign Office was reported to have contacted Ecuador with an appeal to "calm the situation down". Ecuador has filed a motion to the Organisation of American States calling for condemnation of British threats to seize Mr Assange, which it denounced as "a hostile, unfriendly act". The UK Government is resigned to members supporting the statement. One diplomatic source said: "They will see an imperative for Latin American solidarity. But signing up to a motion doesn't mean people are going to do anything about it."

**Britain mounted a major diplomatic exercise yesterday, contacting several Latin American nations both on their home soil and at their London embassies.** Sources insisted the Government was explaining the facts of the case and pointing out that the UK was acting in accordance with international law by backing the extradition.

Venezuela and Bolivia are offering full support to Ecuador. Argentina is sympathetic, partly because of the historic dispute over the ownership of the Falkland Islands. Mr Assange, who breached bail terms on entering the embassy around two months ago, is liable to arrest if he leaves the building.

WikiLeaks announced on Thursday that he intended to make a statement "in front" of the embassy tomorrow. However, Britain has insisted he could be arrested on the steps if he does so.

Carl Bildt, Sweden's Foreign Minister, gave strong backing to Britain yesterday and ridiculed claims that Mr Assange's life would be in danger if he were extradited to Sweden because he would be passed to the United States.

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## **US in pursuit of Assange, cables reveal**

*Philip Dorling  
Sydney Morning Herald  
August 18, 2012*

AUSTRALIAN diplomats have no doubt the United States is still gunning for Julian Assange, according to Foreign Affairs Department documents obtained by The Saturday Age. **The Australian embassy in Washington has been tracking a US espionage investigation targeting the WikiLeaks publisher for more than 18 months.**

The declassified diplomatic cables, released under freedom of information laws, **show Australia's diplomatic service takes seriously the likelihood that Assange will eventually be extradited to the US** on charges arising from WikiLeaks obtaining leaked US military and diplomatic documents.

This view is at odds with Foreign Minister Bob Carr's repeated dismissal of such a prospect.

Australia's ambassador to the US, former Labor leader Kim Beazley, has made high-level representations to the American government, asking for warning of any moves to prosecute Assange. However, briefings for Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Senator Carr suggest the Australian Government has no in-principle objection to Assange's extradition.

On Thursday, Ecuador granted Assange political asylum at its London embassy on the grounds that if extradited to Sweden to be questioned about sexual assault allegations he will be at risk of further extradition to the US to face espionage or conspiracy charges.

Last night, the diplomatic standoff continued. Foreign Secretary William Hague said Britain would not allow Assange safe passage out of the country, "nor is there any legal basis for us to do so". However, he later told reporters "there is no threat here to storm an embassy".

WikiLeaks announced on Twitter that Assange would give a statement outside the embassy tomorrow. Meanwhile, one of his defence lawyers said he would appeal to the International Court of Justice if Britain prevented him from going to Ecuador.

In May, Senator Carr told a Senate estimates committee hearing: "We have no advice that the US has an intention to extradite Mr Assange ... nothing we have been told suggests that the US has such an intention."

**However, the Australian embassy in Washington reported in February that "the US investigation into possible criminal conduct by Mr Assange has been ongoing for more than a year".**

The embassy noted media reports that a US federal grand jury had been empanelled in Alexandria, Virginia, to pursue the WikiLeaks case and that US government officials "cannot lawfully confirm to us the existence of the grand jury".

Despite this, and apparently on the basis of still classified off-the-record discussions with US officials and private legal experts, **the embassy reported the existence of the grand jury as a matter of fact. It identified a wide range of criminal charges the US could bring against Assange, including espionage, conspiracy, unlawful access to classified information and computer fraud.**

Australian diplomats expect that any charges against Assange would be carefully drawn in an effort to avoid conflict with the First Amendment free speech provisions of the US constitution.

The cables also show that the Australian government considers the prospect of extradition sufficiently likely that, on direction from Canberra, Mr Beazley sought high-level US advice on "the direction and likely outcome of the investigation" and "reiterated our request for early advice of any decision to indict or seek extradition of Mr Assange".

The question of advance warning of any prosecution or extradition moves was previously raised by Australian diplomats in December 2010.

American responses to the embassy's representations have been withheld from release on the grounds that disclosure could "cause damage to the international relations of the Commonwealth".

**Large sections of the cables have been redacted on national security grounds, including parts of reports on the open, pre-court martial proceedings of US Army Private Bradley Manning, who is alleged to have leaked a vast quantity of classified information to WikiLeaks. Australian embassy representatives have attended all of Private Manning's pre-trial hearings.**

Australian diplomats have highlighted the prosecution's reference to "several connections between Manning and WikiLeaks which would form the basis of a conspiracy charge" and evidence that the investigation has targeted the "founders, owners, or managers of WikiLeaks" for espionage.

However, the embassy was unable to confirm the claim in a leaked email from an executive with US private intelligence company Stratfor, that "[w]e have a sealed indictment against Assange".

"Commentators have ... suggested that the source may have been referring to a draft indictment used by prosecutors to 'game out' possible charges," the embassy reported in February. "There is no way to confirm the veracity of the information through official sources."

A spokesperson for Senator Carr said yesterday Assange's circumstances remained a matter for the UK, Ecuador and Sweden, with Australia's role limited to that of a consular observer.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/us-in-pursuit-of-assange-cables-reveal-20120817-24e8u.html>

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## U.S. facing embarrassment in the OAS over Assange

*Narayan Lakshman*  
*The Hindu*  
*August 18, 2012*

The Organisation of American States, an apex hemispherical body for the Americas, said a meeting of its Foreign Ministers next Friday would focus on the diplomatic row between Ecuador and the U.K. over WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange (41), who was granted political asylum by Quito while holed up in the country's London embassy.

The outcome of the OAS meet might embarrass both the U.K. and the U.S., especially since Washington DC will be the venue of the discussion. However, the U.S. State Department has thus far refrained from interjecting itself into the controversy brewing in London's posh Knightsbridge locale.

Even though the Obama administration appeared to be caught off guard by WikiLeaks' publication of a massive trove of confidential State Department cables and has arrested and is prosecuting an army intelligence personnel, Bradley Manning, for the leak, the State Department issued a cautious statement on the OAS proposal and Ecuador's position.

In a press release on Friday, State Department spokesperson Victoria Nuland said Washington "is not a party to the 1954 OAS Convention on Diplomatic Asylum and does not recognise the concept of diplomatic asylum as a matter of international law." She added that the U.S. believed this was a bilateral issue between Ecuador and the UK and that "the OAS has no role to play in this matter."

This statement notwithstanding the OAS call for discussion on the mounting police presence around the Ecuador embassy noted that the group would "address the situation between Ecuador and the UK... regarding the inviolability of the diplomatic premises of Ecuador in the UK... in accordance with international law, and... agree on appropriate measures to be adopted."

According to reports **23 OAS members voted for the resolution proposed by Ecuador to convene the meeting at its Washington headquarters, while the U.S., Canada and Trinidad and Tobago voted nay.**

After the vote U.S. envoy to the OAS, Carmen Lomellin, reportedly said that a meeting of the Foreign Ministers "would be unhelpful and harmful to the OAS' reputation as an institution", underscoring Ms. Nuland's message that the U.S. did not recognise the concept of diplomatic asylum as a matter of international law.

Mr. Assange, who sought refuge in the Ecuador embassy on June 19, was granted asylum by Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa last week. Ecuador's action was said to be motivated by concern for Mr. Assange's life and liberty after it became clear that he faced the prospect of extradition to Sweden, where he faces sexual assault charges.

He also risks being subsequently re-extradited to the U.S., and in such a scenario Mr. Assange may be charged with treason and handed the death penalty, legal experts have argued.

## Julian Assange och rättsstaten i hetluften

*Anders Romelsjös blogg  
18 augusti, 2012*

Jag har glädjen att denna gång få införa ett gästblogginlägg av Zoltan Tiroler, yngre broder till Gabor Tiroler, som tidigare skrev gästblogginlägg om Julian Assange (29/7) och om Aron Modigs besök på Kuba (13/8). Zoltan Tiroler är aktiv i Svensk-Kubanska Föreningen. Frågan om Assange är mycket viktig och mycket aktuell. DN skriver idag "Ecuador vill att organisationen ska diskutera det landet ser som ett hot från Storbritannien om att storma dess ambassad för att gripa Assange." Organisationen är OAS, och 24 av 27 medlemsländer röstade för att sammankalla utrikesministermöte om detta 24/8, medan USA, Kanada och Trinidad & Tobago röstade nej.

\* \* \*

### Några funderingar kring fallet Julian Assange

*Zoltan Tiroler*

Pinochet satt på Chiles ambassad i London. Britternas EU-kollega Spanien ville ha diktatorn utlämnad anklagad för försvinnanden, tortyr och mord på spanska medborgare i Chile. Pinochet fick fri lejd hem till Chile. Då var det aldrig snack om att sabotera förbindelserna med Chile.

Nu har Storbritannien framkallat en diplomatisk kris med stora delar av Latinamerika på grund av en förundersökning om ett ev. sexbrott. **Man kan tycka att sexbrott är allvarliga, men många med mig tycker nog massmord är värre.**

I Sverige lämnas tusentals grova brott utan åtgärd på grund av bristande resurser. **I fallet JA verkar finnas hur mycket resurser som helst för ett ev. brott som i de flesta länder inte är något brott.** Och kalla mig mansgris, men någon gräns finns det väl ändå? Om man fullkomligt frivilligt släpper upp en man i sin säng och utan motstånd genomför ett samlag så tycker jag brottet är ringa, även om en kondom ev. gått sönder och den ena kvinnan enligt egen utsago "halvsov". (Utsagorna har kvinnorna för övrigt ändrat flera gånger). **Jag kan tänka mig att det är bittert att läsa om turerna kring JA för de många vanliga kvinnor som utsatts för verklig våldtäkt och där polisen lagt målet till handlingarna.**

Varför vill inte Sverige garantera att JA inte utlämnas till USA? Varför kan de inte förhöra honom i London? Varför förhörde de inte JA när han vistades i Sverige? Då lades förundersökningen ner, men återupptogs senare. Var det när man insett vem det handlade om? Eller påtryckningar utifrån? **Det är inte långsökt att tro att Bildt vill få ännu en fjäder i hatten hos sina vänner på andra sidan Atlanten genom att leverera JA till USA,** ungefär som den tidigare sosseregeringen levererade människooffer till CIA för vidare tortyr i Egypten.

USA är ingen rättsstat. Det räcker att läsa Amnestys rapporter om misshandel och rasistiska övergrepp i fängelserna. Det räcker med att se hur de behandlar Bradley Manning, misstänkt för att ha gett Wikileaks information. Manning har nu torterats i

flera år och brutits ner. **USA är också den största fristaden för fd diktatorer och terrorister från just Latinamerika. En rad länder, bland annat Ecuador, kräver förgäves att få dömda grova brottslingar utlämnade.**

Att tro att cirkusen kring JA inte har att göra med att Wikileaks avslöjat krigsbrott och hundratusentals dokument från USAs ambassader är naivt. Självklart är det avslöjandena som ligger bakom ansträngningarna att straffa JA och avskräcka andra från att avslöja USAs övergrepp. Därför har också exempelvis prästen Daniel Berrigan, som låg bakom offentliggörandet av Watergate, ställt upp för JA. Det gör också många andra modiga människor som Spaniens mest kände jurist, Garzon, liksom Noam Chomsky, Michael Moore med flera.

Västmakter, inte minst Storbritannien (numera också Sverige med Bildt) är vana vid att behandla länder i tredje världen med översitteri och arrogans. Men varken USA, Storbritannien eller Sverige kan längre bemöta Latinamerika som förr. Den brittiska bulldogen har inte det bett man en gång haft. Numera är bulldogen knähund hos Uncle Sam. Det är något som ministrarna i Whitehall inte fattat, trots att de gått i de dyra privatskolorna i Oxford och Cambridge.

<http://jinge.se/mediekritik/julian-assange-och-rattsstaten-i-hetluften.htm>

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## **How Coverage of Julian Assange Provokes Liberal Outrage**

*Kevin Gosztola  
Firedog Lake  
August 18, 2012*

Most liberals in the United States seem to prefer ignoring what is happening with WikiLeaks, particularly its founder and editor-in-chief Julian Assange. Either they are totally repulsed by Assange as an individual, they do not consider WikiLeaks to have provided a valuable service by releasing previously classified documents, the way the United States government is pursuing WikiLeaks founders, owners, managers, staffers and others connected doesn't bother them or the story at this point is so complicated that they do not have the patience to sort out all the details to figure out the truth.

These various viewpoints inevitably lead to a contention that the era of WikiLeaks is over and, perhaps, the organization never really mattered that much at all. Such views are not surprising given the way that the US press has covered or failed to cover developments in the story of Assange, Pfc. Bradley Manning, the soldier accused of releasing classified information to WikiLeaks, and the media organization. Should WikiLeaks even enjoy First Amendment protection? That is a question for people who do not think Assange is a journalist or that WikiLeaks is a media organization. The dispute over this question is a result of those pundits and commentators in the US media that feel threatened by what WikiLeaks represents. And all of this can combine to form a general disgust toward seeing shows cover issues surrounding Assange, Manning or WikiLeaks.

Chris Hayes, host of the MSNBC show, "Up," covered Ecuador's decision to grant Assange asylum this morning. From the outset, Hayes made his view on the situation

clear saying, “It’s hard for me to figure out where I am on all of this because there seems to be a lot of conflicting facts.” He said the facts around the alleged sexual assault— why Sweden claims it wants to extradite him from the United Kingdom—are complicated.

Hayes continued, “Assange himself as a figure seems complicated and in some senses a frustrating, maddening figure; also admirable in certain ways. **The key thing here is when you look at what happened— how did we get here? He hasn’t even been charged with a crime.** He is wanted for questioning in connection” to “serious allegations.”

Rolling Stone contributing editor Michael Hastings, who was on the show because of his interview with Assange published in January, suggested those discussing the situation step back. **WikiLeaks is the “most significant journalistic enterprise that we’ve seen in the last thirty years,”** he stated. **What Assange did with Cablegate, the Iraq and Afghanistan war logs led to many critical news stories. Hastings added, “Over 310,000 stories around the world based off the documents WikiLeaks released,”** have been written. Many of the news stories one reads now will reference WikiLeaks cables somewhere in the final paragraphs of the story. And what Assange did “angered the most powerful governments in the world. That is why Assange is in this situation.”

The, “It’s complicated,” view is a safe and neutral viewpoint to take. For anyone not wanting to wade through the weeds and stake out a position, it is easy to say this is all complicated. It also is completely fair because the combination of views from WikiLeaks supporters, who have been extremely active in defending Assange and WikiLeaks, and the condescending or sneering opinions of US pundits or commentators have made it easy for someone not following the story closely to doubt much of what is being reported and think all discussion is typically biased and it is impossible to get the truth. Nonetheless, if one cares, it is possible to sort out what is really happening and the show made a genuine effort to do just that.

Hayes layered in on the critical issue in all this that, besides Assange’s perceived character defects, happens to be polarizing people: whether Sweden is “acting either out of their own desire to punish Assange and want to prosecute him” or is acting as a “proxy” for more powerful countries, like the United States, in their pursuit.

There is uneasiness for liberals when asked to accept that Sweden is acting as a proxy because they think this is something Assange is just saying so he can get away with not being punished for the sexually assault he allegedly committed against two women. WikiLeaks supporters throughout the world, however, say Swedish authorities continue to stand behind the case so Assange remains tied up until the US wants him to be extradited to the United States; in fact, he is likely to be extradited from the United States after he is taken into custody in Sweden and would have much more difficulty fighting extradition in Sweden. But liberals hear this view and, without more evidence of a conspiracy, they do not think he should be seeking asylum in Ecuador. They think he should go to Sweden and confront the allegations because the women who accused him of sexual assault do not deserve to be subjected to this long, drawn out process that is created by him trying to protect himself from persecution.

What ardent skeptics do not know or refuse to factor into their view is that the Swedish government has refused to send someone to question Assange in the Ecuador embassy



or in the UK, even though both Assange and Ecuador have requested the authorities send someone. **If the Swedish government is genuinely concerned over the women who have made sexual allegations, it is troubling to see the government continue to refuse to send someone to question Assange in London.** Not wanting to question just proves that what matters most is not the case itself but getting Assange into their custody.

**It is not like Sweden has not acted as a proxy before.** If one accepts that US officials likely view the ultimate prosecution of Assange for releasing classified documents as matter of national security, they could probably get Sweden to do as requested. Sweden did allow the CIA to operate a rendition program that violated a torture ban inside their country.

Similar to when the show decided to cover Obama's policies involving drone executions of alleged terror suspects, there was outrage that Hayes chose to cover Assange:

The opposition to the coverage because people thought Hayes should be talking about voter suppression instead is funny, given the fact that his Sunday program tomorrow will be addressing the issue of voter suppression. It also is not like Assange dominated the broadcast this morning. He covered GOP vice presidential candidate Paul Ryan before talking Assange. Plus, the Ecuador decision to grant asylum was a much-anticipated major breaking news story this week (as Firedoglake readers know well). Liberals were just outraged because Hayes spent time talking about Assange and WikiLeaks on the show. They don't want to be given information that might give them a reason to care about what is happening.

Finally, Josh Barro, who is a lead writer for Bloomberg View's The Ticker, jumped into share his reactionary viewpoint. He said having these documents released "did nobody good." That hundreds of thousands of stories were written and that change might have occurred did not make the release a "good thing." He argued, "The government should be able to keep some secrets," as if it is increasingly has trouble with preserving its culture of secrecy. "It doesn't do anybody good that it's known that we think the foreign minister of Germany sucks and we like the one previously," he declared.

**That reaction is born out of the fact that most media organizations did not cover the substantive or key revelatory stories that showed the true corruption of the American empire and instead focused in on sections of the cables that made it seem like Assange had gotten his hands on a high school girl's diary.** The Bradley Manning Support Network highlighted key revelations showing that Manning did not simply uncover gossip. He uncovered serious abuses and crimes that, if released by him, the network of supporters believes are to his credit.

Barro continued saying there's "lots of private information that would be fun for journalists to know but part of the way diplomacy works is to be able to be discreet and be able to have tact. For example, cables showed the US did not have faith in elements of the Mexican government and that undermined diplomatic relations. The problem with this view is wouldn't it be better for the Mexican people and American people to have it out in the open that there was a high level of distrust? The transparency would hopefully force people to resolve issues that were creating precarious situations and perhaps even fueling violence or conflict.

The viewpoint is less authoritarian than something Representative Peter King might say but still backward because what being able to operate discreetly means is the US can engage in underhanded diplomacy—blackmail, bribery, coercion, deception, fraud, misconduct, etc, and engage in coverups of crimes. They can work on behalf of multinational corporations and overlook the brutality or criminal aspects of a country's government just to keep relations with a country smooth. That is why so many countries in the world have descended into chaos and suffer from increased repression. The culture of secrecy—the fact that diplomacy between countries is not more transparent—fuels and enables corruption amongst world powers. Other countries are reluctant to come to the aid of populations in countries by confronting countries' leaders because it could make diplomatic relations unmanageable.

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Subject: "Minor rape"  
Date: 19 Aug. 2012  
From: Al Burke  
To: Undisclosed recipients

I keep reading and hearing that Julian is wanted for questioning on suspicion of "rape". This would be a good time to explain to the world that:

- the actual offense cited by Marianne Ny translates as "minor rape"
- that is not one of the options provided on the EAW application, so Marianne Ny ticked off "rape"
- the term "rape" implies some degree of force/coercion; but both women have stated that Julian was never violent and that they never feared him
- in the EAW, the (minor) rape is described as follows:

"On 17 August 2010, in the home of the injured party [SW] in Enköping, Assange deliberately consummated sexual intercourse with her by improperly exploiting that she, due to sleep, was in a helpless state.

"It is an aggravating circumstance that 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, still consummated unprotected sexual intercourse with her. The sexual act was designed to violate the injured party's sexual integrity."

But in her (incomplete and unendorsed) testimony, Sofia Wilén stated that she was awake at the time, discussed the matter with Julian, and gave her reluctant consent.

From what I can see and hear, most of the journalists, tweeters and others who have been discussing the case are unaware of these crucial facts, which make the position of the Swedish prosecution even more untenable....

— Al Burke

## Australia's secret Assange files

*Philip Dorling  
Sydney Morning Herald  
August 19, 2012*

Julian Assange continues to be the subject of Australian intelligence reports more than a year after the WikiLeaks website published thousands of leaked US military and diplomatic documents.

In a recent freedom of information decision, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade confirmed to Fairfax Media the existence of at least two intelligence reports concerning WikiLeaks and Mr Assange from Australia's embassy to the US in February and March this year.

The secret Washington embassy cables, **one running to 10 pages**, have been withheld from release because they are "intelligence agency documents".

Yesterday, the Herald reported that Australia's ambassador to the US, the former Labor leader Kim Beazley, had made high-level representations seeking advance warning of any US moves to extradite Mr Assange on charges arising from WikiLeaks obtaining secret US information.

On Thursday, Ecuador granted Mr Assange political asylum at its London embassy on the grounds that, if extradited to Sweden to face sexual assault allegations, he would be at risk of further extradition to the US. British police are outside the embassy, ready to arrest Mr Assange if he leaves the building.

**The Foreign Minister, Bob Carr, yesterday continued to deny any knowledge of any intention by Washington to prosecute Mr Assange.**

In June, Senator Carr told the ABC Insiders program: "I've received no hint that they've got a plan to extradite [Mr Assange] ... I would expect that the US would not want to touch this."

But, as the Herald revealed yesterday, Australia's Washington embassy reported in February that "the US investigation into possible criminal conduct by Mr Assange has been ongoing for more than a year". A spokesman for Senator Carr acknowledged yesterday that WikiLeaks could be linked to that investigation but insisted that did not mean the US was intent on extraditing Mr Assange.

While visiting the Solomon Islands, Senator Carr confirmed to the ABC that Australia was monitoring the US military prosecution of Private Bradley Manning, who allegedly leaked classified information to WikiLeaks.

Australia's intelligence agencies are represented in Washington and liaise closely with their American counterparts. Other freedom of information decisions have revealed Australian intelligence interest in WikiLeaks and Mr Assange. In December 2010, the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, received a "top secret" ASIO briefing on WikiLeaks that was accompanied by media talking points concerning "WikiLeaks release of ASIO-derived information."

The deputy secretary at Foreign Affairs and Trade, Gillian Bird, consulted with the Australian Secret Intelligence Service when preparing a briefing about WikiLeaks for the former foreign minister Kevin Rudd in December 2010. The entire brief has been withheld on national security grounds. Other diplomatic cables relating to WikiLeaks and Mr Assange sent from the Washington embassy in late 2010 and 2011 have also been withheld.

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/australias-secret-assange-files-20120818-24f9c.html>

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DN: 2012-08-19

## "Fallet Assange ett hot mot den svenska rättsstaten"

*Det svenska rättsväsendets behandling av Julian Assange kan närmast liknas vid trakasserier. Samtidigt har mediernas bevakning varit partisk till förmån för det politiska etablissemanget. Nu har JO avslagit vår anmälan av åklagare Marianne Ny, skriver journalisterna Helene Bergman och Anders Carlgren.*

Den juridiska cirkusen kring fallet Julian Assange har nu fått proportioner som saknar motstycke i juridisk historia. Ingen annan man än just Julian Assange skulle bli jagad på detta sätt över flera kontinenter för de påstådda brotten våldtäkt och sexuellt ofredande.

Vi har därför anmält åklagaren Marianne Ny till Justitieombudsmannen, JO, på grund av hennes hantering av ärendet. Men JO Hans Gunnar Axberger avskrev, märkligt nog, saken dagen efter att Assange beviljats asyl, med hänvisning till den pågående rättsliga prövningen.

Sakläget är mycket enkelt. Julian Assange hade sex med två kvinnor vid skilda tillfällen under sin vistelse här i landet. De båda kvinnorna sökte upp en kvinnlig polisinspektör, som var bekant med en av de båda, med avsikt att förmå Assange att genomgå ett hiv-test. Men då våldtäkt faller under allmänt åtal **upprättade polisinspektören i stället en anmälan. Ingen av de båda kvinnorna hade helt säkert någon aning om vilka proportioner besöket hos poliskvinnan skulle få.**

En åklagare beslöt begära Assange häktad i hans utevaro, trots att han fanns kvar i landet. Dagen därpå fann en annan åklagare att det inte fanns någon grund för påståendena och lade ner saken.

Den 30 augusti 2010 förhöordes Assange, som förnekade brott. Dagen därpå vände sig advokat Claes Borgström, som själv hade erbjudit sig att vara målsägarbiträde för de båda kvinnorna, till sin gamla väninna, åklagaren Marianne Ny, som i sin tur beslöt att öppna fallet på nytt.

Julian Assange stannade kvar i Sverige för att vara tillgänglig för förhör under hela fem veckor, fram till den 27 september, då han lämnade landet efter att ha fått lov av åklagarmyndigheten. I det läget utfärdade Marianne Ny en europeisk arresterings-

order. Åtskilliga gånger har Assange därefter erbjudit sig att bli förhörd i London eller via videolänk. Något som åklagaren, märkligt nog, kategoriskt avvisat trots att så skett i andra fall.

Vi är, liksom Julian Assanges internationelle advokat, den berömde spanjoren Baltasar Garzón, djupt oroade över den brist på garanterad säkerhet och transparens samt på vilka juridiska grunder åtgärder har vidtagits mot Julian Assange. De trakasserier han har utsatts för har medfört att hans fysiska och mentala hälsa har lidit svår skada.

Hoten mot hans person försvåras ytterligare av det komplicerade agerande som Marianne Ny, som representant för svenska staten, har åsamkat honom.

Detta har inneburit att Julian Assanges grundläggande fri- och rättigheter enligt Förenta nationerna samt hans mänskliga rättigheter enligt Europakonventionen har försatts ur spel.

När människor söker politisk asyl brukar det handla om att söka skydd undan någon skurkstat och i detta fall framstår den påstådda rättsstaten Sverige just som en sådan skurkstat. **Det räcker gott med att hänvisa till fallen Thomas Quick/Sture Bergwall eller Catrine da Costa för att finna fullständigt förödande jämförelser.**

Vi två journalister, med många decenniers erfarenhet av press, radio och tv både i Sverige och utomlands, **finner med ökande förskräckelse hur okritisk och partisk till förmån för det politiska etablissemangen journalistiken i fallet Assange är.**

Allt tycks gå ut på att till varje pris få Assange överlämnad hit till riket, i stället för att kritiskt granska åklagaren Marianne Nys agerande i skön förening med sin vän advokat Claes Borgström. **Åklagare Ny har till exempel i en trängre krets sagt att "även om jag har fel, ändrar jag mig inte".**

I den häktningSPromemoria från 2010 på över hundra sidor som finns tillgänglig på nätet för alla och envar, framgår tydligt att de båda kvinnorna själva sökte kontakt med Assange.

Den läckta häktningSPromemorian blev till en juridisk bomb, som i dag är bortglömd och begravd i alla turer kring rättsprocessen i London, flykten till Ecuadors ambassad och frågan om hur Assange eventuellt ska kunna ta sig därifrån undan det svenska, numera så prestigefyllda, rättsmaskineriet.

Fallet Julian Assange har synliggjort den statsfeminism med tillhörande propaganda maskineri som för närvarande gäller här i landet. Det är ett maskineri där manshatande radikalfeminister utan historisk förankring, samverkar med journalister som inte begriper journalistikens kritiska uppgift och medlemmar av rättsväsendet som gör karriär på numera lagstadgad jämställdhet.

Ett maskineri som ser vanliga svenska män som potentiella våldtäktsmän och som redan dömt Julian Assange för sexbrott, innan någon rättegång ägt rum. På så sätt har mannen med status som rockstjärna förvandlats till en av världens mest jagade män.

Den fria feminismen kidnappades i slutet på 1980-talet, avväpnades och döptes om till jämställdhet och införlivades i maktapparaten. Jämställdhet upphöjdes till statlig norm

och ideologi och blev en karriärstege inte minst inom politiken, byråkratin och rättsväsendet.

Många av urfeministerna försvann till universiteten och blev elitfeminister och gjorde kampen till vetenskap. Könet blev genus och måltavlan var inte längre statsapparaten utan svängde över mot männen som kön och sexuella varelser. Den rådande totalitära könsideologin anammades också av många traditionella medier som går statens ärenden.

**På en annan kant, i framför allt kvällspressen, säljer sex som aldrig förr på ett sätt som förvandlat begreppet cynism till ett "understatement".** Fallet Assange kittlar journalister till en sällsynt skådad ensidighet som förför läsare, lyssnare och tittare. Därtill kan moralistiska ledarskribenter över hela landet hojta om rättvisa för de förnedrade kvinnorna, utan minsta eftertanke på vad som egentligen hände de där dagarna i augusti 2010 mellan Julian Assange och de två kvinnorna.

Hur fallet avslutas kan mycket väl bli avgörande för om Sverige även i fortsättningen ska kunna kalla sig för en rättsstat, där medborgerliga rättigheter inte kränks och där Europakonventionen om mänskliga rättigheter är värd mer än bläcket den är skriven med.

*Helene Bergman, journalist  
Anders Carlgren, journalist*

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DN-Debatt: 2012-08-20

## "Många felaktigheter i artikeln om Assange"

*Det känns angeläget att korrigera åtminstone en del av de felaktigheter som Helene Bergman och Anders Carlgren för fram som sanning i sin artikel om "fallet Assange" i DN den 19 augusti 2012. Det skriver Claes Borgström i en replik.*

Det är riktigt att de båda kvinnorna vid sitt besök på polisstationen var angelägna om att Assange skulle underkasta sig ett HIV-test. Efter att de två kvinnorna berättat för polisen vad Assange hade utsatt dem för **anhölls han av jourhavande åklagare** såsom misstänkt för våldtäkt, sexuellt ofredande och ofredande.

Samma helg ringde en av kvinnorna till advokatbyrån och sökte mig. Samtalet togs emot av den jourhavande biträdande juristen Pia Engström-Lindgren. **Jag har alltså inte, som Bergman/Carlgren påstår, "själv erbjudit" mig** att vara målsägandebiträde utan har som i alla andra fall kontaktats av de blivande klienterna.

Efter ansökan den 24 augusti, andra vardagen efter polisanmälan, förordnade Stockholms tingsrätt mig den 25 augusti som målsägandebiträde.

Sedan chefsåklagaren Eva Finné lagt ned förundersökningen gällande våldtäkt och sexuellt ofredande begärde jag, på uppdrag av mina klienter, den 27 augusti hos Utvecklingscentrum i Göteborg att Finnés beslut skulle överprövas. **Det är den enhet**

**inom åklagarmyndigheten som bland annat prövar en begäran att en nedlagd förundersökning gällande sexualbrott ska återupptas.**

Bergman/Carlgren skriver att jag vände mig till "min gamla väninna, åklagaren Marianne Ny, som i sin tur beslöt att öppna fallet på nytt." Längre fram i artikeln sägs att Marianne Ny har agerat i "skön förening med sin vän advokat Claes Borgström."

**Marianne Ny och jag är inte gamla vänner.** Vi har, såvitt jag minns, före den nu pågående utredningen träffats en gång i samband med ett seminarium om jämställdhet och en gång i samband med mitt arbete med Sexualbrottsofferutredningen. **De absurda insinuationerna om någon sorts vänskapskorruption är alltså nonsens.** Beslutet att återuppta förundersökningen fattades på grundval av de uppgifter som förelåg redan initialt och som Marianne Ny bedömde på ett annat sätt än Eva Finné.

Det har kritiserats att olika åklagare har kommit fram till olika resultat. Det är en okunnig kritik. Jag har aldrig hört någon invända mot att vi har flera instanser inom domstolsväsendet. Ibland ändrar hovrätten en tingsrättsdom på exakt samma underlag som presenterades vid den första prövningen.

Att jag ansökte om att utredningen om Assange skull tas upp igen var inte någon särskilt ovanlig åtgärd. År 2010 inkom totalt i hela landet 2300 ansökningar om återupptagande av en nedlagd förundersökning. Utvecklingscentrum, som finns i Göteborg, Malmö och Stockholm, bifaller genomsnittligen omkring 11 procent av dessa ansökningar. Utvecklingscentrum i Göteborg fick 2010 in 164 ansökningar som gällde sexualbrott mot personer över 15 år varav **ca 11 procent ledde till att förundersökningen togs upp på nytt.**

Knappast någon stannar upp för det faktum att tingsrätten fann att det förelåg sannolika skäl för att Assange begått våldtäkt och sexuellt ofredande. Beslutet fastställdes av Svea hovrätt, som ansåg att våldtäkten med den då föreliggande utredningen skulle bedömas som mindre grovt brott, ett brott som innehåller fängelse upp till fyra år i straffskalan. Två åklagare och två domstolar har alltså gjort i stort sett samma bedömning, en åklagare har en avvikande uppfattning.

Artikelförfattarna påstår att Assange stannade kvar i Sverige i fem veckor "för att vara tillgänglig för förhör." **Sanningen är att överåklagaren Marianne Ny via hans dåvarande advokat vid flera [??] tillfällen utan framgång försökte få till stånd ett förhör. [En annan sanning att Marianne Ny avfärdade flera erbjundan av Julian Assange att låta sig intervjus och hon väntade tre veckor innan hon kom med ett eget förslag. --A.B.]**

Bergman/Carlgren hävdar att Assanges grundläggande fri- och rättigheter har satts ur spel. På vad sätt framgår inte. Påståendet är nonsens. Den som "saknar hemvist i riket" får enligt rättegångsbalken häktas oberoende av vad brottsmisstanken gäller om det finns risk att han eller hon genom att bege sig från riket undandrar sig lagföring eller straff. I praktiken blir de flesta utlänningar som inte bor i Sverige häktade om de så endast är misstänkta för snatteri. Man kan tycka att det var ett misstag att inte gripa och anhålla Assange i samband med att förundersökningen återupptogs men åklagarmyndigheten utgick sannolikt från att Assange frivilligt skulle inställa sig till förhör [vilket han faktiskt gjorde vid det enda tillfälle som han fick --A.B.].

I artikeln sägs att "de båda kvinnorna själva sökte kontakt med Assange." Det förhållandet saknar all relevans för bedömningen om Assange förgripit sig på dem. Det är det klassiska sättet att försöka skuldbelägga brottsoffret. Författarna talar om de trakasserier som Assange utsatts för men ägnar inte de båda målsägandena en tanke. De har fullständigt oförskyllt fortlöpande utsatts för trakasserier och fått utstå kränkande anklagelser om att de deltagit i någon sorts konspiration mot Assange. *[Aven denna av Borgström otaliga gånger upprepade klagan "saknar all relevans för bedömningen om Assange förgripit sig på dem". --A.B.]*

Det är pinsamt att läsa Bergmans/Carlgrens prat om den "statsfeminism" som råder i Sverige. De skriver att den "fria feminismen kidnappades i slutet på 1980-talet och döptes om till jämställdhet och införlivades i maktapparaten." Författarnas okunskap är betydande. Efter en proposition (prop. 1978/79:56) infördes 1980 lagen om "Jämställdhet mellan kvinnor och män i arbetslivet." *[Bergman är en av Sveriges främsta feminister och i 20 år ledde ett program i SR som behandlade gällande frågor. --A.B.]*

**Bergman/Carlgren tycks inte ha uppfattat att det råder ojämställdhet mellan kvinnor och män i Sverige.** De bör läsa Statistiska centralbyråns skrift "På tal om Kvinnor och Män" som är en "Lathund om jämställdhet". Den utkommer vartannat år och beskriver hur det står till med jämställdheten inom en rad olika samhällsområden såsom hälsa, utbildning, tidsanvändning, barn- och äldreomsorg, förvärvsarbete, lön, inflytande och makt m.m. Den som efter läsning av skriften hävdar att Sverige är jämställt får, som jurister brukar uttrycka det, en betydande förklaringsbörda. *[Har Bergman och Carlgren påstått annat? --A.B.]*

Till sist, det har blivit på modet att, precis som artikelförfattarna, dra till med att Sverige inte är en rättsstat om inte den egna uppfattningen får gehör. Bergman/Carlgren tillägger att Sverige framstår som en "skurkstat". Sådant prat kan man naturligtvis inte ta på allvar men jag vill ändå uppmana dem som så totalt underkänner det svenska rättssystemet: Nämn en rättsstat!

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DN: 2012-08-19

## **Alba varnar Storbritannien**

Wikileaks omstridde grundare Julian Assange planerar att på söndagen möta världspressen från tryggheten på Ecuadors ambassad i London, men riskerar att gripas om han tar ett enda steg utanför ambassadområdet.

Omringad av poliser beredda att gripa honom måste Assange förmodligen tala från en balkong eller ut genom ett fönster. Brittiska utrikesdepartementet har påpekat att ambassadens trappa betraktas som brittisk mark. Wikileaks ville "av säkerhetsskäl" inte avslöja planerna kring Assanges tal.

**Ecuadors allierade varnar Storbritannien för "allvarliga konsekvenser" om landet bryter mot den diplomatiska säkerheten vid Ecuadors Londonambassad. Uttalandet kommer från ett möte i Alba som består av åtta vänsterorienterade latinamerikanska länder....**

TT-AFP



## Hague ignored lawyers to send Assange 'threat' note

*Now Britain wants to talk, as Ecuador faces the consequences of sheltering Wikileaks founder*

*Brian Brady, David Randall  
The Independent  
19 August 2012*

The calamitous Foreign Office note to Ecuador— interpreted there and elsewhere as a threat to raid the country's London embassy where the Wikileaks founder, Julian Assange, is holed up— was sanctioned by William Hague, despite the grave reservations of lawyers in his department.

At least one of the lawyers at the Foreign Office (FCO) expressed concern over the warning that Britain could use the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987 to "storm" the embassy building and remove Assange, who faces sex crime allegations in Sweden. A senior Whitehall source said yesterday that staff feared the move could provoke retaliatory attacks against British embassies overseas.

The potential use of the 1987 Act was included in an FCO "speaking note" delivered to the Ecuadorians on Wednesday, the day before President Correa granted him asylum. The law permits Britain to revoke the status of a diplomatic mission if the state in question "ceases to use land for the purposes of its mission or exclusively for the purposes of a consular post" — but only if such a move is "permissible under international law". In its letter, **Britain added — in the time-honoured fashion of someone threatening to send the boys round— "We very much hope not to get to this point."**

Although the Government has claimed the reference to the 1987 Act was not a threat, **the note sparked a furious response around the world.** Ecuador has already convened a special meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS) this Friday to discuss "the inviolability of the diplomatic premises of Ecuador in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in accordance with international law".

One Foreign Office staffer attempted to play down the crisis, insisting, despite the continuing war of words: "We wish to seek a diplomatic solution to this." This afternoon at 2pm, Assange is due to make a statement "outside" the embassy. He will not only have to be sure he remains on Ecuador premises, lest he be arrested, but will have to weigh his words carefully. **Under Ecuador's asylum offer, Assange is not permitted to make political statements, restrictions that are standard for anyone granted asylum, said an Ecuadorian Foreign Ministry official.**

The Wikileaks founder is wanted for questioning by Swedish authorities on one count of unlawful coercion, two of sexual molestation, and one of rape following allegations made by two women. Assange insists the sex they had was entirely consensual. He left Sweden before he could be seen by police, and came to Britain.

So began the long process to extradite him which wound its way through the British courts. What has hung over these proceedings— and led to the offer of diplomatic

asylum (not political asylum, as widely reported) -- is his claim that, once extradited to Sweden, he would be shipped to the US to stand trial for his part in the publication on Wikileaks of thousands of US government cables, and then possibly executed.

**The US has never clarified its position on possible proceedings against Assange,** despite having held Bradley Manning, the man accused of passing the cables to Wikileaks, in custody for many months. Nor has it dismissed the unlikely thesis that any charges he might face would carry the death penalty for this non-US citizen. (Under European law, if by any chance execution was an option this would prevent his extradition to the US anyway.) Ecuador said it had tried, without success, to get assurances from Britain and Sweden that Assange could not be extradited to a third country. **Puzzling, too, has been Sweden's refusal to accept Ecuador's offer to question Assange in their London embassy.**

It was on 19 June that Assange skipped bail and sought refuge in the Ecuador embassy in Hans Crescent, near Harrods in Knightsbridge, west London. The embassy consists of 10 rooms on the first floor. Assange is living in a small office that has been equipped with a bed, exercise machine, sun lamp (the embassy has no garden) and internet connection. A shower has been installed, and there is a small kitchenette. "It's not quite the Hilton," said Gavin MacFadyen, a friend. Sarah Saunders, with whom Assange stayed in her East Sussex cottage, has been taking him food parcels. "I took him a chocolate cake but I'm limited in what I'm able to bring," she said. "I hate the thought of him having prison food, because he has a very sensitive palate."

There are conflicting reports about his mental state. His mother, Christine Assange, said last month: "He is under a lot of stress and it's been long-term stress now for nearly two years and in conditions which are similar to detention." **Yet supporters who have visited claim he is more buoyant. Ms Saunders said: "When he got the news [about asylum] he was clearly absolutely delighted. The Ecuadorians have been incredibly hospitable."**

Vaughan Smith, the WikiLeaks supporter who hosted Assange for more than a year at his country mansion, visited last week and said his friend was holding up well: "As a person though, he is happiest behind a computer doing his job. He is coping well. He was the same Julian he was when he was staying with me. **He is not a sentimental person and so does not miss things other people might miss.**" A spokesman for Assange, said: "He's been spending a lot of time monitoring the investigation by the FBI [into Wikileaks]. We recently learnt a bit about the scope of it and around 2,000 documents have been gathered in that investigation."

Ecuador, even if it wanted to be so provocative, lacks any obvious means of getting Assange past the police officers on the doorstep, on to a plane, and out of Britain. The embassy is not linked internally with any of the building's gated entrances, making the front entrance its only point of exit. Even if he somehow managed to get into a waiting car, he would have to leave the vehicle at some point to board a flight out of Britain. More adventurous scenarios, involving crates, diplomatic bags and airlifts, are dismissed as very unlikely by diplomats and lawyers.

Rafael Correa, president of Ecuador since 2007 and facing re-election in February, is an economist who has used Ecuador's oil revenues to boost public spending. He is populist, intolerant of media criticism (to the point of repression, say his critics), but

is not a hothead. Although he has been widely applauded in his own country and throughout the region for his stance on Assange, there could yet be a price to pay. At present, Ecuador is the beneficiary of the Andean Trade Preference Act, which allows its goods into the US free of tariffs. Forty-five per cent of Ecuador's exports go to the US, accounting for about 400,000 jobs. Chevron Corp and many US business groups are urging the White House to suspend Ecuador's benefit.

Meanwhile, the lawyer for the two forgotten people of the case, the Swedish women, said his clients deserved justice. "It's an abuse of the asylum instrument, the purpose of which is to protect people from persecution and torture if sent back to one's country of origin," said Claes Borgstrom. "It's not about that here. He doesn't risk being handed over to the United States for torture or the death penalty. He should be brought to justice in Sweden."

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*Crowd of supporters outside the Ecuador embassy, who watched Assange deliver speech.*

## **Julian Assange Delivers Speech Thanking Supporters, Calling for End to US War on Whistleblowers**

*Kevin Gosztola  
Firedog Lake  
August 19, 2012*

Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks editor-in-chief who was granted asylum earlier on August 16, delivered a speech from the balcony of the Ecuador embassy in London, where he has been holed up for two months. The speech was an opportunity for Assange to show gratitude toward his supporters while also reminding the world of what he sees the United States doing to not only go after whistleblowers but also target dissent.

Wearing a blue shirt and red tie, he began, "I am here today because I cannot be there with you today," and immediately went into a roll call of all the people, government officials and countries he owed a thank you.

He shared how he had heard from inside the embassy "teams of police swarming up into the building through the internal fire escape," after a UK threat against the Ecuador embassy was made public late on August 15. Assange knew there would be witnesses because supporters came out late in the night to watch over the embassy.

"If the UK did not throw away the Vienna Conventions the other night, it is because the world was watching," he declared. "And the world was watching because you were watching."

Then he thanked Ecuador President Rafael Correa, Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino, the Ecuadorian people, the staff of the Ecuador embassy in London ("who have been showing me hospitality and kindness despite the threats we've all received"), the people and governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela and other Latin American countries who have supported his right to asylum, the people the United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Australia ("who have supported me in strength, even when their governments have not"), the staff, supporters and sourced of WikiLeaks ("whose courage and commitment and loyalty has seen no equal") and to his family and children—who he said had been "denied their father."

Having shown heartfelt gratitude, Assange pivoted to addressing the United States, particularly the Obama administration. He stated, "As WikiLeaks stands under threat, so does the freedom of expression, and the health of our societies." He suggested the US government had a choice: return to and reaffirm values it was founded upon or "lurch off" a "precipice" and drag us all into a "dangerous and oppressive world, in which journalists fall silent under the fear of prosecution and citizens must whisper in the dark."

"I say it must turn back," he urged.

He called on the US to no longer pursue journalists who shine a light on "the secret crimes of the powerful." Stop this "foolish talk" amongst government officials about prosecuting media organizations, whether they be WikiLeaks or the New York Times. End the war on whistleblowers.

"Thomas Drake, and William Binney, and John Kiriakou and the other heroic US whistleblowers must — they must be pardoned and compensated for the hardships they've endured as servants of the public record," Assange declared.

Not to be forgotten, he highlighted Pfc. Bradley Manning, who is in a military prison in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and believed to have passed on the documents that gave WikiLeaks its most high-profile releases to date. He noted Manning had "endured months of torturous detention" at Quantico in Virginia. After two years in prison, he had yet to see a trial.

"Bradley Manning must be released," Assange added. "On Wednesday, Bradley Manning spent his 815th day of detention without trial. The legal maximum is 120

days.” Though the US has actually not violated any law by delaying the trial because Manning was arraigned less than 120 days after the charges against him were referred to a court martial, the essential point is valid. The trial was scheduled for this September but has been pushed to November or January of next year.

Finally, to acknowledge and make clear that he is not the only one in the world who is being persecuted for dissent, he mentioned his friend, the Bahraini activist Nabeel Rajab, who was sentenced to three years on August 16 for a tweet. He mentioned the Russian punk rock band Pussy Riot, who was sentenced to two years in jail for a “political performance” the day after.

**“There is unity in the oppression,” he concluded. “There must be absolute unity and determination in the response.”**

The editor-in-chief then was met with a roar of applause and turned around and headed back into the embassy, where he could be for weeks or months before being allowed to have safe passage to Ecuador from the United Kingdom.

Notably, there was no mention of extradition to Sweden in his speech. It did not go into nitty gritty details of the situation. He thanked supporters, who have been condemned by pundits or commentators in the media for showing support to him. He made certain the world knew how much he appreciates the show of support from Latin America in the face of the American empire and he cast his plight in the context of oppression that world powers are purveying against citizens all over the world.

It contained a strong message. Everyone must stand tall in unity and face the oppression or else. The war on WikiLeaks is the war on good government employees in the United States, who have done their job and exposed corruption in the past decade. It is the war on dissidents in client states like Bahrain, Yemen, Iraq, and other countries. It is the war on dissidents in Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan, Libya, Jordan and other countries that are fighting to be free. It is the many activists in Moscow, who stand tall against repression from the Russian government, and the people in Latin America, who continue to push their countries to be more democratic.

All the countries of people, from Australia to Yemen, from Uzbekistan to China, who stand up against power. That is the struggle that Assange believes he is fighting. WikiLeaks is, in fact, a part of all these struggles. Having released the US State Embassy cables to the world, there is something on just about every country or territory that people seeking liberation can arm themselves with as they advance their struggle. So, unwittingly or intentionally, the editor-in-chief of the first stateless media organization in the world has transformed himself into a world revolutionary and his fight, to him, is the fight of people of the world.

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## **WikiLeaks Editor-in-Chief Julian Assange’s Speech**

*Text of speech given by Julian Assange, WikiLeaks editor-in-chief, from Ecuador embassy balcony in London on August 19, 2012*

I am here today because I cannot be there with you today, but thank you for coming. Thank you for your resolve, your generosity and spirit.

On Wednesday night, after a threat was sent to this embassy, and police descended on this building, you came out in the middle of the night to watch over it, and you brought the world's eyes with you.

Inside the embassy, after dark, I could hear teams of police swarming up into the building through the internal fire escape. But I knew that there would be witnesses and that is because of you.

If the UK did not throw away the Vienna Conventions the other night, it is because the world was watching and the world was watching because you were watching.

The next time somebody tells you that it is pointless to defend those rights we hold dear, remind them of your vigil in the dark before the embassy of Ecuador. Remind them how in the morning the sun came up on a different world, and a courageous Latin American nation took a stand for justice.

And so, to those brave people, I thank President Correa for the courage he has shown in considering and in granting me political asylum. And I also thank the government, and the particular Foreign Minister, Ricardo Patino, who have upheld the Ecuadorian Constitution and its notion of universal citizenship in their consideration of my asylum.

And to the Ecuadorian people for supporting and defending this Constitution. And I also have a debt of gratitude to the staff of the embassy, whose families live in London, and who have been showing me hospitality and kindness despite the threats we've all received.

This Friday there will be an emergency meeting of the foreign ministers of Latin America in Washington, DC, to address this very situation. And so I am grateful to those people and governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela and to all other Latin American countries who have come out to defend the right to asylum.

To the people of the United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Australia, who have supported me in strength, even when their governments have not. And to those wiser heads in government who are still fighting for justice. Your day will come.

To the staff, supporters and sources of WikiLeaks, whose courage and commitment and loyalty has seen no equal.

To my family and to my children, who have been denied their father. Forgive me. We will be reunited soon.

As WikiLeaks stands under threat, so does the freedom of expression, and the health of our societies. We must use this moment to articulate the choice that is before the government of the United States of America.

Will it return to and reaffirm the revolutionary values it was founded on? Or will it lurch off the precipice, dragging us all into a dangerous and oppressive world, in which journalists fall silent under the fear of prosecution and citizens must whisper in the dark?

I say it must turn back.

I ask President Obama to do the right thing.

The United States must renounce its witch-hunt against WikiLeaks.

The United States must dissolve its FBI investigation.

The United States must vow that it will not seek to prosecute our staff or our supporters.

The United States must pledge before the world that it will not pursue journalists for shining a light on the secret crimes of the powerful.

There must be no more foolish talk about prosecuting any media organization, be it WikiLeaks or be it the New York Times.

The US administration's war on whistleblowers must end.

Thomas Drake, and William Binney, and John Kiriakou and the other heroic US whistleblowers must — they must be pardoned and compensated for the hardships they've endured as servants of the public record.

And the Army Private who remains in a military prison in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, who was found by the United Nations to have endured months of torturous detention in Quantico, Virginia, and who has yet — after two years in prison — to see a trial—He must be released. Bradley Manning must be released. If Bradley Manning did as he accused, he is a hero and an example to all of us and one of the world's foremost political prisoners. Bradley Manning must be released.

On Wednesday, Bradley Manning spent his 815th day of detention without trial. The legal maximum is 120 days.

On Thursday, my friend, Nabeel Rajab, president of the Bahrain Human Rights Center, was sentenced to 3 years for a tweet.

On Friday, a Russian band [Pussy Riot] was sentenced to 2 years in jail for a political performance.

There is unity in the oppression.

There must be absolute unity and determination in the response.

Thank you.

<http://dissenter.firedoglake.com/2012/08/19/wikileaks-founder-julian-assanges-speech-from-the-ecuador-embassy-balcony-in-london-text/>

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## En cirkus utan verklighetskontakt

*Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assanges tal på balkongen till Ecuadors Londonambassad blev kulmen på en vecka av diplomatiskt kaos. Men också: ytterligare ett bevis på hur totalt Assange verkar ha förlorat greppet om verkligheten.*

*Perspektiv Martin Jönsson*

Det fanns en tid, för inte så länge sedan, då Julian Assange fick världsmediernas uppmärksamhet för det han och Wikileaks kunde avslöja. Om amerikanska styrkors helikopterattack mot civila i Irak, om USA:s militära operationer i afghanistan och om hemliga telegram från amerikanska ambassader världen över. Betydelsen av det organisationen och Assange gjorde då – i samarbete med en rad stora nyhetsorganisationer – får naturligtvis aldrig underskattas eller glömmas.

Men det Wikileaksgrundaren hade att säga i går eftermiddag, när han klev ut på ambassadbalkongen i ljusblå skjorta och röd slips, har ytterst lite gemensamt med det han en gång representerade. Han har fortfarande förmågan att dra till sig medieuppmärksamhet, men nu av ett helt annat slag. Nu handlar det mer om en motvillig fascination av vad personen Assange utvecklats till: en storhetsvansinnets retoriker, som verkar ha kvar ytterst lite kontakt med verkligheten.

I torsdags, när Ecuador beviljade honom asyl, beskrev Assange det som en "betydande seger för mig och mitt folk". När han i går höll sitt balkongtal fortsatte han att framställa sig som folklig ledare av rang – och tackade både befolkningen i Ecuador, ett antal andra latinamerikanska länder och folket i andra länder, som "stöttat mig trots att deras regeringar inte gjort det". Att folket i exempelvis Ecuador förefaller visa ytterst lite intresse och ännu mindre stöd för det diplomatiska spel Assange och landets politiska ledning ägnar sig åt verkade inte bekymra honom nämnvärt.

Under sitt tal nämnde han flera gånger det hot som han hävdar att Storbritannien uttalat om att storma ambassaden – trots försäkringar från Storbritanniens utrikesminister William Hague om att något sådant aldrig formulerats – och tackade folket utanför för att de varit på plats de senaste dagarna. Assange dramatiserade



situationen maximalt och beskrev närmast åskådarna som mänskliga sköldar. "När polisen slog ner på ambassaden kom ni ut mitt i natten för att övervaka den och se till att världen skulle se vad som händer. Inne i mörkret på ambassaden hörde jag hur polisstyrkor fyllde byggnaden, via brandtrapporna, men jag kände mig trygg av att ni var på plats".

Assange tog, något förvånande också upp den ryska punkgruppen Pussy Riot, som i fredags dömdes till två års fängelse för huliganism i Putins Ryssland, och tog deras aktioner som bevis på att det finns "enighet i motståndet". Exakt vilket motstånd han syftade på var inte glasklart, för även om hoten mot yttrandefriheten fanns med i talet hamnade det i skuggan av hoten mot hans egen organisation.

I slutet av talet riktade han sig direkt till USA:s president. "Det måste vända. Jag ber president Obama att göra det rätta. USA måste stoppa sin häxjakt mot Wikileaks."

Frågan är dock om det är USA, Storbritannien, det svenska rättsväsendet eller någon annan som utgör det största hotet mot hans organisation. Eller om det är hans egen paranoia och rättshaveristiska karaktär som sett till att Wikileaks i dag är i ruiner, både ekonomiskt, organisatoriskt och trovärdighetsmässigt.

Ganska många som såg den megalomaniska cirkusföreställningen i går eftermiddag tyckte nog att de fick det slutgiltiga svaret på den frågan precis där.

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DN:s första webbsida, 2012-08-19 kl. 18:45



Assange under sitt tal från en balkong på Ecuadors ambassad.

Foto: AP

## Assange: Tack för allt ert stöd

► **Assange uttalade sig.** Han krävde att uppgiftslämnaren och "hjälten" Bradley Manning frigges. Och tackade Wikileaksanhängare för deras stöd. [024](#)

► **Ombudet Garzón:** "Julian Assange kommer att fortsätta kämpa." [016](#)



► **Högt spel.** Affären riskerar nu att sluta i världspolitik. [033](#)



► **Svenska advokaten:** Genomför förhöret på brittisk mark. [026](#)



## Assange: Polisen har försökt bryta sig in

*Höll sitt tal från en balkong*

Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange har gjort sitt uttalande.

– I onsdags kväll kunde jag höra polisen storma byggnaden. Jag var trygg för att jag visste att det fanns vittnen, och det är tack vare er här utanför, sade Julian Assange under sitt tal.

Strax efter utsatt tid kom Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange med sitt uttalande vid Ecuadors ambassad i London, dit han tagit sin tillflykt för att undvika överlämning till Sverige.

– Jag ber president Obama att göra det rätta. USA måste erkänna sin häxjakt på Wikileaks, sade Julian Assange.

Utöver att tacka länderna i Latinamerika för att de stöttar hans politiska asyl i Ecuador, vände sig Julian Assange till sin familj:

– Vi kommer snart att återförenas.

Han inledde sitt tal med att blicka ut över de folkmassor och stora mediauppbåd som samlats utanför. Han påstod också att polisen ska ha försökt tränga sig in i ambassaden.

– I onsdags kväll kunde jag höra polisen storma byggnaden. Jag var trygg för att jag

visste att det fanns vittnen, och det är tack vare er, sade Julian Assange under sitt tal från en av ambassadens balkonger.

Han tackade supportrarna som vistats utanför ambassaden för att de kunnat "bevittna allt som händer".

Vid 14-tiden svensk tid kom juristen Baltasar Garzón och höll ett kort anförande.

– Julian Assange är inställd på strid, sade Baltasar Garzón framför ambassaden.

Garzón är en spansk före detta domare som blev världsberömd när han försökte ställa Chiles förre diktator Augusto Pinochet inför rätta. Han fick tidigare i år yrkesförbud i Spanien efter att ha dömts för olaglig avlyssning. Han hjälper nu Assanges försvar.

Försöker ni förhandla fri lejd för Julian Assange?

– Nej, det pågår inga förhandlingar över huvud taget just nu, säger Baltasar Garzón till Aftonbladets Torbjörn Ek.

På spanska ska Garzón däremot ha sagt att de tänker vidta alla åtgärder som finns för att försäkra sig om att Assange kan ta sig till Ecuador.

Framför ambassaden hölls vid 14.30-tiden flera tal. Förmodligen dröjer det längre än till klockan 15 innan Julian Assange uttalar sig. Bland annat har man läst upp en hälsning som ska vara från kända designern Vivienne Westwood.

– Han för en kamp för frihet, frihet för information. Vi är Julian Assange, jag är Julian Assange, löd hälsningen som lästes upp.

Filmregissören Ken Loach och författaren John Pilgrim ska också ha lämnat sina hälsningar.

– Han behöver vårt stöd. Julian Assange och Wikileaks har avslöjat maktens hemligheter, löd Ken Loachs hälsning.

Över 100 poliser står vid ambassaden just nu, rapporterar Aftonbladets Torbjörn Ek. Wikileaks talesperson Kristinn Hrafnsson säger att ett bra sätt att bryta det pågående dödläget är om "svenska myndigheter utan reservationer skulle garantera att Julian (Assange) aldrig kommer att utlämnas från Sverige till USA", skriver AFP.

Den latinamerikanska samarbetsorganisationen ALBA— där bland annat Bolivia, Kuba, Nicaragua och Venezuela ingår— uttrycker sitt "ovillkorliga stöd" för Ecuador, mot bakgrund av det som organisationen ser som hot från Storbritannien, samt landets rätt att ge Julian Assange asyl, uppger latinamerikanska medier.

*Torbjörn Ek*  
*Nina Svanberg*

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## Julian Assange, the balcony Bolívar of Knightsbridge

*The WikiLeaks founder blew a giant raspberry in the face of William Hague from the Ecuadorean embassy in London*

*Luke Harding  
The Guardian  
19 August 2012*

The balcony of Ecuador's London embassy is a mere 10 ft above street level. Theoretically speaking, it might have been possible for a tall Metropolitan police officer to have leapt up and grabbed Julian Assange by the leg. Or possibly his foot.

Certainly, there were plenty of men in blue to be seen around the embassy on Sunday. Scotland Yard was taking no chances. Before Assange appeared at the balcony— in scenes that might have sprung from Monty Python's *Life of Brian*— officers had comprehensively sealed off the area.

Several were lurking at the side of the red brick building. Others stood grim-faced in front of a scrum of media and WikiLeaks supporters packing the Knightsbridge pavement. There was even a police helicopter. It circled noisily overhead. If Assange had planned to escape by hot-air balloon— well, the Met had that one covered.

At around 2.30pm Assange emerged on to the balcony, a pallid figure dressed in a business-blue shirt and maroon tie. There was an enormous roar. Assange managed a thumbs-up, then tapped the microphone and inquired: "Can you hear me?" **This, perhaps, was the moment for someone to shout: "E's not the Messiah! 'E's a very naughty boy!"** [???] But from the Met officers there was a gloomy silence.

As part of his asylum deal with Ecuador, Assange had agreed not to make any political statements from the embassy— the cramped ground and first floors of an SW1 townhouse, right next to Harrods. In reality, the manner of his balcony appearance— just feet away from the police, next to a large Ecuadorean flag— amounted to a giant, taunting raspberry blown in the face of William Hague.  
*[Or a simple gesture of appreciation for the support he has received? --A.B.]*

In a carefully crafted 10-minute speech, the WikiLeaks founder thanked those who had made his escape from a Swedish extradition warrant possible: Ecuador's president, Rafael Correa (who is having a good Assange crisis); the country's foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, and the freedom-loving nations of South America. He mentioned many of them by name, Argentina twice.

Unsurprisingly, Assange reserved his harshest words for the US. He called on President Obama to stop its "witch-hunt against WikiLeaks" [*"harshest"? --A.B.*]. And he said the FBI should "dissolve" its investigation against him. He also called for Bradley Manning, the alleged source of classified material from US war logs and diplomatic missions passed to WikiLeaks, to be released from military jail.

Assange's supporters loved it. *[The writer apparently did not. --A.B.]* So did his celebrity backers. Earlier, Craig Murray, the UK's former ambassador in Tashkent, denounced Hague in front of the embassy for his "threat" last week to enter the building and seize

Assange. Murray said "neo-conservative juntas" now ran western Europe and said that he too had sheltered dissidents inside the British embassy in Uzbekistan. Tariq Ali, meanwhile, said Europe had much to learn from South America. We should "change" our "gaze". Someone shouted back: "So should you, mate."

But for Assange sceptics this was more of the same: an attempt to yoke the principles of free speech and justice (good) with a criminal case in Sweden (a matter for the courts). *[The "yoke" is to the threat of mistreatment by the U.S., as the writer must surely be aware. -- A.B.]* Assange said nothing about the allegations of sexual misconduct that have got him into this mess— allegations separate from any theoretical attempt to indict him in the US. *[He has repeatedly said he is eager to resolve that issue. --A.B.]*

Assange also called for the release of the Russian punk band Pussy Riot. His appeal might have had more credibility had Assange not worked for Russia Today, the TV channel owned by the same Kremlin that put the band in jail.

Nonetheless, the balcony drama was another PR triumph for Assange, **now recast as a South American revolutionary hero akin to Simón Bolívar** *[by whom? -- A.B.]*. Filming from the balcony was a crew from Ecuador state TV. This is all good news for Correa, who has written up this latest episode in the Assange soap opera as one small nation's plucky battle against the evils of Anglo-American imperialism.

Still, one senses Scotland Yard may get the last laugh. Ecuador is a long way away. "He's not going anywhere," one police officer said of Assange, **as the crowds melted away in the rain.**

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## Julian Assange: the balcony defence

*[Would the editors prefer that he spoke from the rooftop or the basement? --A.B.]*

*Miss A and Miss W are at the heart of this story, however inconvenient it may be for the WikiLeaks founder's supporters*

*Editorial  
The Guardian  
19 August 2012*

Amid the estimated 100 protesters, 50 police, a noisy helicopter and rained-on press corps gathered in Knightsbridge on Sunday afternoon, two women were missing. They are referred to as Miss A and Miss W— that is, when they are mentioned at all in the hullabaloo over Julian Assange. Yet Miss A and Miss W are at the heart of this story, however convenient it may be for Mr Assange's supporters to elide them.

After all, it is their allegations that Mr Assange sexually assaulted them two years ago that are the reason why the WikiLeaks founder faces extradition to Sweden. It is to avoid questioning by Swedish prosecutors that Mr Assange battled extradition orders for almost 18 months with the best legal representation money can buy— before finally jumping bail two months ago. It is to avoid being confronted with accusations of rape and sexual assault that Mr Assange is now holed up in the Ecuadorean embassy— and

was forced to say his piece from a diplomat's first-floor balcony, for fear of otherwise being collared by the police. Yet to listen to the speechifying from his supporters, you would never have guessed at any of this; their remarks concerned western Europe's "neocon juntas" or the political change sweeping Latin America. And when it was Mr Assange's turn to speak, he allied his struggle with Russian punk protesters Pussy Riot, with the New York Times, and indeed "the revolutionary values" upon which America was founded. This is his traditional method of argument: to conflate a number of causes— big and small, international and individual— into one, so that Mr Assange is WikiLeaks, which is freedom of speech, which holds powerful states to account; and so on, ever upwards. Yet Mr Assange is not facing a show trial over the journalism of WikiLeaks; he is dodging allegations of rape. To confuse the two does no favours to the organisation he created, which has done so much excellent work.

It is commonly accepted that such allegations take a huge toll, with those making them forced to divulge intimate details. In the case of Miss A and Miss W, it is worse. Mr Assange's legal team has referred to the case as a "honeytrap"; and their own lives have been smeared across the web by self-styled followers of WikiLeaks. Imagine enduring nearly two years of that and then watching the man you believe assaulted you addressing an adoring throng on the subject of oppression. His one point that did deserve amplifying was about Bradley Manning. Accused of giving classified material to WikiLeaks, the US private has been locked up without a trial, and subjected to treatment that Hillary Clinton's own spokesman, PJ Crowley termed "counterproductive and stupid" (before being forced to resign).

But there is much else that doesn't stack up in Mr Assange's presentation of his case. This champion of radical transparency hasn't helped Swedish prosecutors with their inquiries. There was his remark about people being jailed for exercising freedom of speech, "There is unity in the oppression. There must be absolute unity and determination in the response", and yet taking shelter in a country that, according to Reporters Without Borders, shut down six radio stations and two TV stations in just one fortnight this June.

And ultimately there is the repeated suggestion from Mr Assange's supporters that if he goes to Sweden he will face extradition to the US to be prosecuted for treason. Yet there is no serious evidence that Washington plans to start such proceedings; and if it ever did, the political and public opposition in Sweden as well as Britain and across the world would be massive. But that is precisely the point: the valuable service performed by Mr Assange at WikiLeaks is a different issue from the serious accusations facing him in Sweden. Conflating the two may provide a rhetorical rush, as it did in Knightsbridge on Sunday; but over the longer term it badly damages the reputation of WikiLeaks and does Mr Assange's case no practical good.

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## Diplomatic dilemmas and Julian Assange

**Letters:** Much better to let this wanted man stew in the embassy until sense prevails and he leaves to face the allegations that the Swedish women have made

*Note: The above notice on The Guardian's "World News" page links to a page with seven letters— the one above, one about the practical problem of spiriting Assange out of England, and the five below, none of which was featured as above by the editors. --A.B.*

- You are right that Julian Assange is not exactly a total hero, and he's probably safer against US extradition if he's in Sweden than in Britain. But the sheer vengefulness and ugliness of the noises coming from much of the US has to be a cause for concern. They want to try him for treason (despite not being an American) and espionage (though every member of every non-US intelligence service in the world could be accused in the same way). This should not be dismissed as just the manic extremes sounding off, if only because these people might be in power in a few months' time. Given this and the gleefully harsh treatment of Bradley Manning even under the present regime, and the noticeably cool and proviso-ridden Swedish response about guarantees against further extradition, it is probably best if some way is found to pack him off to Ecuador.

*Roger Schafir  
London*

- The left and radical movement have often been associated with well-known figures who have been less than ideal despite their undoubted qualities. Henry Hunt who spoke at Peterloo in 1819 was involved in doubtful business deals, while William Cobbett was prone to voicing antisemitic views. Yet the ruling order of the day hated them not for this but because they were a thorn in the side of the establishment. Fast forward almost 200 years and Julian Assange fits the model. Certainly he needs to address allegations of sexual assault and rape which he appears to take rather less seriously than is warranted. But he is the focus for so much attention not for this reason— after all, western governments regularly welcome and deal with people who are guilty of far greater crimes— but because he blew the whistle on the debacle of the Iraq war.

*Keith Flett  
London*

- If the UK government is unwilling to accept the view of Ecuador that Julian Assange deserves political asylum because he fears for his freedom to continue as a journalist, why did they not insist that Swedish prosecutors interview him in the Ecuadorean embassy before the decision to grant asylum was reached? As that has not been done, how can we even consider extradition to Sweden? The solution should be similar to the recent Chinese action when a dissident sought asylum in an American embassy. The dissident and his family were assisted to leave the embassy, escorted to an airport and flown to the country which had offered asylum.

*Owen Ephraim  
Chelmsford, Essex*

- I seem to recall that when General Pinochet was being detained in London on a Spanish arrest warrant the British government was unable to fulfil its extradition obligations and he was allowed to escape back to his Chilean bolthole. It seems that in Britain you stand a better chance of avoiding extradition if you are a murderous fascist dictator than if you are a champion of free speech and open government. But of course we must dismiss from our minds any suspicion that in both cases it was and is Washington that has reminded London where its real obligations (and best interests) lie. Perish the thought.

*Adrian Marlowe*

*The Hague, Netherlands*

- William Hague says the UK does not recognise diplomatic asylum. Strange. The UK did recognise the concept of diplomatic asylum when the Hungarian Cardinal Mindszenty was sentenced to death by the communist authorities for supporting the anti-communist uprising in Hungary in 1956. Mindszenty spent 15 years in diplomatic asylum in the American embassy in Budapest. Strange that the UK authorities did not protest then. But maybe Hague is too young to actually know of this precedent.

*Jan Culik*

*University of Glasgow*

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## **Correa revels in high-profile role but puts spotlight on freedoms at home**

*Assange standoff highlights gap between Correa's defence of WikiLeaks founder but harassment of journalists in Ecuador*

*Dan Collyns*

*The Guardian*

*19 August 2012*

While Julian Assange was not a household name in Ecuador before this week, figures from across the political spectrum have rallied round the government of Rafael Correa over the perceived threat from the Foreign Office against the country's embassy in London.

For many, granting asylum to the WikiLeaks founder has become a matter of principle in order to defend the country's sovereignty. Correa dedicated a large part of his regular Saturday television and radio broadcast to the subject, saying that if Ecuador had threatened to enter a foreign embassy, other countries would have accused him of being a dictator.

"They haven't found out that the Americas are free and sovereign and that we don't accept meddling and colonialism of any kind," he said. "They don't know who they are dealing with." Sweden had not given enough guarantees that it would not be extraditing Assange to a third country, he said, and the Ecuadorean government wanted to give him protection.



With his country suddenly playing a key role in a high-profile diplomatic standoff, many analysts believe Correa is likely to use the case to build capital at home ahead of next year's presidential election, when he is expected to run again.

But writing in the opposition newspaper El Comercio, columnist Marco Arauz suggested that in the long term the row may count against Correa. "By drawing the world's attention with this superhuman effort in Assange's favour, the government will revive the debate over its own intolerance against the independent press," he wrote. El Comercio, openly hostile to Correa, is one of several privately owned media organisations that have borne the brunt of the president's hostility.

César Ricaurte, the executive director of the Quito-based media watchdog Fundamedios, said that his organisation has registered 533 attacks on journalists in Ecuador since 2008, 100 of them this year. Twenty radio and television stations have been shut. Ricaurte said the panorama for journalists in Ecuador is "increasingly asphyxiating".

"We've suffered five years of constant harassment and persecution which begins with the president's own hostile discourse," said Ricaurte. Human rights groups say only Cuba has a worse record in the Americas on press freedom.

One of the latest incidents reported to Fundamedios involved the editor of the local newspaper La Hora, who had written critical editorials about the granting of asylum to Assange. Orlando Gomez, also a correspondent for the Colombian magazine Semana, said a man stepped off the back of a motorcycle at a road junction, asked if he was Mr Gomez then smashed his car window with an iron bar.

*[See Mark Weisbrot's response to these accusations at 2012-07-22: "As anyone who is familiar with the Ecuadorian media knows, it is uncensored and more oppositional with respect to the government than the US media is." --A.B.]*

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## **Former British Ambassador Craig Murray: 'We Need Whistleblowers Now More Than Ever'**

*Kevin Gosztola  
Firedog Lake  
August 19, 2012*

Craig Murray, a former British ambassador to Uzbekistan and a whistleblower, delivered a speech in support of WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange just before Assange gave his speech from the balcony of the Ecuador embassy in London.

"We should not forget what this is about," he began. "This is about the persecution of an individual who has made life much more simple and more productive for whistleblowers in the Information Age and in an age where, as Western governments become increasingly authoritarian and civil liberties are diminished, we need whistleblowers now more than ever to protect the rights of others."

He highlighted how WikiLeaks had not only shined a light on the illegal war in Iraq but also revealed “individual war crimes carried out withing that war.” They’d shown how governments had colluded on the rendition and torture of individuals. To Murray, there was a parallel.

**“I blew the whistle on torture and extraordinary rendition and the collusion of the CIA and MI6. I was in consequence immediately charged with extortion for sexual purposes and blackmailing people into sex in exchange for British visas.”**

He said it took him one and a half years to clear his name of those charges because “they routinely charge and try to beat up whistleblowers and that is what is happening to Julian Assange just as it happened to me.”

He mentioned the case of Brigadier General Janis Karpinski, who blew the whistle on the fact that “she had seen documents signed personally” by then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld authorizing torture at Abu Ghraib. **The “very next day” she was charged with shoplifting.**

Whistleblowers or dissidents are always “immediately charged with offensives which don’t relate to whistleblowing at all.” Why is this? Because in the United States, in the United Kingdom and now, apparently, in Sweden, “just as it seems to always happen in authoritarian and totalitarian countries, **dissidents are not charged with political offenses. They are fitted up with criminal offenses.**”

“How likely is it that when I was engaged in a bitter struggle, an internal struggle with my own government that were trying to sack me over the torture and I was trying to prevent the use of torture, did I then think, oh, that’s a good idea. I’ll go and bed someone tomorrow while I am in the middle of this. Was Julian Assange, while conducting the campaign of WikiLeaks, so distracted that he decided to get into incidental and coincidental criminal activity?” He also asked if Rumsfeld would be exposed as a man who authorized torture by Karpinski only to have her the very next day “pop out” and engage in “shoplifting.”

**“Only our disgustingly, complacent and spoon-fed mainstream media would accept such a narrative for one single moment.** It is obviously nonsense to anybody with half a brain,” he added.”

And, to the British Foreign Office’s threat against the Ecuador embassy by the UK, he said it was but another example of the “total abandonment of the very concept of international law by **the neoconservative juntas that are currently ruling the former Western democracies.**” He recounted his experience as a British diplomat and suggested if police were sent into the Ecuadorean embassy to get Assange they would be subject to Ecuadorean law for committing crimes.

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*Daily Mail, 2012-18-19*

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## **My Visit to a London Embassy Under Threat**

*Jeff Cohen  
Common Dreams  
August 19, 2012*

On Friday, I visited Ecuador's embassy here in the capital of the former British empire and saw a building surrounded by a phalanx of cops, with several of them at the front door. The embassy is in an upscale neighborhood near Harrods department store. The intimidating police presence was ordered by a Conservative government that waxes eloquent about the need to respect (British) embassies overseas.

The intensified police deployment is only part of Britain's response to Ecuador's decision— after a long review— to grant political asylum on human rights grounds to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, who took refuge in the embassy two months ago. The British government has made it clear that it will not allow Ecuador to provide safe passage and asylum to an individual who— for the "crime" of publishing— has heard powerful U.S. voices in politics and media call for his murder.

At the door of the rather small embassy, I was met by cops who interrogated me about who I was and why I sought entry. I had to wonder if the embassy was under siege by Britain on behalf of Washington, which reportedly stands ready to prosecute the WikiLeaks founder. Again, that's for the "crime" of publishing— not sexual assault.

Besides all the mainstream journalists, cameras and satellite trucks across the street from Ecuador's embassy, I was heartened to see British citizens protesting their government's actions — and also standing up for Bradley Manning, the young U.S. Army private who faces life in prison as the accused WikiLeaks leaker of documents showing military and diplomatic crimes by the U.S. government. Among the placards I saw: "Exposing War Crimes Is Not a Crime— Free Assange, Free Manning" and "Protect Freedom to Publish." and "If Wars Can Be Started by Lies, They Can Be Stopped By Truth."

It's important to know that Britain's Foreign Office recently threatened Ecuador in a letter— claiming a legal basis to go ahead and arrest Assange from the embassy after revoking the building's diplomatic status. On Thursday, a prominent Conservative member of Parliament tweeted that Britain should break off diplomatic relations with Ecuador and then invade the “former embassy” to seize the WikiLeaks founder.

A U.S. group I co-founded, RootsAction.org, is circulating a short online petition thanking Ecuador and protesting Britain's threats against the embassy and refusal to uphold the right of asylum.

As the father of two daughters (who are with me in London), I take sexual assault allegations seriously (Assange has never been charged). But standing outside this embassy surrounded by British police, it looked to me like a classic case of powerful Western states uniting to intimidate a less powerful country on behalf of their prerogatives toward domination and war. It had nothing to do with “the rule of law.” And it had nothing to do with women's rights.

• *Jeff Cohen is an associate professor of journalism and the director of the Park Center for Independent Media at Ithaca College, founder of the media watch group FAIR, and former board member of Progressive Democrats of America. In 2002, he was a producer and pundit at MSNBC (overseen by NBC News). He is the author of Cable News Confidential: My Misadventures in Corporate Media— and a cofounder of the online action group, [www.RootsAction.org](http://www.RootsAction.org).*

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## **South American bloc adopts resolution on UK threats to Ecuador**

RT

20 August 2012

The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) has unanimously adopted a seven-point resolution supporting Ecuador's right to grant Julian Assange asylum and condemning British threats to raid a sovereign state's embassy in order to arrest him.

Foreign ministers of the 12-member bloc took part in an extraordinary meeting in Guayaquil, Ecuador's largest city. A resolution was adopted just eight minutes after the session began, and was read out by Secretary General Ali Rodriguez.

Rodriguez' readout of the resolution was met with loud applause.

The document reaffirmed the sovereign right of any country to grant asylum and condemned threats to use force, stating that the bloc's foreign ministers had taken into account the aide memoire Britain sent to the Ecuadorian Embassy in London on the eve of the announcement of the decision on whether to grant Assange asylum.

The resolution reiterated "the inviolability of embassies" and the Vienna Convention, saying that principles of international law could not be overridden by domestic laws, such as the Diplomatic and Consular Act of 1987, which grants the British Secretary of State discretion to revoke immunity to ambassadorial premises.

The organization vowed to encourage all parties to the Assange case to continue dialogue to find a solution within the framework of international law. The importance of refuge and asylum for the protection of human rights was also reaffirmed by the South American foreign ministers.

After the session, Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino addressed the press. He noted that while the United Kingdom was a country far more powerful military-wise than Ecuador, the small Latin American country had the high ground in terms of its understanding of international law.

"Reason does not call for force," Patino stated. "The force may be as different and as distant as a small country and a country which has atomic bombs. But here, reason is with us."

Patino thanked fellow Latin American nations for firmly supporting Quito on the issue and said he was pleased with the fact that Julian Assange knows that the region respects international law, the right to personal integrity and the freedom of expression.

He also said he was waiting for a resolution expected to be adopted at a similar foreign-minister level meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS), which is scheduled to meet next Friday.

Ecuador convened a number of regional meetings following the threat to storm the country's embassy in London. **On Saturday, representatives of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) adopted a similar eight-point resolution condemning Britain for its "intimidating threats" to violate the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity.**

On Friday, a special meeting of the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States, which envelopes countries from North, Central and South America, voted to hold a meeting of the member states' foreign ministers in order to discuss the same resolution filed by Ecuador.

<http://rt.com/news/unasur-condemns-uk-threats-ecuador-072/>

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## Assange Accuser Named by Former British Ambassador on BBC Show

*Kevin Gosztola  
Firedog Lake  
August 20, 2012*

Rape victims, according to the BBC, are “legally entitled to anonymity for life.” One can be arrested in the United Kingdom for naming rape victims in tweets. There is an understandable and generally accepted rule in not just the British media, but also in the United States media that one does not name rape victims because of the humiliation it could bring to victims. And so, when whistleblower and former British ambassador to Uzbekistan Craig Murray went on the BBC program Newsnight to discuss Julian Assange on the night of August 20, there was great disgust from the guest who appeared alongside him and the host.

This is what was said:

JOAN SMITH: My problem with this is how insulting it is that all these men—and it is mainly men on the left—are queuing up to cast aspersions on two women, who are making very serious allegations of sexual wrongdoing and those women are as entitled to Assange. They have human rights too. They are entitled to have him answer the case that they have made.

HOST: They’re entitled to hear him answer the case.

CRAIG MURRAY: Let’s look at the conduct of these women...

SMITH: How do you know about these women?

MURRAY: Anna Ardin— I know about the conduct of these women the same way you do.

SMITH: No, no, no, I’m not claiming that I do. I am not an expert on the criminal justice system and neither are you.

MURRAY: I’m going to say— I’m going to say some things that I know to be true. Anna Ardin, who’s the one who claims...

SMITH: I’m sorry. You should not be naming alleged rape victim.

HOST: [talking over guests] You should not be naming potential rape victim.

MURRAY: ...Everybody listening...

HOST: And they can look it at it on the Internet but please don’t name a potential rape victim...

SMITH:...Why would you do that?...

HOST:...Please do not name a potential rape victim...

MURRAY: Because everybody knows it and there's no point...

SMITH: No, I don't think everybody does...

MURRAY: ...And there is...

SMITH: Do you see how little respect this man has for women who've made serious allegations?

Now, at this point, it would have probably been good to concede the point that rape victims (actual or potential) are to be left anonymous, but Smith had not been the most friendly guest during the previous part of the segment. Murray felt a need to defend his decision to name the accuser, which really only made the situation worse:

MURRAY: That is absolute nonsense. I would like to say I'm married to a rape victim and I take the charge of anything to do with rape extremely seriously.

HOST: There is a great difference between you talking about something to do with your wife, presumably with her consent, and you talking about someone who has no rights because she's not here. So, if you want to make a point, make the point and do it anonymously.

MURRAY: My point is the lady, the night after she claimed was a physically coerced rape, took Julian Assange with her to a crayfish party. She turned down...

SMITH [host talking]:...What that's got to do with anything?

MURRAY:[host talking] ...She chaired a meeting at which she spoke. She chaired a meeting at which he spoke. The next day she went to dinner with him again.

SMITH: These should be tested by the investigating authorities in Sweden who have experience in the area of sexual abuse and rape. **We know very well that a lot of women who have suffered some kind of sexual assault take a while to process the fact of what's happened them. Rape victims don't always go straight to the authorities. Sometimes they're in a state of shock.**

How the host and guest reacted is perfectly acceptable and reasonable. There is this understanding that alleged rape victims are not supposed to be named on shows, whether the names are known on the Internet or not. It seems that legally and ethically the BBC program had an obligation to step in and inform Murray that he needed to talk about the accuser without using her name. [I, myself, until today, had never typed her name in a post and published it. I have always referred to the accusers as just "women."]

Yes, it is true the names of both the women, who have accused Assange of sexual assault, are known. For example, here are Swedish police reports (translated). That does not necessarily mean I or anyone else should go on a news program and say the name of alleged rape victims— even if they are victims in cases that are believed to be cooked-up.

The decision to name the accuser should frustrate supporters of Assange, because this is an excellent sound bite that now will be difficult for supporters to highlight because all opponents of Assange will just want to condemn or joke about how disgusting it is that Murray named an accuser:

MURRAY: Let me talk about four people, all of whom I know personally. James Yee, chaplain at Guantanamo, blew the whistle on torture in Guantanamo Bay, was charged with adultery and pornography on a government computer. Janis Karpinski, brigadier general at Abu Ghraib, blew the whistle on Donald Rumsfeld's sanctioning of torture at Abu Ghraib, was immediately charged with shoplifting. Scott Ritter, UN weapons inspector, entrapped by a honey trap. I was charged myself with sexual coercion of visa applicants after I blew the whistle on extraordinary rendition...

HOST: [interrupting]... That's a very clear point...

MURRAY: ...Everybody knows that whistleblowers are charged with non-whistleblowing related offenses.

HOST: Indeed, and everybody also knows that women sometimes get raped by people who may otherwise perform a public service...

This is a very strong point he made. He also made this point yesterday in his speech in support of Assange. It makes it clear that suggesting there is a possibility that the sexual allegations are a cooked-up offense being pushed by the Swedish authorities is not some outlandish thing to claim. It happens. The state targets people in ways that will not only lead them to be convicted of crimes but will also potentially wreck their reputation entirely.

Murray has experience that makes it possible for him to offer great insight into diplomacy, international relations and the Assange situation. It is not my opinion that Murray's decision to name an accuser here should neutralize all the other things he said and make them taboo to discuss. He could have made his points about the women without naming an accuser (maybe—if the host and Smith let him).

Now, to Smith's suggestion throughout the show that Assange expects "special treatment," he's "no different than anybody else" and there is a "moral and legal duty to comply" with authorities. First off, Assange has not failed to comply with authorities to date. Secondly, seeking asylum is something legally available to all individuals. If one contends they are being politically persecuted, they can go to an embassy and apply for asylum.

Of course, the authorities are then going to suggest that person is trying to avoid due process. Of course, the authorities and people who believe he should face the crime will argue that the person is running away. But, these opinions will be symptomatic of the fact that they do not believe the person is being politically persecuted, that they believe the person's fears are entirely unjustified. That is the case here. Smith and others fed up with Assange apologists do not buy the "conspiracy theories" that the United States has some criminal investigation into him and is likely to pursue extradition in the near future and he should be wary of the countries which he goes to because they might



cooperate with an extradition over a political offense—the publishing of previously classified documents via WikiLeaks.

There is a polarization happening here between those who have developed an utter distaste for Assange and those who see Assange as a whistleblower and valiant hero. **There are sharp views and they make it incredibly difficult to discuss the sexual allegations aspect of all this soberly and objectively.** One's character can easily be assassinated for defending Assange and suggesting he is the victim of Swedish prosecutors, who have cooked-up charges to tie him up and make it hard for him to run WikiLeaks. This is because one immediately finds his or herself being told they are sexist and not properly considering the rights of the alleged rape victims. On the other hand, one can find their character assassinated for defending the alleged rape victims and not think the sexual allegations are part of the political persecution he is facing. This is because one this view immediately finds his or herself being told they are filled with prejudice and supportive of rogue power.

Upon intense examination of the investigations against Assange (there are at least two), **here is what can be accepted as true all at once without being in conflict:**

The alleged rape victims deserve to be respected, not named on television and Assange should have to face the sexual allegations.

State powers go after whistleblowers and dissidents by cooking up non-whistleblower related offenses so there is a possibility that these allegations are being pushed by the Swedish Prosecuting Authority for political purposes.

Assange has a legal right to pursue asylum and make a case that he is being politically persecuted.

Ecuador has a sovereign right to grant diplomatic asylum to an individual like Assange if they believe that the person's fears are valid and if they believe the person is indeed being targeted for political offenses and could be abused or potentially put to death if taken into custody for these offenses.

The United States has an open criminal investigation into WikiLeaks. A federal grand jury has been empaneled to investigate. It has been meeting. A case against Assange and other WikiLeaks managers, staffers and individuals connected is being put together with resources and the support of the US Justice Department.

The Swedish authorities could question Assange in London but have refused. They also will not publicly assure Assange that he would not be extradited to the United States. This makes it easier for Assange to justifiably claim he is being politically persecuted.

This is a complex and nuanced view to hold, one that someone who has spent a lot of time covering is likely to feel compelled to adopt. It is one that ultimately respects the feminists who believe Assange should be held accountable for violating the women, if that is indeed what he did. It also is a view that recognizes the reality that the United States is an empire whose secrets were exposed by a stateless news organization and the US is putting Pfc. Bradley Manning through a court martial right now for allegedly previously classified documents to WikiLeaks. They intend to convict him and, once

convicted, this will not all be over. What to do with the cases put together by the grand jury and how to leverage the Manning conviction will be next on the government's agenda.

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Metro: 2012-08-20

## Jag förstår Assanges rädsla

*Göran Greider*

När Julian Assange i söndags eftermiddag klev ut på balkongen till Ecuadors ambassad i London var det för många ett slags vänsterikon som trädde fram. I sitt tal—mekaniskt uppläst från ett papper— tackade han dem som stött honom. Han räknade framförallt upp namnen på en lång rad latinamerikanska länder som stött honom sedan han fått politisk asyl av Ecuador.

Är Assange en vänsterikon? Jag har aldrig uppfattat honom som någon vänsterman. Han ger aldrig intryck av att ha någon genomtänkt analys av hur samhället fungerar [???] och hans enda tema är viljan att avslöja Makten. Makten och dess hemliga verksamhet. I den meningen är han snarare en liberal som tar idén om öppenhet och genomskinlighet på allvar.

Öppenhet och genomskinlighet i en värld dominerad av i synnerhet en enda militärmakt blir något rebelliskt och farligt för makten. Bradley Manning heter den menige amerikanske soldat som levererade hemliga dokument till Wikileaks som inför världen visade hur vidrig den amerikanska krigföringen i Irak och Afghanistan är och har varit. Bradley sitter fängslad i USA sedan ett år tillbaka utan rättegång. FN:s tortyrexpert har ansökt om att få träffa honom men tillåts inte göra det. Mannings "brott" är att han gett världen en chans att med egna ögon se vad USA:s militär gjort mot människor. Ytterst få av västvärldens liberaler verkar uppröras av Mannings öde.

I svensk press har det raljerats mycket kring Assange och hans rädsla för att bli utlämnad till Sverige. Även jag anser att han bör acceptera det, men jag vägrar att delta i raljerandet. **Den där rädslan för att utlämnas till USA är nämligen begriplig: han har retat upp världens mäktigaste stat och mest kraftfulla militärapparat.** Om han är skyldig till de sexualbrott han misstänks för vet inte jag och det måste utredas. Men fallet Assange har två dimensioner: En som rör privatmannen Assange och en som rör hans roll i en värld av makt.

**Att en rad latinamerikanska stater med fruktansvärda erfarenheter av amerikansk inbladning och övergrepp stöder honom är inte konstigt. Och vad är Sverige betraktat från en punkt utanför vår egen nationella självtillräcklighet? Svar: En liten nation i norr som ställer upp på det mesta som USA och Nato företar sig och om det kniper inte drar sig för att utvisa människor till egyptiska fängelser.**

Assange rädsla är i den meningen förklarlig. **I England har han stöd av många röster i offentligheten, i Sverige knappast av någon.** Hur det än är med Assanges eventuella skuld till det han misstänks för så blyxtbelyser hans gestalt makten i världen som den ser ut. Och allt detta för att han tagit liberalismen på större allvar än vad liberalerna brukar göra.

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## **Rusbridger's Lies are Sacred and Neo-Con Comment is Free**

*Craig Murray*  
*August 20, 2012*

Today's Guardian editorial quotes directly from my speech at the Ecuadorean Embassy, in a sneering way: "their remarks concerned western Europe's 'neocon juntas'."

The Guardian editorial makes the direct claim that I, and the other speakers, omitted all mention of the sexual allegations against Julian Assange in Sweden. That is a direct lie by the Guardian. In fact over half my speech— 23 sentences to be precise— were dedicated to the allegations against Assange and putting them in the context of the irrefutable evidence of the serial use of such allegations against various whistleblowers, including myself, in order to damage their reputation and brand them as criminals unconnected to whistleblowing.

Despite quoting my speech in its editorial, and mentioning it three times in its liveblog of the rally, the Guardian at no stage made any attempt to indicate the gist of what I actually said. Even the New York Times, without giving any of my explanation, at least got the point when it reported that: "A former British diplomat, Craig Murray, asserted that Mr. Assange had been 'fitted up with criminal offenses' as a pretext."

Of course the Guardian did not overlook what the NYT picked up. You could not overlook all 23 sentences of it. But simply the Guardian wished to run an editorial arguing that the Swedish allegations had been completely ignored. The facts did not suit Rusbridger's comment. So Rusbridger's comment remained free and lies were sacred.

**The Guardian's shrill and vitriolic campaign against Assange is extraordinary in its ferocity, persistence and pointless repetition.. The sad truth is that its origins lie in the frustration of the Guardian's hopes to make a great deal of cash from involvement in Assange's putative memoirs. That such a once great paper should fall sway to such a mean-minded little neo-con lickspittle as Rusbridger and his Blair supporting coterie is a great tragedy.**

[http://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2012/08/rusbridgers-lies-are-sacred-and-neo-con-comment-is-free/?utm\\_source=twitterfeed&utm\\_medium=twitter](http://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2012/08/rusbridgers-lies-are-sacred-and-neo-con-comment-is-free/?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter)

## WikiLeaks Press

2012-08-20

A poll in Ecuadorian newspaper El Telegrafo shows 93.6% of voters believing Julian Assange should be granted safe passage by the UK to Ecuador.

<http://www.thisdayinwikileaks.org/>

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## WikiLeaks and Free Speech

MICHAEL MOORE and OLIVER STONE  
*The New York Times*  
August 20, 2012

We have spent our careers as filmmakers making the case that the news media in the United States often fail to inform Americans about the uglier actions of our own government. We therefore have been deeply grateful for the accomplishments of WikiLeaks, and applaud Ecuador's decision to grant diplomatic asylum to its founder, Julian Assange, who is now living in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London.

Ecuador has acted in accordance with important principles of international human rights. Indeed, nothing could demonstrate the appropriateness of Ecuador's action more than the British government's threat to violate a sacrosanct principle of diplomatic relations and invade the embassy to arrest Mr. Assange.

Since WikiLeaks' founding, it has revealed the "Collateral Murder" footage that shows the seemingly indiscriminate killing of Baghdad civilians by a United States Apache attack helicopter; further fine-grained detail about the true face of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars; United States collusion with Yemen's dictatorship to conceal our responsibility for bombing strikes there; the Obama administration's pressure on other nations not to prosecute Bush-era officials for torture; and much more.

Predictably, the response from those who would prefer that Americans remain in the dark has been ferocious. Top elected leaders from both parties have called Mr. Assange a "high-tech terrorist." And Senator Dianne Feinstein, the California Democrat who leads the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, has demanded that he be prosecuted under the Espionage Act. Most Americans, Britons and Swedes are unaware that Sweden has not formally charged Mr. Assange with any crime. Rather, it has issued a warrant for his arrest to question him about allegations of sexual assault in 2010.

All such allegations must be thoroughly investigated before Mr. Assange moves to a country that might put him beyond the reach of the Swedish justice system. But it is the British and Swedish governments that stand in the way of an investigation, not Mr. Assange.

Swedish authorities have traveled to other countries to conduct interrogations when needed, and the WikiLeaks founder has made clear his willingness to be questioned in

London. Moreover, the Ecuadorean government made a direct offer to Sweden to allow Mr. Assange to be interviewed within Ecuador's embassy. In both instances, Sweden refused.

**Mr. Assange has also committed to traveling to Sweden immediately if the Swedish government pledges that it will not extradite him to the United States. Swedish officials have shown no interest in exploring this proposal,** and Foreign Minister Carl Bildt recently told a legal adviser to Mr. Assange and WikiLeaks unequivocally that Sweden would not make such a pledge. **The British government would also have the right under the relevant treaty to prevent Mr. Assange's extradition to the United States from Sweden, and has also refused to pledge that it would use this power.** Ecuador's attempts to facilitate that arrangement with both governments were rejected.

Taken together, the British and Swedish governments' actions suggest to us that their real agenda is to get Mr. Assange to Sweden. Because of treaty and other considerations, he probably could be more easily extradited from there to the United States to face charges. Mr. Assange has every reason to fear such an outcome. The Justice Department recently confirmed that it was continuing to investigate WikiLeaks, and just-disclosed Australian government documents from this past February state that "the U.S. investigation into possible criminal conduct by Mr. Assange has been ongoing for more than a year." WikiLeaks itself has published e-mails from Stratfor, a private intelligence corporation, which state that a grand jury has already returned a sealed indictment of Mr. Assange. And history indicates Sweden would buckle to any pressure from the United States to hand over Mr. Assange. In 2001 the Swedish government delivered two Egyptians seeking asylum to the C.I.A., which rendered them to the Mubarak regime, which tortured them.

If Mr. Assange is extradited to the United States, the consequences will reverberate for years around the world. Mr. Assange is not an American citizen, and none of his actions have taken place on American soil. If the United States can prosecute a journalist in these circumstances, the governments of Russia or China could, by the same logic, demand that foreign reporters anywhere on earth be extradited for violating their laws. The setting of such a precedent should deeply concern everyone, admirers of WikiLeaks or not.

We urge the people of Britain and Sweden to demand that their governments answer some basic questions: Why do the Swedish authorities refuse to question Mr. Assange in London? And why can neither government promise that Mr. Assange will not be extradited to the United States? The citizens of Britain and Sweden have a rare opportunity to make a stand for free speech on behalf of the entire globe.

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**s'Do some research!' Christine Assange steamrolls Western journalism**

*Reuters*  
21 August, 2012

Julian Assange's mother slammed Western media's lack of research and grasp of basic facts in an interview with Australian television, as the host tried to get her to "address the allegations" of free speech suppression in Ecuador.

Following the profound question "Why did your son choose to make that speech last night?", Christine Assange was asked if Julian plans to fight for freedom of speech in Ecuador, which is "known for its restrictions on the press."

"I don't think you know a lot about the media situation in Ecuador, do you?" she responded. "Not really, you've just read a few human rights things."

She suggested that the host do better research, or at least look through Ecuador's constitution, as many things published by Western media and human rights organizations are, she says, "propaganda."

"I've been to Ecuador and I've read the constitution, two things that most of the media haven't done," Christine Assange said.

And the fact that many media make simple but significant mistakes, for example claiming that Julian "has been charged," makes her believe that most media do not actually follow the developments of her son's case.

Christine added that some human rights organizations have been silent about the prosecution of WikiLeaks and the breaches of Julian's rights.

Ecuador faces the same problem faced by the majority of the world's countries, she said.

**"Media that is owned by big business is against governments that want sovereignty from foreign nations, against governments that share the country's wealth with its populace, against countries that fight for environmental rights, and against countries that have constitutions which are underscored by human rights," she explained.**

**"We also know that many human rights groups are sponsored by the US,"** she added, noting that she would take into account what human rights groups have to say about Ecuador only after they "stop sitting on the fence" and start covering events like the abuse of Julian Assange's legal human rights by Sweden in breach of its own protocols.

When asked why her son didn't speak about Sweden during his public address on Sunday, Assange answered that it would take several hours to fully address the issue and that journalists could at least have done some research instead of waiting for her son to provide them with a summary.

"I think Julian has better things to do right now than talk about the documented abuses of Sweden," she said, advising that those interested read the 2011 submission to the Australian Parliament which documented the violation of Assange's rights by Sweden, or sources like [justice4assange.com](http://justice4assange.com). **"You journalists should go and do your jobs. Why aren't you talking about the documented abuses of Sweden?"**

On Sunday, Julian Assange made his first public appearance in months. Speaking from the balcony of the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, he called on Washington to end its "witch hunt" against him and other whistleblowers, including Bradley Manning, the man charged with furnishing sensitive data to WikiLeaks.

Assange mentioned the sentencing of Bahraini human rights activist Nabeel Rajab to three years in prison for “participation in an illegal assembly” and “calling for a march without prior notification”, as well as the two-year sentence the three Pussy Riot members received for their “punk prayer” that criticized President Vladimir Putin and senior Russian Orthodox clergy.

The Australian whistleblower praised Ecuador for its decision to grant him asylum. The Andean country announced its decision to do so on Thursday, having reviewed his case for almost two months.

Christine Assange also hailed the decision, noting that the country had a “strong record of human rights and free speech.” She told RT that the British government was prepared to “go to extreme measures and breach international law” at the bidding of the United States.

In the run-up to the fateful decision, Christine Assange visited Ecuador and met with President Rafael Correa to discuss her son’s case.

<http://rt.com/news/christine-assange-slams-journalist-080/>

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## **Rädda vita män som Assange svartmålar feminismen**

*Statsvetare med genusinriktning: När den vita mannen blir medveten om sin sociala position blir han kränkt eftersom han upplever att någon försöker beröva honom hans fri- och rättigheter. Likt Julian Assange. Susanna Holmström om Wikileaks*

*Newsmill*  
2012-08-21

Journalisterna Helene Bergman och Anders Carlgren menar i sin debattartikel i DN 19/8 att Sverige lyder under statsfeminism med propagandamaskineri och drivs av manshatande radikalfeminister. Deras debattartikel är ett utmärkt exempel på hur feminismen attackeras och utpekats som ett både omodernt och ondskefullt samhällsinslag mot vilket män står maktlösa och kränkta. De vill genom artikeln påvisa hur feminismen har infiltrerat alla väsentliga delar av samhällsstrukturen och lagt beslag på den politiska korrektheten. [Bergman är en känd feminist som ogillar det som hon och andra kallar för “statsfeminism”. —A.B.]

Artikeln insinuerar rakt av att det svenska rättssystemet är en feministisk diktatur som inte tar hänsyn till mänskliga rättigheter för män utan bara för kvinnor, och jagar alla biologiska män med blåslampa och finner våldtäktsanklagelser i tomma intet. Detta ett mycket tydligt ställningstagande, där [stats]feminismen utmålas som den onda förtryckaren vars lakejer inte drar sig för att döma oskyldiga och sända dem mot evig olycka med ett hänskratt. Det är löjligt hur dessa författare har lyckats trampa så brutalt fel.

Sakfelen i artikeln är många, och rätt enkla att peka ut såsom redan gjorts av Claes Borgström när han i en replik pulveriserade Bergmans och Carlgrens bristande argumentation. Vad som däremot är läskigare är att det inte är ett okänt knep att ta till

när hotet om jämställdheten blir för stort. Feminismen har iklätts maskeradkostym förr då man löpande genom årtionden byggt nidsbilder kring vilka dessa galna feminister är och vad de vill. Det må ha hetat allt från håriga kärringar till sura brudar som får för lite kuk. När denna ulv ska in på DN debatt får den ikläda sig fårkläder igen, för ändamålet passande blir feminismen här en mäktig rättighetsberövande autoritär samhällsinstitution.

Författarna gör själva gällande att den fria feminismen kidnappades i slutet av 80-talet, döptes om till jämställdhet och blev elitfeminism genom utvecklandet av genusvetenskapen. Till en början är det inte bara sakfel, precis som Borgström påpekade i repliken så finner jämställdheten stöd långt tidigare än så. Formuleringen av jämställdhet så som mänsklig rättighet tog form långt innan framtagandet av FNs Konvention för avskaffandet av alla former av diskriminering mot kvinnor (Kvinnokonventionen/CEDAW) som färdigställdes och ratificerades 1979. **Att en person som likt Helene Bergman påstår sig själv vara feminist av den "ursprungliga" sorten är det grövsta övergreppet på ideologin ifråga att beröva den rätten att utvecklas vid erkända lärosäten.**

Bergman och Carlgren menar då alltså att feminismen gör rätt i att stanna i det enskilda privatlivet och endast utövas av människor som inte besitter maktposition. Det, om något, är att klämma ner feminismen i skorna. Visst håller jag med om, som Bergman skriver i sin artikel på Newsmill, att Göran Perssons identifikation som feminist är en hädelse. Men detta beror varken på att han är man eller som Bergman hävdar att han representerar makten— utan på att han helt enkelt inte visste vad feminismen handlade om och icke visade sig inneha feministiska värderingar.

Jag som själv har läst mycket genusvetenskap och således då bör titulera mig elitfeminist om vi följer Bergmans och Carlgrens retorik, skulle själv gärna bjuda de båda till en föreläsning på något av landets institutioner för genusvetenskap. Introduktionsföreläsningen på A-kursen skulle duga fint för att få koll på definitionerna.

Genusvetenskap är nämligen inte synonymt med feminism. Genusvetenskap är studier av maktstrukturer i sociologisk tappning dvs i relation till identitet, kön och genus (som händelsevis inte råkar vara samma sak) ursprung, etnicitet, samhälls-position, bakgrund och diverse annat. Att feministiska värderingar sedan är vanligt hos genusvetare beror snarare på att en grundläggande analys av den samhälleliga maktstrukturen visar att det är just en könsmaktsordning.

Motståndet mot feminismen är mycket utbrett. Den som tar sig en vända på internet blir genast varse om hur politiskt aktiva kvinnor och män med feministiska värderingar ständigt är utsatta för hot om våld och hot om mord. Det är inte på skoj. Då jag arbetar med anmälningsupptagning vid Polismyndigheten kan jag intyga på erfarenhetsbasis att hot mot feminister är mycket vanliga. Hoten ser lite olika ut för kvinnor och män— kvinnor får som traditionen bjuder oftast sexuellt relaterade hot så som att de bör våldtas, skändas och "skäras fittan av", medan män ofta får höra att de är bögar eller idioter. Eller invandrare, ett skällsord nog.

Jag började nysta i hoten häromveckan och träffade Kawa Zolfagary, "mannen bakom Kränkta Vita Män". Kawa råkar vara både man, feminist och invandrare. Detta har för honom inneburit mordhot och ständiga angrepp på hans person i egenskap av politiskt



aktiv invandrare. Till honom har man sagt att han ska åka hem och rätta till saker istället för att bråka med den svenska jämställdheten. Man har berättat att han inte ska lägga sig i. Man har hängt ut hans namn och adress på internet. Man har sagt att han borde dö. Att man ska döda honom.

Vi elitfeminister som strävar efter samhällsförändring är vanligen inte lakejer i maktens centrum. Nog må det vara politiskt korrekt att vara för jämställdhet, men från den dagen man mött sin första hat- och hotattack förstår man genast att det inte är riktigt så accepterat som DN:s kultursidor vill ge sken av.

Propagandamaskineriet och statsfeminismen går inte i alla hus och gårdar och skrämmer folk till tystnad och lydig feministisk hållning. Vi som agerar släpar oss oftast omkring bland upplyst kulturelit som självklart förstår bättre än att låta oss förstå att de inte är med oss om så är fallet. Vi kommer inte åt dessa hatande, ovetande individer som till vardags sysselsätter sig med att hota, hata och förtala andra människor som tar plats på fel sätt. Inte mer än på internet, där de kränkt raljerar till försvar. Jämställdheten och integrationen, likt "kvinnofrågan" är ett behjärtansvärt och gulligt projekt så länge det inte är på allvar. Då kan det bemötas med den hederliga "Vad duktig du är som tänkt så många tankar helt själv-retoriken". Hotet om den faktiska jämställdheten däremot, när vi poängterar att jämställdhet i praktiken skulle innebära att män måste kliva åt sidan och ge plats åt andra— det blir farligt. Kawa Zolfagary intygade också med empiri i detta fall— några av de mest aggressiva bemötande han fått var efter en artikel som löd under rubriken "Lämna plats, vita män!"

När den vita mannen blir medveten om sin egen identitet och sin sociala position inom diskursen— då blir han också väldigt kränkt eftersom han upplever det hela som att någon försöker beröva honom hans grundläggande fri- och rättigheter. Likt Julian Assange, som nu får asyl i Ecuador för att undkomma en rättegång i "feminismens Saudiarabien" — vad den irrelevanta liknelsen än är tänkt att påvisa. Det argumentet används enbart för att han är rädd att utlämnas till USA. Den skräcken kan jag visserligen förstå, jag hade inte heller velat ha USA med CIA i spetsen flåsande i nackhåret. Men eftersom Sverige lyder under flertalet deklarationer och konventioner om mänskliga rättigheter— dels för FN och dels för EU— så är det nästintill en omöjlighet att svenska maktutövare kan finna legitima belegg för att lämna ut Assange till USA om det finns en reell risk för hans liv och säkerhet. **Visserligen har Sverige en hel del skit under naglarna i liknande fall**; vi kan dra oss till minnes hur asylsökande skickades med iltransport till Egypten för att möta tortyr och reella dödshot. I Assanges fall har han turen att vara dels vit, dels icke-muslim och dels medialt uppmärksammas. Skräcken är således inte särskilt befogad för just Julian Assange, även om ämnet som sådant bör få utstå en nitisk granskning.

Om då den svenska rättsstatens skuld i dramat är att på ett för feministiskt sätt försöka genomföra grundläggande förhör och rättslig prövning för en misstänkt våldtäktsman som inte infinner sig, då vill jag för en gångs skull skåla för svensk rättsprocess.

Är han misstänkt ska han förhöras, sedan står utredning och rättegång för uppföljningen. Och den kan se ut lite hur som helst i "feminismens Saudiarabien", det såg vi idag enligt en artikel i Dagens Juridik. Scenariot var ungefär detsamma som i Assanges fall— en man åtalades och dömdes i tingsrätten för att ha våldtagit sin sovande flickvän. Våldtäkten var anal, och mannen visste att kvinnan sov samt att hon

inte tyckte om analsex. Han överklagade domen i hovrätten, där han friades eftersom han hade "träffat fel" och inte syftat till att våldta henne analt.

Hon var visserligen fortfarande våldtagen enligt definitionen eftersom hon sov och hade blivit både utnyttjat och kränkt, men man ansåg att mannen lidit stor skada till följd av frihetsberövande under häktningstid och ombudskostnader vid rättegången. Han friades således helt och mottager nu skadestånd på 22 000 kronor beviljat av JK. Assange bör kanske våga sig på att underkasta sig det svenska rättsväsendets feministiska våld, han kan ju faktiskt få en slant på kuppen.

*Om författaren: Statsvetare med genusinriktning, i nuläget **civilanställd hos Polismyndigheten**. Annars och i övrigt student, skribent, konsult, föreläsare och kulturarbetare.*

## Kommentarer

Frågeställning: tycker du att man kan generalisera utifrån hudfärg? Kan alla göra det eller är det enbart legitimt om det riktar sig mot vita? Svara ärligt nu.

— *Ben Dekå*

Får mig lite att tänka på när en reporter i P3 frågade Ayaan Hirsi Ali hur det kom sig att hon kunde kritisera islam trots att hon var mörkhyad. Det ledde ganska snabbt till en nervös intervjuare när hon snabbt replikerade om vad hennes hudfärg har med kritik av islam att göra? Så, Susanna Holmström, vad har hudfärg med kritik av genusvetenskapen att göra? Sedan är svenskt rättsväsende ibland patetiskt där de drar sitt begrepp "hellre fria än att fälla" till sin yttersta spets. Om det du skriver stämmer är det fruktansvärt att han blev friad i hovrätten (och det gäller även när folk skyller på varandra och slipper straff, helt otroligt!)

— *Magnus*

Anklaga vita män anser du legitimt va? Försök med samma mot "övriga" så blir du sågad vid fotknölarna av PK maffian. Dagens kalkon är du en het kandidat att vinna.

— *André W.*

Vita mannen? Vi är överens om att inte generalisera om tex invandrare, romer, kvinnor, homosexuella m fl. Varför är män undantagna? Det svaret skulle jag vilja ha.

— *Bo Grahn*

Som vanligt när feminister ska försvara feminismen riktas kritiken mot män, inte mot de kvinnor som också kritiserar samma ideologi. Visst, Helene Bergman får viss kritik den här gången men det är den "vita kränkta mannen" som får den största slev. Om inte dagens feminism vore så fylld av manshat skulle den inte heller bli lika mycket kritiserad.

— *Malte Skogsnäs*

Vare sig du och dom andra feministerna har rätt eller inte så kan ni inte reparera den skada som fallet Assange har orsakat Sverige. Ni kan inte heller reparera den skada som de juridiska institutionerna i Sverige led när riktiga jurister ersattes med politiker för att genomdriva era ståndpunkter. Ett lands institutioner är något av det viktigaste som finns för ett lands välbefinnande och dessa ska drivas av jurister och inte politiker.

— *Anders Olsson*

Dagens svenska feminism handlar inte om jämlikhet, utan är en ideologi som förtycker såväl kvinnor som män och förolämpar allas intelligens. Det är nu länge sedan feminismen urartade. Jag skulle tveklöst ställa mig bakom och stödja den typ av feminism som verkligen handlar om borttagandet av inskränkningar för kvinnor och kampen för lika rättigheter, men dagens feminism skulle jag kunna ge en lång rad exempel på varför den är skadlig och något som klokt folk bör ta avstånd ifrån.

Här har den s.k. jämställdismen tagit på sig den goda ledarrollen. Det förvånar mig att många än idag talar om feminism som vore det något positivt. Det är förmodligen ingen slump att det är välutbildade och klarsynta personer inom högt logiskt krävande ämnesområden som utgör de bästa rösterna för kritiken mot genusvetenskapen, exempelvis Tanja Bergkvist (doktor i matematik) och Per Ström (civilingenjör i teknisk fysik).

Feminismen har förflyttat sig från den demokratiska kampen för "rätten för en kvinna att kunna välja" till det förtryckande, icke-demokratiska och vetenskapsfientliga....

— Peter Andersson

Ett urgammalt knep som alla feminister tar till är att förklara sig själva vara synonyma med alla kvinnor. En argumentation blir plötsligt ett "påhopp" och inte bara på dem, utan på hela den kvinnliga befolkningen. Således blir feministkritiker "kvinnohatare", "mörkermän" och så vidare. Sen är det lustigt, som någon tidigare påpekade, hur det alltid ska vara vita män som ska attackeras.

**Objektivt så har kvinnor det bäst där vita män är flest.** Håller du inte med? Titta på Arabvärlden, Afrika, Sydamerika och så vidare. T.o.m. i Östasien så har kvinnan en helt annan roll. Många kvinnor med universitetsutbildningar mer eller mindre fryses ut tills de blir hemmafruar.

Är detta ett bevis på att vita män är bättre än alla? Knappast. Men det tål att tänkas på varför det alltid är 'vita män' som ska angripas i kollektiv. Skulle förföratten kunna generalisera på samma sätt om t.ex. svarta män?

Tror inte det, eller hur? Så problemet med feminismen är att den är genomsyrad av den post-68 kulturmarxistiska idén där alla rasister bara kan vara vita, och helst män, heterosexuella och kristna. Detta är urbotat korkat. Det räcker att titta på anti-Semitismen i Malmö för ett kort exempel på det. Eller ta hedersmord. Och så vidare.

Detta är samma inställning som ledde Gudryn Schyman att förklara att svenska män är som 'talibaner'. Eller ROKS ordförande att säga att 'män är djur' och så vidare. Feminismen är en vänsterradikal idéströmning.

Feminismen är INTE samma sak som jämställdhet. Detta är ännu ett favoritknep som feminister vill använda sig av för att legitimera sig själva. Alla angrepp på feminister blir angrepp på kvinnligheten och/eller på jämställdhet.

Men jämställdhet har inget med feminism att göra. Jämställdhet är målet. Feminism är en vänsterradikal rörelse. Åtminstone idag, då den är dominerad av vänsterradikala som har rasistiska dubbelstockar gentemot vita män och sexistiska dubbelstockar gentemot män i allmänhet.

**Att Feministiskt Initiativ får 0.2 % eller vad de nu fick förra valet säger allt. Den enda platsen där feministerna kan spy ut sin galla är i akademien** där alla klappar alla i ryggen och där den humanistiska traditionen stadigt sjunkit i gytjan sedan 60-talet och där det är viktigare att ha ett vänsterperspektiv än att ha empirin på sin sida.

Jag läste någonstans att 90 % av alla socialpsykologer på universiteten röstade vänster i USA [*det finns ingen vänster i USA --A.B.*] och att en majoritet öppet erkände att de diskriminerade på politisk grund. Så det är inte konstigt att siffrorna är så stora när vänstern som inte alls står för tolerans, öppet och tydligt vill diskriminera de med

annan syn så de kan roffa åt sig makten i akademien.

Feministerna har förstått spelet. De har ingen chans i verkliga livet, de blir totalt utplånade. Bäst istället att gömma sig inom akademien eller inom olika NGOs där alla tycker och tänker lika som sengångare.

**Hela den här artikeln är ett exempel på varför feminismen är så hjärndöd och politiskt död i Sverige.** Författarens rasistiska dubbelstock— hennes vilda attack på alla vita män— är **också en ledtråd varför så många feminister har låtit invandrar-tjejer lida i det tyst i hedersvåldets helvete**, för de kan inte förstå en mer komplicerad värld där vita män är roten till all ondska och där jämställdheten inte ens är i närheten av samma sak som feminism, en vänsterradikal ideologi som stötts av 0.2 % av befolkningen enligt förra valet. Tål att tänkas på, men jag gissar på att författaren tycker det är för jobbigt att tänka. Det där med självkritik är nog inte hennes och hennes medfeministers grej. Det är mycket skönare att syssla med slogans än med tankar och självkritik.

Man kan alltid attackera 'vita män' för all världens ondska i sin lilla svart/vita värld när man är deppig.

— Anna Hellsén

I de båda sista styckena jämför du vad Assange gjort med ett annat fall. De är ungefär lika, säger du. **Nej, de är inte alls lika.** Mannen i det fall du refererar till visste uppenbarligen om att kvinnan inte ville ha analsex, d.v.s. han gjorde vad han gjorde mot hennes vilja. Så långt är det tydligen klart men det är en väsentlig skillnad i förhållande till Assange-fallet. Sedan konstaterade hovrätten att åklagaren inte lyckats bevisa uppsåt och då ska han frikännas.

Sitter man t.ex. häktad för ett brott och frikänns för detta så får man alltid ersättning enligt en särskild lag. Men du gör en grej av alltsammans, genom att binda ihop de två meningarna i sista stycket med ett "men" och dessutom påstå något så dumt som att kvinnan ju var våldtagen "enligt definitionen". Vilken definition då, frågar man sig. I vart fall inte den juridiska, den saken är klar. Men kanske din? Kan man då i din värld bli dömd för våldtäkt trots att man inte gjort sig skyldig till brott? Något är helt fel i ditt sätt att resonera. Osakligt helt enkelt. Gäller det resten av artikeln också?

— *Gunnar*

Vilket snömos! Inte ofta jag använder ordet rasist (brukar normalt skratta när det används), men feminismen är en rastistisk, hatisk och vänsterextremistisk rörelse. Det är ett under att vi skattebetalare betalar din lön! Men det är bara en tidsfråga innan ni genusideologer går arbetslösa.

— *Micael Johnsson*

Jag skummade igenom artikeln tills vi kom till frågan om utlämnande till USA eftersom det är just det hela den här krisen handlar om och inte Assanges åtalspunkter i Sverige. Du verkar säker på din sak: "... eftersom Sverige lyder under flertalet deklARATIONER och konventioner ... så är det nästintill en omöjlighet att svenska maktutövare kan finna legitima belägg för att lämna ut Assange till USA om det finns en reell risk för hans liv och säkerhet." Många, inklusive säkerligen Assange själv, delar inte din idealistiska syn.

Om USA på allvar skulle kräva att Assange blir utlämnad (med alla typer av påtryckningar det kan komma att innebära), tror du då att regeringen, vare sig det är Reinfeldt eller Löfven, kommer att stå upp och säga ifrån? Det tror nämligen inte jag. Om Assange blir utlämnad, vad tror du då kommer bli påföljden av en fällande dom för spioneri etc? Vad hände med Bradley Manning? Är han också en vit, kränkt man?

Jag tror inte att det är fråga om dödsstraff eftersom det skulle leda till enorma protester, men hur kul är det att spendera resten av sitt liv i en isoleringscell i ett amerikanskt högsäkerhetsfängelse?

Så länge regeringen inte kan garantera att det inte blir någon utlämning, vilket de inte kommer eller kan göra, förstår jag varför Assange inte är villig att "våga sig på" det svenska rättsväsendet och personligen stödjer jag hans beslut även om det är olyckligt att det inte går att genomföra förhör angående de påstådda sexbrotten.

— Alex Pedersen

Ironin bakom statsfeministrieriet är komiskt med tanke på följande skrivet av Pär Ström:

"Jaså, det finns ingen statsfeminism? Hur kommer det sig då att...

- ... svensk lag på ett tiotal punkter diskriminerar män?
- ... det finns statligt starta eget-bidrag som bara kan sökas av kvinnor?
- ... det finns statligt stöd för att göra film som bara kan sökas av kvinnor?
- ... det finns rehabilitering med statliga pengar som bara är tillgänglig för kvinnor?
- ... det finns statligt stöd för kvinnor, men inte män, som vill organisera sig?
- ... det finns särskild karriärhjälp för statstjänstemän som bara är tillgänglig för kvinnor?
- ... det finns en särskild statlig satsning på att förbättra kvinnors arbetsmiljö?
- ... Försvarsmakten rekryterar kvinnor även om dessa har sämre testresultat än män som också har sökt?
- ... regeringens regleringsbrev till ett flertal myndigheter föreskriver att kvinnor ska prioriteras?
- ... Kronofogdemyndigheten har en särskild satsning på kvinnor med skuldproblem, trots att fler män än kvinnor är drabbade?
- ... den statliga myndigheten Skogsstyrelsen arrangerar kurser som bara är öppna för kvinnor?
- ... det statliga bolaget Sveriges Radio söker en sportreporter, men skriver i annonsen att bara kvinnor får söka?
- ... många universitet och högskolor ger kvinnor snabbspår i den akademiska karriären
- ... den statliga myndigheten Vinnova under fem år har delat ut 500 miljoner kronor till disputerade forskare— under förutsättning att de har kvinnligt kön?
- ... Diskrimineringsombudsmanne ofta väljer att avstå från att agera när företag ger kvinnor "tjejrabatt" på varor och tjänster, eller ger kvinnor bättre villkor än män?
- ... det finns diverse statliga och kommunala ungdomssatsningar som bara är öppna för tjejer?"

Och så vidare i en lista som aldrig verkar ta slut."

<http://www.pellebilling.se/2012/05/gastblogg-par-strom/>

Låt feminismen vara en organisation för kvinnors intressen men då skall de hundratals miljoner som delas ut till jämställdhet gå till organisationer som faktiskt är jämställda— och inte bara förespråkar vita kvinnor.

— Kent S.

@Anna Hellsén: Du har nog missförstått det här med de vita männen en aning. Dessutom, vad menar du med att amerikanska socialpsykologer röstar "vänster"? Så vitt jag vet finns inget vänsterparti i USA som får annat än en handfull av röster. Vad jag antar att du menar är att de röstar på demokraterna, i likhet med de flesta människor med lite vett alternativt utbildning.

— Alex Pedersen

Bästa Susanna Holmström:

Nu har förmodligen Newsmill satt Din rubrik, vilken inte är i överkanten snällt i det här fallet, men i texten återger Du samma intelligensbefriade prosa.

Rädda vita män (önskestigmatisering i klass med rasse eller nasse) som Assange (persolighetsteckning av en person Du överhuvudtaget inte känner) svartmålar feminismen (anklagelse om något, mig veterligen, Assange aldrig gjort).

Du stigmatiserar Assange i det här fallet med åsikter Du själv personligen har om män. OK för Dig, men projicera inte Dina fel på andra, tack. De läckta förundersökningsprotokollen visar en helt annan historia (men det har Du förmodligen inte brytt Dig om att läsa), ej heller har Du läst Anna Ardins tidigare alster om hur man hämnas på män som har (dumpat) en kvinna, Alltså AA:s beteckning på män, som funnit hennes sällskap tillfyllest. Några sådana anteckningar hittar man överhuvudtaget inte i Assanges anamnes.

Vi kan alltså anse AA:s inställning till män vara redan halvkriminell från början. Tyvärr har Du tydligen samma inställning till män själv. Troligen för att Du från start inte gillar män eller för att Du väljer sällsynt dåligt.. I vilket fall som helst, Ditt eget fel.

**Jag börjar äntligen förstå hur Assangefallet överhuvudtaget blev till. En polis som Du på stationen, en bekant åklagare till Dig, med samma åsikter, som blir uppringd och en brännvinsadvokat av typen Borgström. Då eskalerar ärendet från något som klarats upp med ett samtal och blodprov på närmaste akut till en Internationell kris med minst 6 nationers diplomater och statministrar inblandade och som till dags dato har kostat minst 100 miljoner kronor.**

Och ändå kan inte dumskallen till åklagare åka till London för att höra mannen ifråga. Fast polisbevakningen kring ambassaden kostar mer än 100 varv runt jorden. Snacka om prestige och feminister. **De svartmålar sig alldeles utmärkt själva, De behöver ingen hjälp av vita intellektuella män....**

— Kristian Grönqvist

Susanna Holmström har säkert en hel del intressant att säga om feminism och genusfrågor men jag tror att hon gör sig själv en otjänst när hon kopplar ihop detta med fallet Assange....

All världens konspirationsteoretiker har uppenbarligen samlats till Assanges försvar. Det är en slags masshysteri som fullständigt tappat all form av kritiskt tänkande, sans och vett. Det är möjligt att det är en smittsam epidemi som även har drabbat Helene Bergman och Anders Carlgren. Ser man hur kommentarsfältet växer här så inser man att smittan sprider sig snabbt.

Assange är bara en man i nedre medelåldern som har både en hjärna och en penis. Tyvärr kan hans hjärta bara förse en i taget med blod och syre. **Han lider nog dessutom av någon form av narcissistisk personlighetsstörning.**

Jag må vara en rädd vit medelålders man men jag vill inte bli sammanblandad med Julian Assange.

— Fundamentus

Att Susanne Holmström m fl inte fattar att hela upplägget från början har varit en "honey-trap" för att USA skulle kunna lägga vantarna på Assange. En av målsägandena skrev i sin personliga bloggpresentation att hon var CIA-agent och lesbisk slampa. Jag ska uppehålla mig vid det ur feministisk synvinkel för jag tror kärnan ligger här: Anser man att tjejerna blev ofredade och våldtagna, eller anser man det inte.

Jag anser det inte. Jag har själv varit ung och glad och följt med fel man hem och saker och ting har utvecklats i en situation som oundvikligen ledde till att mannen genomförde ett samlag som jag inte ville vara med om egentligen, men jag fick stå mitt kast. **Är man så dum att man försätter sig i den situationen så får man skylla sig själv. Punkt!!!**

Målsägare A lånar ut sin lägenhet till en obekant man, Assange och kommer instolpande två dagar innan hon anmält ankomst, stannar kvar med honom i lägenheten och börjar hängla. Sover med honom ett par dygn och twittrar om världens häftigaste folk från en kräftsiva och så anses en söndrad kondom utan DNA vara orsak till våldtäktsanmälan? Är det sexuellt ofredande?

Målsägare B hänglar med Assange på en biograf, sista raden, halva inne, och tar sedan hem honom, älskar med honom flera gånger under natten och går på morgonen ut och köper frukost, går hem och äter frukost med honom och går sedan tillbaka till sängen. Inslumrad känner B att Assange är på väg in och hon frågar om han har något på sig och han svarar bara dig, och hon låter honom fortsätta. Är det våldtäkt??

Och så denna cirkus som uppstår med byten av åklagare och Broderskapsrörelsen som målsägare A m fl i kretsen kring Assange också ingår i.

Endast en som vill undvika att se verkligheten kan röra sig med så mycket floskler som Susanna Holmström. Inse att hela den här affären handlar om något betydligt större än två vuxna kvinnors anmälan av Assange för våldtäkt. Handlingar som dessutom i normala människors hjärnor aldrig kan härröras till våldtäkt....

— Christina Lundqvist

<http://www.newsmill.se/trackback/46315>

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## **How South America sees the Julian Assange case**

*On the Assange affair, the UK is a mere pawn in US imperial strategy to get what it wants*

Atilio Boron  
The Guardian  
20 August 2012

Since the end of the last century, the expression "rogue state" has become increasingly acceptable within international public discourse. Driven by US propaganda, the concept aims to demonise countries opposed by Washington by portraying them as global threats.

However, in recent years, this argument has been turned against the White House. An alternative view is gaining traction—namely that the main rogue state of the planet and the greatest terrorist threat to world peace is none other than the United States, and it has the backing of the likes of eminent US intellectuals Noam Chomsky and William Blum, and the film director Oliver Stone.

Viewed from South America, the UK has done more than enough to share that accolade with its US cousins, and the attitude in Britain to Julian Assange is simply the latest example. The Ecuadorean foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, reported that the British government transmitted to Quito an "explicit threat in writing that they may assault our Ecuadorean embassy in London if we do not deliver Julian Assange".

The British foreign secretary, William Hague, later confirmed the threat, thus breaching the Vienna convention, which establishes the immunity of diplomatic headquarters, something that not even the bloodthirsty South American dictators Jorge Videla and Augusto Pinochet dared to do.

**As the spokesperson for the Russian foreign minister noted: "Everybody knows that tens of alleged criminals, whose extradition is requested by many countries, including Russia, found asylum and feel safe in Great Britain. Why then refuse to do the same in the case of Assange?" Worse still, London extended a welcome to one of the bloodiest Latin American dictators, Pinochet, but denies it to Assange. This regrettable moral double standard speaks for itself.**

It seems that Assange's offence of publishing the schemes and crimes secretly committed and supported by those who would lead us is unforgivable. As a result, the US has mobilised its friends and allies worldwide in order to capture the WikiLeaks founder, even if it must breach international laws and treaties and trample over human rights in order to teach him the lesson it feels he deserves.

The global media is praising the "bravery of Britain". But the UK is a mere pawn in the imperial strategy, as are the governments of Sweden and, worse still, Australia, Assange's country of origin, which has scandalously disassociated itself from the case.

However, there is some hope: last weekend an emergency meeting of the ministers of foreign relations of the Union of South American Nations (Unasur) concluded with a unanimous declaration of solidarity with Ecuador and in repudiation of the attitude of the British government regarding this incident. **It should be noted that Unasur includes governments at either end of the political spectrum.**

David Cameron's position was so reprehensible that conservative leaders such as Chile's Sebastián Piñera and Colombia's Juan Manuel Santos as well as radical ones such as Bolivia's Evo Morales and Venezuela's Hugo Chávez sided with President Rafael Correa of Ecuador.

It is a discouraging sign that the country which, in the mid-19th century, welcomed Karl Marx is now ready to deliver Assange to a country that administers the infamous Guantánamo prison camp, sends prisoners overseas in secret flights to be tortured elsewhere, and deprives alleged criminals of the most elementary right of self-defence, unable to call a lawyer or even to communicate his or her whereabouts to their family.

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## **George Galloway wades into Julian Assange row— and creates a storm**

*Respect MP criticised by anti-rape campaigners after claiming having sex with a woman when she is asleep is not rape*

*Robert Booth  
The Guardian  
20 August 2012*



Anti-rape campaigners have accused George Galloway of a "deeply disturbing and disappointing" attitude towards sexual violence after he claimed a rape allegation levelled at the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange had no basis because having sex with a woman when she is asleep is not rape.

In an extraordinary and graphic speech made through a weekly online video broadcast called "Good Night with George Galloway", the Respect party MP for Bradford West addressed allegations of rape, sexual molestation and unlawful coercion made by two women— known as woman A and woman B— Assange met on a visit to Stockholm in August 2010, including having sex with one of them while she was asleep. Assange strongly denies the allegations.

**"Even taken at its worst, if the allegations made by these two women were true, 100% true, and even if a camera in the room captured them, they don't constitute rape," Galloway said. "At least not rape as anyone with any sense can possibly recognise it. And somebody has to say this.**

"Woman A met Julian Assange, invited him back to her flat, gave him dinner, went to bed with him, had consensual sex with him, claims that she woke up to him having sex with her again. This is something which can happen, you know. I mean, not everybody needs to be asked prior to each insertion."

**Lawyers and anti-rape campaigners said Galloway was wrong and the law is clear that consent is required every time someone has sex.**

**Galloway said he was speaking out because "a reign of intellectual terror has descended in Britain" on this issue and he believed the sexual assault claims were part of a "setup" intended to deliver Assange into the hands of the US authorities angered at his publication of state secrets.**

"It is staggering just how ignorant, factually and morally incorrect George Galloway can be," said Katie Russell, spokeswoman for Rape Crisis England and Wales. "It is very concerning that an elected MP should display such ignorance of the law for all the women and men he represents. It sends a negative message to all the women and girls who have experienced sexual violence and a disturbing message to perpetrators. He says he doesn't believe these women or these allegations and that is a very powerful statement because every woman or girl who has made an allegation of sexual violence deserves to have that treated fairly."

A magistrates court has already ruled that: "What is alleged here is that Mr Assange 'deliberately consummated sexual intercourse with her by improperly exploiting that she, due to sleep, was in a helpless state'. In this country that would amount to rape." *[But the accusation in this case is false. --A.B.]*

The high court also ruled: "It is clear that the allegation is that he had sexual intercourse with her [woman A] when she was not in a position to consent and so he could not have had any reasonable belief that she did." *[Ditto. --A.B.]*

In his broadcast Galloway said: "Some people believe that when you go to bed with somebody, take off your clothes, and have sex with them and then fall asleep, you're already in the sex game with them. It might be really bad manners not to have tapped her on the shoulder and said: 'Do you mind if I do it again?.' It might be really sordid and bad sexual etiquette, but whatever else it is, it is not rape or you bankrupt the term rape of all meaning."

Sandy Brindley, national co-ordinator for Rape Crisis Scotland said Galloway's comments were "very unhelpful" and supported an enduring but false notion of "real" or "serious" rape.

**"It can be just as devastating to be raped asleep by someone you know as it is to be raped by a stranger in the street," she said.**

Assange remains holed up in the Ecuadorean embassy in Knightsbridge, as he attempts to avoid extradition to Sweden where he is wanted for questioning over sexual assault claims. The lawfulness of a European arrest warrant issued by the Swedish authorities was confirmed in May by the UK's supreme court.

Assange and his supporters believe that if he travels to Stockholm he may be rendered to the United States and charged with espionage for publishing leaked military logs from Iraq and Afghanistan and highly classified diplomatic cables from US embassies around the world. They fear he faces life in prison, or even the death penalty in the US.

**On Twitter, Galloway reacted dismissively to the uproar surrounding his remarks. "Oh how this 'liberal' chorus of Pavlovian reaction must delight the Pentagon!" he tweeted. "Oh my, what a lot of 'liberal' useful idiots the Empire can count on. It's about WIKILEAKS stupid...!"**

In a characteristically hectoring broadcast, Galloway also addressed allegations made by the second woman against Assange, over which he is wanted for questioning.

"She claimed that while she did have consensual sex with him, the condom ripped and yet he continued to do it," he said. "Now you wouldn't just need to be in the room with the two of them to know the truth of this allegation. I don't want to take the biology too far, but you would actually need to be somewhere located inside the woman to know if that allegation were true. And if it were true, is it rape?"

The Respect MP concluded by declaring: "I think the whole thing is a setup. I don't understand how so many of you can't see that. If he did these things, he's a rat. But the United States empire, the British empire, the imperial system that around the world is slaughtering human beings by the million, cutting their throats, starving them to death, leaving them to die of poverty and avoidable disease in their millions, is a much bigger rat, no? **Imperialism is a much bigger rat than Julian Assange, no? So why would you want Assange to be delivered to the United States and silenced for ever, unless you were on the side of empire.**"

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### George Galloway must not fall into the trap of rape denial

Julie Bindel: Men supposed to be our allies are trying to rewrite definitions of rape to suit their uncritical adoration of the WikiLeaks founder

**"World News", The Guardian, 2012-08-21**

*[Note: The man in the photo is not George Galloway. --A.B.]*

## **Gorgeous George joins the Assange backers who don't think rape is rape**

*Galloway sparks outrage with claim that alleged crimes are part of 'the sex game'*

Jerome Taylor  
The Independent  
21 August 2012

Anti-rape campaigners have reacted with horror after George Galloway became the latest supporter of Julian Assange to claim that the sexual assault allegations against him should not be considered rape.

In a video podcast which immediately sparked outrage, the Bradford MP and notorious polemicist suggested that sex without consent should not always be thought of as rape, if a woman has previously consented to what he called "the sex game". He added that Mr Assange was merely guilty of "bad sexual etiquette".

Mr Galloway's comments were delivered in a 30-minute defence of the WikiLeaks founder, which he released online as part of his weekly podcast series "Goodnight with George Galloway". Twenty minutes in, he turns his fire on the rape allegations Mr Assange is facing in Sweden, stating that it should be acceptable to have intercourse with a sleeping woman if she had previously consented to sex.

"What I am going to say is going to be controversial, because somebody has to say this," he said. "A reign of intellectual terror has descended on this subject. Even taken at its worst, if the allegations made by these two women were true, 100 per cent true, and even if a camera in the room captured them, they don't constitute rape. At least not rape as anyone with any sense can possibly recognise it. And somebody has to say this." He then turns to the case of "Woman A", one of Mr Assange's two accusers, who claims he forcibly had sex with her without her consent without wearing a condom. "Woman A invited him back to her flat, gave him dinner, went to bed with him, had consensual sex with him. Claims that she woke up to him having sex with her again. This is something which can happen, you know," Mr Galloway said.

He added: "I mean, not everybody needs to be asked prior to each insertion. Some people believe that when you go to bed with somebody, take off your clothes, and have sex with them and then fall asleep, you're already in the sex game with them."

Mr Galloway joins the ranks of prominent supporters of Mr Assange. Monty Python star Terry Jones has tweeted his support by attacking Sweden's rape laws and incorrectly stating that the charges would not be considered a crime in Britain.

"Having had consensual sex with a woman once does not give a man licence to then have sex with her again at any time and in any way he pleases and assume consent is given," said a spokeswoman from Rape Crisis. "Mr Galloway's description of such sexual violence as 'really bad manners' is offensive and deeply concerning."

Sarah Green, from the End Violence Against Women Coalition, added: "The Assange case has revealed some very worrying attitudes to sexual violence among many commentators as to what constitutes 'real rape'."

Last night the hacker group Anonymous claimed to have hacked into the websites of the Ministry of Justice, the Department of Work and Pensions and Number 10 as a gesture of support for Assange. A spokesman for the MoJ confirmed the website was suffering "disruption" but would not say why. The other websites appeared unaffected.

Meanwhile, foreign ministers across South America yesterday called for dialogue between the UK and Ecuador to resolve the row over Mr Assange's extradition.

### **George's gospel: In his own words**

"Even taken at its worst, if the allegations made by these two women were true, 100 per cent true, and even if a camera in the room captured them, they don't constitute rape."

"Not everybody needs to be asked prior to each insertion. Some people believe that when you go to bed with somebody, take off your clothes, and have sex with them and then fall asleep, you're already in the sex game with them."

"It might be really bad manners not to have tapped her on the shoulder and said, "do you mind if I do it again?". It might be really sordid and bad sexual etiquette, but whatever else it is, it is not rape."

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## Ecuador gambles on WikiLeaks founder Assange

*Editorial Board  
Washington Post  
August 21 The*

JUST ABOUT eight weeks ago, Julian Assange — the WikiLeaks founder and self-styled victim of an imagined international political conspiracy — sought asylum in the Ecuadoran Embassy in London. After Britain's Supreme Court refused his appeal against extradition to Sweden, where Mr. Assange is wanted for questioning on alleged sex crimes, the 41-year-old Australian hacker broke his bail conditions and fled to the embassy, a few hundred yards from Harrods department store. Last week, Ecuador granted his asylum request.

Given that British authorities are sure to arrest Mr. Assange the minute he steps outside embassy premises, what this arrangement gives him is essentially imprisonment without a sentence. More interesting is what advantage Ecuador envisions from protecting an alleged sex criminal who was allowed to exhaust his legal options in one democracy and would be allowed to do the same in another.

Mr. Assange claims that extradition to Sweden will result in his being turned over to the United States, which, because of its embarrassment over the secret diplomatic cables and military logs WikiLeaks made public, might subject him to the death penalty. At a news conference of sorts on Sunday, in which Mr. Assange was careful not to stick too far out from the Ecuadoran Embassy's balcony, he went so far as to call on the United States to end its "witch hunt" against his organization.

Rafael Correa, Ecuador's outspokenly anti-American president, has stoked fantasies like these, having welcomed Mr. Assange to the so-called "club of the persecuted." In January, he welcomed Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Quito. But he's also certainly aware that the United States has neither charged the WikiLeaks founder with any crime nor demanded his extradition. Why then offer asylum?

Mr. Correa — who has cracked down on press freedoms in his own country — has begun to show signs of establishing the same sort of autocracy that Hugo Chavez has brought to Venezuela. He may imagine that protecting Mr. Assange will give a much-needed boost to his international reputation. But it also could have disastrous economic consequences for his country. As we've said before, the United States that Mr. Correa so despises allows Ecuador to export many goods duty-free, supports roughly 400,000 jobs in a country of 14 million people and accounts for one-third of Ecuador's foreign sales. Congress could easily decide to diminish that privileged commercial access early next year.

Is Mr. Assange really worth the risk?

*[This is the second time that the Post has threatened Ecuador with economic sanctions. But Assange has nothing to fear from the U.S., apparently. --A.B.]*

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## Galloway just keeps digging with Assange rape 'clarification'

*The Respect MP fails to address 'bad etiquette' comments in defence of WikiLeaks founder*

Kevin Rawlinson  
The Independent  
22 August 2012

George Galloway has refused to retract his comments that the sexual offences allegedly committed by Julian Assange amounted to no more than bad "sexual etiquette"—despite the leader of his own party condemning them as "deeply disappointing and wrong".

When the Respect MP issued a statement yesterday afternoon, it was expected that he would use the opportunity to clarify his controversial claims about the WikiLeaks founder. But instead of addressing them directly, he insisted that Mr Assange was the target of a "set up" by the US, British and Swedish governments.

"No never means yes and non-consensual sex is rape. **Julian Assange, let's be clear, has always denied the allegations.** And this has all the hallmarks of a set-up," the statement read. Suggesting the US and UK authorities should promise not to organise the onward extradition of Mr Assange while he was in Sweden, he added: **"What is preventing the two governments doing this? I think we know."**

Mr Assange faces the prospect of being charged with four separate offences in Sweden. In his initial extradition hearing, the Magistrate asserted that the first three allegations would— if proven— constitute offences under the British Sexual Offences Act; and that the fourth would constitute rape.

However, Mr Galloway insisted: "What occurred is not rape as most people understand it. And it's important to note that the two women involved did not initially claim it."

Salma Yaqoob, the leader of the Respect party, said the MP's original comments had been "deeply disappointing and wrong". In a posting on her own website, she said the "political issues" surrounding Mr Assange's case should not be used to diminish the seriousness of the accusations against him. "Let me be clear, as a politician and as a woman. Rape occurs when a woman has not consented to sex," she added.

In his statement, Mr Galloway, who is in Indonesia, said Mr Assange has repeatedly made clear that he is prepared to return to Sweden to face questioning if he receives a guarantee that he would not be extradited to the US to face charges over the leak of US diplomatic cables.

But yesterday the US State Department accused the WikiLeaks founder of spreading "wild assertions" and **insisted that the extradition saga, now centred on Ecuador's embassy in London, is nothing to do with them.**

Spokeswoman Victoria Nuland criticised Mr Assange for what she said was an attempt to deflect attention from the sex charges he faces in Sweden. Her outburst came as Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa, who has granted the WikiLeaks founder asylum, said it would be "suicidal" for UK authorities to attempt to arrest him in the embassy.

The American government, however, sought to distance itself from the issue. At a press briefing, Ms Nuland said: "He is making all kinds of wild assertions about us. He is clearly trying to deflect attention away from the real issue, which is whether he's going to face justice in Sweden, which is the immediate issue. So that case has nothing to do with us. It's a matter between the UK, Sweden, and now Ecuador has inserted itself."

Meanwhile, the computer hacking collective Anonymous claimed yesterday that it had attacked Government websites in retaliation for Britain's handling of Mr Assange case. It claimed responsibility for the "denial of service" attacks on Twitter, which affected the websites of the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office.

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### **The real reason why Assange is not questioned in London: "A matter of prestige"**

*Swedish Foreign Ministry: "You do not dictate the terms if you are a suspect. Get it?"*

*Fria Tider  
21 augusti 2012*

Last Friday, a Swedish professor of international law stated that the reason why the prosecutor will not question Julian Assange in London is that it has become "a matter of prestige" not to do so. The following day, the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs commented that Assange must come to Sweden because it is not up to him to "dictate the terms". It seems increasingly clear that the prosecutor's refusal to accept Assange's offer to be interviewed in London has much to do with prestige and little with law.

One of the most vexing questions in the Assange case is why the Swedish prosecutor insists on having him extradited to Sweden, instead of simply questioning him in London. A long series of contradictory explanations has been provided by the Swedish Prosecution Authority throughout the proceedings.

In the early stages of the extradition process, the prosecutor in charge of the case, Marianne Ny, frequently claimed that British as well as Swedish law prevented her from interrogating Assange anywhere but in Sweden. Some examples: On 20 November 2010, Ms. Ny was quoted as saying that Swedish law prevented her from questioning Assange by video link or at an embassy in London. On 3 December the same year Ms. Ny told TIME Magazine that she could not legally interview Assange by telephone or video link. She made similar comments two days later, claiming that it was impossible to question Assange in London.

**Two months later, Ms. Ny suddenly changed her story.** In a witness statement submitted in the extradition proceedings in London, dated 4 February 2011, she admitted that it was possible for her to interview Assange in London within the framework of a system for legal co-operation called Mutual Legal Assistance. However, Ms. Ny claimed, that would not be "an appropriate course" to take, because she considered it necessary to interrogate Assange "in person".

The legal basis for Ms. Ny's comments appears dubious, to say the least. The rules setting out the procedures for Mutual Legal Assistance make clear that a foreign

prosecutor can question a suspect in the UK by telephone, videolink, or through British police (see Mutual Legal Assistance Guidelines for the United Kingdom, 8th edition, pp. 15, 20 and 29). If the latter option is used, it is possible for officers from the foreign state to be present during the interview. In fact, Ms. Ny had a wide range of options for interrogating Assange in the UK: by telephone, video link or by interviewing him in person, together with British police.

As for Swedish law, there are no provisions preventing prosecutors from interrogating suspects abroad. Doing so is, in fact, a routine matter. An example: In late 2010, at roughly the same time that Ms. Ny decided to issue a European Arrest Warrant for Assange, Swedish police officers went to Serbia to interview a well-known gangster suspected of involvement in an armed robbery. The interview was conducted in co-operation with Serbian police. **Thus, at the same time that Ms. Ny claimed it was an impossibility to interview the founder of Wikileaks in London, her colleagues were busy interrogating an infamous gangster in Serbia.**

In a radio interview last Friday, a Swedish professor emeritus of international law, Ove Bring, confirmed that there are no legal obstacles whatsoever preventing Ms. Ny from questioning Assange in London. When asked why the prosecutor would not do so, Professor Bring responded that "it's a matter of prestige not only for prosecutors, but for the Swedish legal system". Professor Bring also stated that the charges against Assange would probably have to be dropped following an interview, since "the evidence is not enough to charge him with a crime".

Last Saturday, Fria Tider sent a message to the Ministry's official Twitter channel, asking if Professor Bring was right in saying that the reason why the prosecutor would not interrogate Assange in London was "prestige". After a short exchange of messages, **the Ministry provided the following response:**

**"You do not dictate the terms if you are a suspect. Get it?"**

In an opinion piece published last Sunday in Sweden's largest daily Dagens Nyheter, two Swedish journalists claimed that Marianne Ny had privately stated that she would not change her position on Assange even if she were wrong.

Today, two years after Assange was first questioned by Swedish police in Stockholm, it seems increasingly clear that the reason why he has not been interviewed again has very much to do with prestige and little to do with law.

<http://www.friatider.se/swedish-ministry-of-foreign-affairs-explains-why-assange-is-not-questioned-in-london-you-do-not-dictate-the-terms-if-you-are-a-suspect-get-it>

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## Julian Assange sex claims not a crime in Latin America— Ecuador president

*Rafael Correa says allegations should still be investigated but Ecuador will stand firm on asylum for WikiLeaks founder*

Jonathan Watts  
The Guardian  
22 August 2012

Ecuador's president, Rafael Correa, has said Julian Assange should respond to the sexual assault allegations made against him by two Swedish women, even though the case would not in his view constitute criminal behaviour in Latin America.

His remarks are likely to add to the controversy surrounding the WikiLeaks founder but they also hint at a possible avenue for a compromise in the diplomatic row caused by Ecuador's recent decision to grant asylum to Assange at its London embassy.

In the latest in a series of strident comments, Correa accused the British government of hypocrisy and said he was prepared for the standoff to last indefinitely even if it risked a loss of UK business and public support.

"If the UK distances itself from Ecuador as a result of this decision to grant asylum that would make us very sorry because we appreciate the United Kingdom— especially its people— but that will not make us go back on our position.s

"Despite the attitude of the United Kingdom, we as a country are obliged to act responsibly," he told a gathering of international press in Guayaquil. "As we have previously said, now that he has asylum, Mr Assange is entitled to remain in the embassy for as long as he wants."

He spelled out three possibilities for the standoff to be broken: for the UK to promise safe conduct to the airport without the threat of arrest; for Assange to leave asylum of his own accord; or for the government in Ecuador to change its mind, which he said would not happen.

The British government has insisted on an investigation into the rape and sexual assault accusations. It wants to comply with a court request that Assange should be sent to Sweden for questioning. Assange's supporters have tried to discredit the allegations, saying they are part of a plot to extradite him to the US.

Senior politicians in Ecuador have implied much the same. Correas added his voice but said the case needed to be answered. "I don't want to judge allegations that have not been proven and would not, in any case, be considered a felony in Latin American, too," he said. **"It has never been the intention of the Ecuadorean government for Julian Assange not to respond to those allegations."**

Ecuador has proposed interrogations by Swedish investigators on embassy property and has said it would support Assange going to Sweden if it could get reassurances from the UK government that he would not then be extradited to the US.

Critics say this is grandstanding for domestic political reasons. Correa— already Ecuador's longest serving president for a century— will contest an election early next year. Although his support rates are high, one of his least popular moves has been to assert greater control over the media through lawsuits, referenda and closures of radio stations. Providing a haven for Assange— a champion of whistleblowers— may be designed to offset these negative perceptions.

During the Q&A on Tuesday Correa addressed this issue and defending an offensive against TV, radio and print. "Don't let yourself be fooled by what's going. There is this image of the media as being about Woodward and Bernstein and Watergate and the struggle for freedom of expression. But that isn't the case here."

**The reality, he said, was more like the the novel *Pantaleón y las Visitadoras* by Mario Vargas Llosa. "Instead of grabbing the news they are blackmailing people. The press in Latin America is totally corrupt," he said.**

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## **The pursuit of Julian Assange is an assault on freedom and a mockery of journalism**

*John Pilger*  
*New Statesman*  
22 August 2012

The British government's threat to invade the Ecuadorean embassy in London and seize Julian Assange is of historic significance. David Cameron, the former PR man to a television industry huckster and arms salesman to sheikdoms, is well placed to dishonour international conventions that have protected Britons in places of upheaval. Just as Tony Blair's invasion of Iraq led directly to the acts of terrorism in London on 7 July 2005, so Cameron and Foreign Secretary William Hague have compromised the safety of British representatives across the world.

Threatening to abuse a law designed to expel murderers from foreign embassies, while defaming an innocent man as an "alleged criminal", Hague has made a laughing stock of Britain across the world, though this view is **mostly suppressed in Britain. The same brave newspapers and broadcasters that have supported Britain's part in epic bloody crimes, from the genocide in Indonesia to the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, now attack the "human rights record" of Ecuador, whose real crime is to stand up to the bullies in London and Washington.**

It is as if the Olympics happy-clappery has been subverted overnight by an illuminating display of colonial thuggery. Witness the British army officer-cum-BBC reporter Mark Urban "interviewing" a braying Sir Christopher Meyer, Blair's former apologist in Washington, outside the Ecuadorean embassy, the pair of them erupting with Blimpish indignation that the unclubbable Assange and the uncowed Rafael Correa should expose the western system of rapacious power. Similar affront is vivid in the pages of the Guardian, which has counselled Hague to be "patient" and that storming the embassy would be "more trouble than it is worth". Assange was not a political refugee, the Guardian declared, because "neither Sweden nor the UK would in any case deport someone who might face torture or the death penalty".

**The irresponsibility of this statement matches the Guardian's perfidious role in the whole Assange affair.** The paper knows full well that documents released by WikiLeaks indicate that Sweden has consistently submitted to pressure from the United States in matters of civil rights. In December 2001, the Swedish government abruptly revoked the political refugee status of two Egyptians, Ahmed Agiza and Mohammed el-Zari, who were handed to a CIA kidnap squad at Stockholm airport and "rendered" to Egypt, where they were tortured. An investigation by the Swedish ombudsman for justice found that the government had "seriously violated" the two men's human rights.

In a 2009 US embassy cable obtained by WikiLeaks, entitled "WikiLeaks puts neutrality in the Dustbin of History", the Swedish elite's vaunted reputation for neutrality is exposed as a sham. Another US 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 the government to domestic criticism".

The Swedish foreign minister, Carl Bildt, played a notorious leading role in George W Bush's Committee for the Liberation of Iraq and retains close ties to the Republican Party's extreme right. According to the former Swedish director of public prosecutions Sven-Erik Alhem, Sweden's decision to seek the extradition of Assange on allegations of sexual misconduct is "unreasonable and unprofessional, as well as unfair and disproportionate". Having offered himself for questioning, Assange was given permission to leave Sweden for London where, again, he offered to be questioned. In May, in a final appeal judgment on the extradition, Britain's Supreme Court introduced more farce by referring to non-existent "charges".

Accompanying this has been a vituperative personal campaign against Assange. Much of it has emanated from the Guardian, which, like a spurned lover, has turned on its besieged former source, having hugely profited from WikiLeaks disclosures. With not a penny going to Assange or WikiLeaks, a Guardian book has led to a lucrative Hollywood movie deal. The authors, David Leigh and Luke Harding, gratuitously abuse Assange as a "damaged personality" and "callous". They also reveal the secret password he had given the paper which was designed to protect a digital file containing the US embassy cables. On 20 August, Harding was outside the Ecuadorean embassy, gloating on his blog that "Scotland Yard may get the last laugh". It is ironic, if entirely appropriate, that a Guardian editorial putting the paper's latest boot into Assange bears an uncanny likeness to the Murdoch press's predictable augmented bigotry on the same subject. How the glory of Leveson, Hackgate and honourable, independent journalism doth fade.

His tormentors make the point of Assange's persecution. Charged with no crime, he is not a fugitive from justice. Swedish case documents, including the text messages of the women involved, demonstrate to any fair-minded person the absurdity of the sex allegations—allegations almost entirely promptly dismissed by the senior prosecutor in Stockholm, Eva Finné, before the intervention of a politician, Claes Borgström. At the pre-trial of Bradley Manning, a US army investigator confirmed that the FBI was secretly targeting the "founders, owners or managers of WikiLeaks" for espionage.

Four years ago, a barely noticed Pentagon document, leaked by WikiLeaks, described how WikiLeaks and Assange would be destroyed with a smear campaign leading to

“criminal prosecution”. On 18 August, the Sydney Morning Herald disclosed, in a Freedom of Information release of official files, that the Australian government had repeatedly received confirmation that the US was conducting an “unprecedented” pursuit of Assange and had raised no objections. Among Ecuador’s reasons for granting asylum is Assange’s abandonment “by the state of which he is a citizen”. In 2010, an investigation by the Australian Federal Police found that Assange and WikiLeaks had committed no crime. His persecution is an assault on us all and on freedom.

[www.newstatesman.com/politics/politics/2012/08/pursuit-julian-assange-assault-freedom-and-mockery-journalism](http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/politics/2012/08/pursuit-julian-assange-assault-freedom-and-mockery-journalism)

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**Formal statement by Craig Murray  
former U.K. Ambassador and career diplomat  
on the Ecuadorian embassy siege in London**

*WikiLeaks  
August 23, 2012*

My name is Craig John Murray. I am a retired British diplomat. I was a member of Her Majesty’s Diplomatic Service for over 20 years, and a member of the Senior Management Structure of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for over six years.

As anybody who works a long time in any one organisation, I have a great many friends there, some of whom are now very senior officials. And as is natural, they sometimes discuss matters with their old colleague.

I arrived in the UK from a trip abroad on 15 August 2012 and was immediately contacted by a very senior official within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office who was very concerned. He had knowledge that an attempt by the British authorities to force entry to the Embassy of Ecuador was possibly imminent. I suggested that this must be impossible, and he said that unfortunately it was not. He said that he had been party to formal discussions over a three week period between different British government departments on the legality of such a move. It had concluded that the provisions of the Diplomatic Premises Act of 1987 gave the authorities the domestic power to do this, in spite of the Vienna Convention of 1961.

My ex-colleague went on to say that he understood the government intended to act quickly to pre-empt any grant of political asylum to Mr Assange by the government of Ecuador. If there were any formal international recognition of Mr Assange as a political refugee, it might complicate matters.

He also said there was tremendous discomfort at this development within the British diplomatic service because of the potential exposure of British embassies and diplomats abroad to similar action.

**I asked how on earth such an illegal decision could have been reached. My ex-colleague said that political pressure exerted by the administration of the United States of America on Mr William Hague and Mr David Cameron had outweighed the views of British diplomats.**

I published a brief account of this conversation on my blog the following morning, in an effort to add to the pressures which might avert the government from such an illegal act.

<http://wikileaks.org/Statement-on-U-K-intentions-and.html>

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**Martha Kearney interviews Karin Rosander,  
Director of Communications for the Swedish Prosecution Authority**

*BBC*

*23 August 2012*

Karin Rosander: The prosecutor has stated that, according to circumstances in the investigation, her opinion is that it is necessary he is present in Sweden. And she hasn't stated exactly what circumstances, but that's her statements.

Martha Kearney: But isn't it the case that Swedish prosecutors have gone abroad to question defendants in serious cases at other times?

Karin Rosander: Yes, that's true, it has happened. And it's for the individual- it's for the prosecutor to decide which measures to take. So it's all about what the prosecutor decides to do.

Martha Kearney: But, what you're saying is there are circumstances in this case that makes it very different. It's hard to understand what they might be.

Karin Rosander: Yeah, and the prosecutor hasn't stated exactly what kind of circumstance- what circumstances, but that's her decision.

Martha Kearney: Would it be possible to reach some kind of agreement with Julian Assange that he wouldn't be extradited to United States, because that's what he says he's frightened of if he were to agree to travel to Sweden.

Karin Rosander: Well, that's not exactly for the prosecutor to decide because that's a decision that has to be made by the Swedish Government.

Martha Kearney: Wouldn't it be possible to interview him by video link, by some kind of video phone?

Karin Rosander: The prosecutor has stated that it's necessary for him being present in Sweden. And that's all she can say at the moment.

Martha Kearney: One other form of compromise that has been suggested is that he would be interviewed in the Swedish Embassy, so technically on Swedish Soil.

Karin Rosander: Yeah. But that doesn't really change it because the prosecutor's opinion is that it's necessary he is actually present in Sweden, according to the circumstances within this investigation.

Martha Kearney: Given what's at stake here—it's now become a great international question now, hasn't it, with Ecuador, the UK, and Sweden all being involved—shouldn't the Swedish prosecutor spell out more clearly her reasons for taking this stand?

Karin Rosander: No, her decision is that at this stage of the investigation she does not want to specify.

Martha Kearney: So how is the deadlock going to be resolved, then?

Karin Rosander: Uh... I have no idea, really.

Audio file: <http://audioboo.fm/boos/928311-swedish-prosecution-authority-on-julian-assange-case-the-world-at-one-bbc-radio-4>

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## **Britain is shunning us, say Ecuadorians as tension continues over Assange**

*Jerome Taylor and Kevin Rawlinson*  
*The Independent*  
*23 August 2012*

The Ecuadorian government has expressed “surprise and disappointment” that Britain has made no attempt to contact them since Julian Assange was granted asylum one week ago.

Officials at the embassy where the 41-year-old is holed up said they expected the Foreign Office to seek talks after William Hague called for calm after a dramatic spike in tensions between London and Quito.

Instead the British government has ignored them for a week with no official or back-channel communications as the tense stand-off continues with little sign of resolution. The stark admission is an indication of how low relations have sunk between the two countries since Mr Assange walked into Ecuador's embassy two months ago and requested asylum.

The WikiLeaks founder is wanted by the Swedish authorities to face a series of sexual assault charges but he insists he fled to the embassy to avoid the potential threat of extradition to the United States over the work his website has done.

Quito granted his request last week amid a dramatic escalation in tensions with Britain threatening to use an obscure piece of legislation to strip the embassy of its diplomatic protection. Ecuador saw the threat as a direct threat to their sovereignty and promptly granted Mr Assange permanent sanctuary. They later allowed the WikiLeaks founder to give a politically charged speech from the balcony of the first floor embassy, a decision which further angered British officials further.

Speaking to reporters today, Ecuadorian officials said they were disappointed at Britain's stance. But they also warned that any request by London to hold talks on Mr

Assange should be accompanied by written confirmation that the threat against their embassy had been withdrawn.

Asked whether such a request was a direct condition of future talks one official replied: "It's not a condition but it's the best thing to do. It would be an indication of good faith. Before you start with anyone to talk about anything no threats should be on the table. And as far as we know the threat has not been withdrawn."

On the day Mr Assange was granted asylum, the foreign secretary said Britain would make no attempt to enter the Ecuadorian embassy but officials say they want to see such assurances in writing.

The impasse comes as Latin American nations gather in Washington tomorrow to vote on a resolution which could condemn Britain's role. Quito has been lobbying its allies to vote for the resolution and act as one against Britain.

As one senior Ecuadorian official put it: "What happens to one of us happens to all of us". Britain, meanwhile, has been secretly trying to persuade a number of nations to vote against or abstain.

During the briefing officials gave further details of Mr Assange's flight to the embassy. Employees were so surprised at his request that an official had to be dispatched to the ambassador's house to pick up an air mattress for him to sleep on that night.

Officials remained upbeat that a compromise agreement could be reached. But Ecuador nonetheless remains adamant that both Britain and Sweden have to guarantee that Mr Assange would not be extradited to a third country should he go to face the sexual assault charges in Stockholm.

**One official said they were prepared to play a long game with Britain. "He can stay here for eight years... two centuries," the official said. "However long he wants."**

Asked whether they might make any attempt to help Mr Assange escape Britain should the impasse continue the official replied: "I can open the door for him if he wants me to but I can't help him escape."

A Foreign Office spokesman said Britain "remained committed to a diplomatic solution" over Mr Assange adding that a formal communication would be sent to the embassy tomorrow.

However some have questioned Ecuador's suggestion that they are being ignored by Britain. As one diplomatic source put it: "There's nothing stopping them picking up the phone and calling us."

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## Sweden's Serial Negligence in Prosecuting Rape Further Highlights the Politics Behind Julian Assange's Arrest

Naomi Wolf  
*Huffington Post*  
August 24, 2012

As I have been making the case on media outlets in the past few days that the British and Swedish sex crime charges related actions against Julian Assange are so extraordinarily and unprecedentedly severe— compared to how prosecutors always treat far more cut-and-dry allegations than those in question in this case worldwide, including in the Scandinavian countries, and that thus the pretext of using these charges against Assange is a pimping of feminism by the State and an insult to rape victims— I have found myself up against a bizarre fantasy in the minds of my (mostly male) debating opponents.

The fantasy is that somehow this treatment— a global manhunt, solitary confinement in the Victorian cell that drove Oscar Wilde to suicidal despair within a matter of days, and now a bracelet tracking his movements— is not atypical, because somehow Sweden must be a progressively hot-blooded but still progressively post-feminist **paradise for sexual norms in which any woman in any context can bring the full force of the law against any man who oversteps any sexual boundary.**

Well, I was in Denmark in March of this year at a global gathering for women leaders on International Women's Day, and heard extensively from specialists in sex crime and victims' rights in Sweden. So I knew this position taken by the male-dominated US, British and Swedish media was, basically, horsesh-t. But none of the media outlets hyperventilating now about how this global-manhunt/Bourne-identity-chase-scene-level treatment of a sex crime allegation originating in Sweden must be 'normative' has bothered to do any actual reporting of how rape— let alone the far more ambiguous charges of Assange's accusers, which are not charges of rape but of a category called 'sex by surprise,' which has no analog elsewhere— is actually prosecuted in Sweden.

Guess what: Sweden has HIGHER rates of [reported --A.B.] rape than other comparable countries— including higher than the US and Britain, higher than Denmark and Finland— and the same Swedish authorities going after Assange do a worse job prosecuting reported rapes than do police and the judiciary in any comparable country. And these are flat-out, unambiguous reported rape cases, not the 'sex by surprise' Assange charges involving situations that began consensually.

Indeed, the Swedish authorities— who are now being depicted as global feminist sex-crime-avenger superheroes in blue capes— were shamed by a 2008 Amnesty International report, "Case Closed", as being far more dismissive of rape, and far more insulting to rape victims who can be portrayed as 'asking for it' by drinking or any kind of sexual ambiguity— than any other country in their comparison group. As Amnesty International put it in a blistering attack: "Swedish Rapists Get Impunity."

The same Swedish prosecutors who are now claiming custody of Julian Assange are, indeed, so shamefully negligent in prosecuting Swedish rapists who did not happen to embarrass the United States government that a woman who has been raped in Sweden



is ten times more likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer than she is of getting any kind of legal proceeding on her behalf undertaken by Swedish prosecutors.

Of all Swedish reported rapes (and remember this is rape, not "molestation"), fewer result in legal proceedings of any kind than do comparable cases in the US, Finland and Norway.

"Sweden needs to do much more to clamp down on rapists, according to reports from Amnesty International and the United Nations," Jennifer Heape reports for the website thelocal.se, which translates Swedish news for an English-speaking audience. Sweden tops European [reported --A.B.] rape league, data showed in 2009, but "Sweden's image as an international forerunner in the fight for gender equality has been damaged by recent reports comparing rape statistics across various countries...."

The same prosecutors going after Assange for an ambiguous situation are doing worse in getting convictions today than they were forty-five years ago: "despite the number of rapes reported to the police quadrupling over the past 20 years, the percentage of reported rapes ending in conviction is markedly lower today than it was in 1965."

Sweden's horrific record in prosecuting all the accused rapists and men accused of sex crime in Sweden who are not Julian Assange drew consternation from as high up as the UN. UN rapporteur Yakin Ertürk warned in February 2007, that there is a shocking discrepancy "between the apparent progress in achieving gender equality and the reports of continued violence against women in the country."

The actual number of rapes in Sweden in 2006 was estimated to be close to 30,000, according to Swedish data compilation. This number indicates that Swedish women have so little faith in their own legal system that 85-90 percent do not bother reporting the crime to the same police who are ankle-braceletting Assange, as a 2007 study showed that only '5-10 percent of all rapes are reported to the police'— a reporting rate lower than the US and the UK, which have reporting rates of about 13-30 percent, a shameful enough set of numbers in itself.

The statistical survey by the Swedish organization BRÅ showed that of that five or ten percent of rapes that resulted in reporting— fewer than thirteen percent resulted in a police decision to start any legal proceedings at all. "The phenomenon of alleged offenses not formally being reported to the police or dropped before reaching court is termed 'attrition'," the report remarks sadly. "Amnesty slams the Swedish judicial system and the prevalence of attrition within it, concluding that, "in practice, many perpetrators enjoy impunity," Heape writes. In other words, 1.3 women in a thousand who is raped in Sweden will not receive any legal response whatsoever.

In the US and in Europe, male-dominated media discussions seem to portray the Assange charges as a victory of Swedish authorities over the old canard that "date rape" is not prosecuted because of a tendency to "blame the victim." But in fact, whenever they are not prosecuting Julian Assange, if you are raped on a date, Swedish police are unlikely to pursue your assailant. If the victim has been drinking, or behaving in a way that can be stigmatized as sexually provocative, no matter how clear-cut the rape charge, Swedish police typically leave such charges by the wayside. "In analyzing attrition and the failings of the police and judicial system, Case Closed draws attention to 'discriminatory attitudes about female and male sexuality...Young

(drunk) women, in particular, have problems fulfilling the stereotypical role of the 'ideal victim', with the consequence that neither rapes within intimate relationships nor 'date rapes' involving teenage girls result in legal action," reports Heape.

"Helena Sutourius, an expert in legal proceedings in sexual offense cases, concludes that, in Sweden, 'the focus appears to be on the woman's behaviour, rather than on the act that is the object of the investigation.'" Swedish prosecutors and police don't even keep proper track of their own rape issue and how their own police handle or mishandle cases. Amnesty accused Sweden of little scrutiny of or research into the quality of its own rape crime investigations, "a serious shortcoming that needs to be addressed immediately."

Finally, remember that in the Assange case it is the State rather than the women themselves that is bringing the charges. The Swedish state— which has proven, in politically neutral cases that merely involve actual assaults against women— such a shameful custodian of raped victims' well-being.

And then, conclude: shame on Sweden; shame on Interpol; shame on Britain. And lasting shame, given this farcical hijacking of a sex crime law that is scarcely ever enforced in Sweden in far less ambiguous contexts, on the United States of America.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/naomi-wolf/post\\_1435\\_b\\_797188.html?view=print](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/naomi-wolf/post_1435_b_797188.html?view=print)

*[Note: Such comparisons as presented here may be problematical due to the especially strong status of "radical feminism" in Sweden, and all which that implies. --A.B.]*

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## **'Imperial ambitions' won't change Ecuador's position on Assange — Correa**

RT

24 August 2012

The mounting pressure on Ecuador after granting Julian Assange asylum, comes from some countries imperial ambitions, Ecuador's President says. He argued that the UK's "diplomatic clumsiness" only showcased strong support for Ecuador.

President Rafael Correa gave RT an exclusive interview explaining his country's position concerning Julianne Assange's case.

*RT: Why did Ecuador get involved in all this? By standing up for Julian Assange, the country is exposing itself to risk. According to the media, one of the reasons for the delay in granting asylum to Julian Assange was Ecuador's fear of a possible US response. Is this true?*

Rafael Correa: Not at all. We just wanted to address the request in a very thorough and responsible way. We looked at the motivations for Mr. Assange's asylum bid. We looked into the charges brought against him in Sweden, we reviewed UK law, as well as international law, and of course we went over our own legislation. Then we made a responsible decision, just as we promised originally, after the Olympics— specifically

because they were taking place in London, and not because of fear of reprisals, which we know might follow.. We will always be guided by principles and values, not fear.

*RT: What consequences might Ecuador face after granting asylum to Julian Assange?*

RC: Normally, such a decision shouldn't have any consequences— **that is, if all countries respect international law, which clearly says that a state has the right to grant asylum. How many times has Sweden granted asylum?** A lot of people requested asylum in Sweden and live there now. This country is known for its willingness to give asylum. What consequences could there be? But unfortunately, in this particular case we see that some countries are displaying their colonial and imperial ambitions, their ethnocentricity. **It turns out that if Ecuador grants asylum to someone, it suddenly might have consequences.** What consequences are we talking about, if we are exercising our sovereignty in line with international law?

*RT: Are you afraid of any sanctions that might follow?*

RC: There is definitely no fear. But let's face it, there might be reprisals, which would be terrible. If the UK, for example, acts on its threats and invades our embassy to arrest Assange, can you imagine how big of a precedent this would set?

*RT: Mr. President, some media have suggested that the decision to grant asylum to Julian Assange is nothing more than Ecuador's attempt to improve the country's international image. How do you respond to this allegation?*

RC: And what is this international image? I don't know anything about it. Fortunately, in our country, 75 to 80 percent of the power belongs to the people, no matter what some dishonest and immoral media are trying to say— certain power groups use them to tell lies about what's going on. They say that there is no freedom of speech in Ecuador. **If there was no freedom of speech, how would they be able to communicate this idea? They contradict themselves.** The whole world knows that Latin America, including Ecuador, is going through historical changes right now. We are finally witnessing social justice, equality, sovereignty, and dignity. There are some power groups that oppose these changes. Mind you, these groups are very influential; some of them own media outlets. They constantly conduct smear campaigns, trying to discredit our government. I want to ask you a question— how many days have you been in Ecuador?

*RT: No more than three, I think.*

RC: Have you felt that any of your reports have been banned or censored? Have you felt like there was censorship? Have you been told, for example, that you cannot publish certain stories? Has your access to information been restricted in any way?

*RT: Of course, not.*

RC: And this is the reality. But these power groups— both national and international— are constantly campaigning against us, trying to discredit our government. Because Ecuador and Latin America are changing, and they are changing for the better— thank God.

*RT: Mr. President, in your interview with Julian Assange in his programme on our channel you invited him to the club of the persecuted. Do you feel like you're being persecuted? Are you afraid?*

RC: As I've said, every day I wake up and have to guess what lies the media will cook up today. **In Ecuador, there are six families that own the whole media business, and there are several other major businesses that belong to them. Our new constitutional reform banned the media from being involved in any other business activities except for being the source of information. They called it "infringing on freedom of speech".** We wanted to avoid the conflict of interest, and that was considered "infringing on freedom of speech" as well. Whatever is in line with law and ethics, but is at odds with the interests of the media dictatorship that used to exist in Ecuador is considered "infringing on freedom of speech".

We would like the world to understand what is really going on in Ecuador. The things that the media does here would be unacceptable in such countries as the UK, Russia, the USA. **Take, for example, the Murdoch case in the UK. If something similar happened in Ecuador and the people responsible were brought to justice, it would be called "infringing on the freedom of speech".** You have to understand that the media in Latin America has always been very corrupt, it supported the Pinochet regime, the dictatorship in Argentina and so on. Conflicting interests were an everyday occurrence, there was even a clear pattern: having become a successful businessman, you set up your own channel. Not to keep the population informed, but to protect your business interests. Now everything is changing, and I've become the target of daily criticism, of regular smear campaigns. No one believes them, though.

*RT: When Julian Assange's mother came to Ecuador, did you have a chance to talk to her?*

RC: Yes, of course. Christine is a wonderful person, isn't she? We gave her a warm welcome, and it was a pleasure to talk to her.

*RT: Did her visit to Ecuador influence your decision to grant Julian Assange asylum in any way?*

RC: No, it didn't. Our decision was made in accordance with international law and was based on Ecuador's traditions of humanism, as well as the grounds that Mr. Assange presented to support his request for political asylum. We met with Christine, she's a very nice woman, but it in no way influenced our decision.

*RT: Mr. President, it's hard to believe that Julian Assange had no contact with Ecuadorian officials prior to requesting political asylum. Because he needed to be certain that the Ecuadorian embassy would ensure his safety. Did you discuss this option with him beforehand?*

RC: No, we didn't. I didn't talk to Mr. Assange personally, but, if I'm not mistaken, at some point the situation became so tense that he said he was thinking about seeking asylum in an embassy, perhaps even in Ecuador's embassy. That was the only thing we discussed before he entered our embassy.

*RT: Was he sure he would be allowed to stay when he entered the embassy?*

RC: I think Mr. Assange discussed it with the embassy staff, since he, I believe, entered after hours, so they must've been expecting him. Any person seeking asylum in

Ecuador's embassies will be safe, we will see to their needs, but after that we will consider granting them asylum with all due thoroughness. If the person in question is a criminal, we will never grant asylum to him.

*RT: Why do you think Julian Assange chose Ecuador and not another country?*

RC: Only Mr. Assange can answer that. The fact he did is the best response to the smear campaign and to the people who maintain we have no freedom of speech: the man who is 'freedom of speech' personified requested asylum in Ecuador. It's the best response to all the lies.

*RT: How long do you think it might take? How long will Julian Assange be staying in the embassy?*

RC: In theory, indefinitely, unless the UK goes ahead with its threat to raid our embassy to arrest him. As you know, the threat is in written form, and the UK hasn't revoked it.

*RT: Do you think they'd really go as far as that?*

RC: I think it would be pure insanity on the part of the UK. After doing so, any of their embassies could be raided, and what will they say then?

*RT: What kind of repercussions would such a development have?*

RC: We would immediately sever our diplomatic ties, of course. I think it would lead to a backlash in all the Latin American countries, but I maintain that the UK has more to lose. After that, how would they prevent the same from happening to the UK embassies around the world? And I assure you, the UK has more diplomatic missions than Ecuador.

*RT: If the UK doesn't give permission for Julian Assange's safe passage to Ecuador, how will he get there? In a diplomatic vehicle?*

RC: No, it would be impossible. If he leaves the embassy, he can be arrested by the UK police. I am not an expert on this, but I would think that even if you are in a car with diplomatic license plates, you are still at the mercy of the driver, and who knows what he will agree to. In any case, no one is trying to hide Assange from the Swedish prosecution, but we need guarantees that he wouldn't be extradited to a third country.

*RT: Why do you think Sweden refused Ecuador's proposal to question Assange at the embassy? Even via Skype, as has been done before?*

RC: Why? This is a widely accepted legal practice; it has been done many times before. That's why the Ecuadorian embassy proposed this to the Swedish prosecution. We invited them to come to the embassy and question Assange in person. Isn't that what they've been trying to do all along? They denied our offer, so what are we supposed to think now?

*RT: In your opinion, why have Sweden and the UK stood so firm on their position? What are their real motives?*

RC: First, it's absolutely possible and legal. There have been many precedents, many similar cases that prove that Sweden could question Mr Assange inside the Ecuadorian embassy in London. Second, the UK could extradite Mr Assange on a condition that he would not be then handed over to a third country. Third, Sweden could accept Mr Assange on a condition that he would not be extradited to a third country. Why has this not happened? It's up to humanity to address this question.

*RT: Why do you think they haven't taken any of those options?*

**RC: I'd rather not say.**

*RT: So many countries and organizations have supported Ecuador's decision to grant asylum to Assange, including UNASUR and most of the ALBA nations. In what way did they express their backing?*

RC: The support we have enjoyed has been primarily due to Britain's diplomatic clumsiness—I hope you will excuse my language, but I just cannot find another way to put it. The British threatened us with storming our embassy to arrest Mr Assange. This is what has united all the nations in South America and other continents in their desire to stand behind Ecuador, confronted as it was with such a barbaric prospect. Such threats are unacceptable. Had they been carried out, this would have constituted a violation of one of the fundamental principles of international law: the inviolability of diplomatic premises. It was this threat rather than our eventual asylum decision that has prompted such widespread support in our favor from the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas and the Union of South American Nations. And on Friday, foreign ministers of the member nations of the Organization of American States will meet to discuss the issue.

*RT: What do you think could happen in the short term? What are the possible scenarios?*

RC: I am not an astrologist, I am an economist. A lot will now depend on the UK and Sweden. Our position remains the same. We are open to dialogue. All we want is a guarantee that Mr Assange will only face those charges that were brought against him in Sweden and will not be extradited to a third country. Or they could give him safe passage from the Ecuadorian embassy in London.

*RT: And the final question, very brief. Will Ecuador stand behind Assange no matter what consequences might follow?*

RC: Once we granted asylum to Mr Assange, he is under the protection of Ecuador, and we will do everything to make sure this protection is effective.

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## The Swedish media war on Assange — "Australian pig", "retard", "white-haired crackpot", "scumbag"

*Fria Tider*  
24 augusti 2012

Wikileaks founder Julian Assange has claimed that the media climate in Sweden has become so "hostile" against him that it may now jeopardize his right to a fair trial. These allegations have been strongly rejected by several Swedish officials, but a brief glance at recent Swedish media coverage on Assange seems to show that they are not entirely without ground.

In a controversial statement last week, Swedish Minister of Social Affairs Göran Hägglund called Assange a "coward" and a "pitiful wretch" for taking refuge at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London. Hägglund also alleged that Assange was afraid of having "his case tried by the court", even though Assange has not been charged with any crime and has not been summoned to court. He added that Assange was a "scumbag" if the accusations against him were true.

Another official reaction came from the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in an angry attempt to explain why Assange cannot be questioned in London: **"You do not dictate the terms if you are a suspect. Get it?", the Ministry declared via its official Twitter channel.**

The bulk of the attacks on Assange, however, do not come from government officials, but from journalists and prominent intellectuals. The four major Swedish newspapers—Dagens Nyheter, Svenska Dagbladet, Aftonbladet and Expressen—have all roundly condemned the Wikileaks founder, using very strong language. A number of examples are provided below to illustrate the general tone of Swedish media opinion on Assange.

In Sweden's largest tabloid Aftonbladet, well-known columnist Oisín Cantwell characterized Assange as a "coward", a "creep", a "white-haired crackpot" and an "asshole" because he would rather request asylum from Ecuador than face extradition to Sweden.

Cantwell's colleague at Aftonbladet, Johanne Hildebrandt, famous for her reporting from the wars in former Yugoslavia and Afghanistan, chimed in. "He's a paranoid retard who refuses to come to Sweden", she claimed in a recent column.

Also writing in Aftonbladet, prominent journalist Martin Aagård called Assange an "Australian pig". "There are many good reasons to criticize Assange. One of them is that he's a repugnant swine", Aagård elaborated.

In Svenska Dagbladet, a major Stockholm daily, deputy editor-in-chief Martin Jönsson called Assange a "paranoid querulant" who is to blame for "letting Wikileaks fall into ruins". He described Assange's recent speech from the balcony of Ecuador's embassy as a "megalomaniac's circus".

The same theme was echoed by an editorial writer in Sweden's largest daily, Dagens Nyheter, who also called Assange "paranoid", and a "querulant".

Jan Guillou, a well-known journalist and probably Sweden's most famous author, recently proclaimed in Aftonbladet that regardless of "whether Assange is guilty or not— he's still an unprincipled disgusting little creep", adding "and now I'm holding back".

Writing in Sweden's second-largest tabloid, Expressen, TV journalist and news anchor Jenny Strömstedt advocated that Assange should be put on display in a glass cage at Ecuador's London embassy for the next fifteen years "so that anyone willing to pay entrance can watch his aging struggles".

According to Expressen's culture editor Karin Olsson, Assange is a "dodgy hacker" whom most Swedes view as "a paranoid chauvinist pig". "A year ago we Swedes hailed Assange as a James Bond of the net. Now he's seen as a pitiable, paranoid figure", she writes.

Having previously been portrayed as a romantic rebel, Assange has now become the target of what can only be described as a vicious smear campaign. Legal experts commenting on the accusations against Assange, however, have usually been far from convinced that the prosecutor's case holds water. For example, Ove Bring, professor emeritus of international law, recently stated that the prosecutor would probably have to drop the case against Assange once he has been questioned, since "the evidence is not enough to charge him with a crime".

<http://www.friatider.se/the-swedish-media-war-on-assange>

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Julian Assange has been included in a set of terrorist trading cards, alongside people such as Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, and [mass murderer] Jared Loughner, which come with a "We Shall Never Forget 9/11" coloring book.

<http://www.coloringbook.com/NeverForget9/11TerroristTradingCards.aspx>

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## **Rafael Correa hits back over Ecuador's press freedom and charge of hypocrisy**

*President defends granting Julian Assange asylum and compares domestic press crackdown to Leveson inquiry*

*Jonathan Watts in Quito  
The Guardian  
24 August 2012*

The president of Ecuador, Rafael Correa, has hit back at critics who accuse him of hypocrisy for granting asylum to Julian Assange while launching lawsuits and verbal attacks on his country's own media.



In an interview with the Guardian, Correa defended his approach towards free speech, saying it was necessary to rein in private newspaper, radio and TV owners who had enjoyed too much power for too long, and **comparing his campaign to the investigations into Rupert Murdoch's newspapers in the UK.**

"We won't tolerate abuses and crimes made every day in the name of freedom of speech. **That is freedom of extortion and blackmail,**" he said in response to concerns about recent crackdowns on private news organisations.

Days before the Ecuadorean government granted asylum to the WikiLeaks founder and promoted itself as a guardian of freedom of expression, riot police in Quito raided the offices of one of the country's leading magazines, *Vanguardia*. They confiscated journalists' computers and prevented publication for a week, ostensibly as a punishment for labour law violations.

It was the second time in less than two years that *Vanguardia* had been raided. Its journalists are also getting death threats after being denounced by the president during his weekly TV show, and **the magazine's editorial director was recently sued by Correa for \$10 m in "moral damages" for suggesting the president knew his brother was making millions of dollars from state contracts.**

**After a public outcry, the president withdrew one suit and issued a pardon in the other, but he defended his right to take such action:** "Do we have an unwritten law that we can't sue a journalist? Since when? So nobody should sue Murdoch and his partners in crime in Britain?"

The editorial director of *Vanguardia*, Juan Carlos Calderón, had earlier told the *Guardian* he was being targeted for criticising the administration, and accused Correa of double standards. "The government said it has granted asylum to Assange because he is politically persecuted for defending freedom of expression. But the same thing happens to us," he said. "This is not a country with the free press described by Correa."

He is not alone. The domestic press watchdog Fundamedios [*presumably an instrument of the economic elite —A.B.*] describes the situation in Ecuador as a low-intensity war on journalists that appears to be escalating. Last year, it recorded 151 cases of physical aggression against reporters, up from 101 in 2009. It says this increase is largely the result of the constant abuse directed at journalists by Correa during his weekly TV broadcast, which is carried by almost every channel. [*And the constant abuse directed by the Ecuador mainstream media against Correa? —A.B.*]

It also notes that 17 radio stations have been shut down this year for transgressing regulations and that the government has recently issued new rules that will oblige internet service providers to provide the IP addresses of their users to the authorities, even without a court order.

"There is a huge gap between what Correa says about press freedom and reality," said César Ricaurte, head of Fundamedios. "If Assange were Ecuadorean, I dare say he would already be in jail." International free press campaigners, including the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and Reporters Without Borders, have also accused Correa of trying to discredit and intimidate critics.

Correa said such judgments were misguided. **"The Ecuadorean and Latin American press is not like the European or North American press, which has some professional ethics. They are used to being above the law, to blackmail, to extort. I am sorry about good people on an international level who defend this kind of press."**

He denied that radio station closures were politically motivated, saying some were simply music channels that failed to conform to broadcasting rules. This will open up space for more public channels.

An insight into Correa's strategy was given by his chief communications adviser, Fernando Alvarado who described the media as "weeds that need to be cleaned" and replaced by flowers (public and community media outlets) in a recent interview with the Mexican publication Gatopardo. Since Correa— a US-educated economist who describes himself as a moderate leftist— came to power in 2007, there has been a wider range of state and private ownership of newspapers and TV stations. There is more scope for critical non-governmental organisations and greater access to senior officials. The interviews given by Correa on Thursday were carefully staged in terms of lighting and camera work, but unscripted.

Media watchers said Correa's approach— particularly in his weekly live broadcasts— was as confrontational as that adopted by Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, but less destructive. "In some regards, it is like Chávez. But Chávez went too far. Though there is confrontation here, no TV stations have been closed, which was the case in Venezuela," said Maurice Cerbino, a professor at Andina Simon Bolivar University. **The confrontation, he said, was understandable given the previous situation in Ecuador in which the private media colluded with the government.**

Correa's supporters say the administration is carrying out an overdue rebalancing of the media, which was previously skewed too heavily towards private ownership by a handful of families. When Correa came to power in 2007, there was only one public media organisation, Radio Nacional.

Those who work in public media say this has created a far healthier media environment because advertisers have less influence. "The reports by the Committee to Protect Journalists and Amnesty are not false, but a lot of them are exaggerated," said Orlando Pérez, the editorial director of *El Telégrafo*.

**"Ecuador is going through a golden age for media freedom. Citizens now have so much space for expression, through social networks, public media, community media as well as blogs and websites." To demonstrate his editorial independence, he pointed to a front-page story in his public newspaper exposing a corruption in the state-owned oil company *PetroEcuador*.**

Pérez claims to have set the stage for Assange's first interview with Correa, which later lead to asylum. He denies that this has anything to do with a government strategy. **"We didn't choose Assange. Assange chose us," he said.**

Correa said he was trying to support an individual threatened by a powerful state. "I don't agree with everything Mr Assange did. I never said that. But I believe he is entitled to a just legal process," the president said. "Assange never stole the information. It was handed to him by Bradley Manning. He just distributed it. **So why didn't**

**the newspapers that published it also get sanctioned? That is an international double standard. The answer is that the newspapers have power, whereas Mr Assange is just a citizen. That is why certain countries want to crush him with all their weight."**

His motives are widely disputed. Some accept the president's idealistic claims. Cynics say he is trying to distract attention from the criticism of his heavy handling of the domestic media. Another theory is that he is a political opportunist who understands the benefits of picking high-profile fights, in this case, with the UK. Having gone further than any other Latin American leader outside of Argentina in criticising Britain over the Falklands earlier this year, he has now found a new cause. William Hague's threat to remove the diplomatic status of the Ecuadorean embassy simply played into his hands.

"The UK foreign minister has given him the perfect excuse to unite the left in a confrontation with imperialists," Calderón observes. "People on the left have an anti-imperialist gland. All you have to do it touch it to secrete anthems (of solidarity)." *[It was the "imperialist" Hague, under pressure from the White House, who confronted Ecuador and international law. —A.B.]*

But the decision to grant asylum has made waves inside Ecuador's government. Career bureaucrats are uneasy at a decision made by political appointees. Some feel it is of dubious legality and could backfire in terms of trade with the European Union. **On the streets, however, the move appears to have widespread public backing.** There were demonstrations of support in Quito this week. Women's groups have even seconded Correa's claim that the accusations against Assange would not constitute felonies in Latin America.

**"I totally agree with the decision to grant asylum to Assange," said Virginia Gómez, former director of the Attention and Help Centre for Women. "The allegations against Assange would not be crimes here. Women are empowered, but not to the point that if a condom breaks it is a sex crime. That is beyond our imagination."**

Quito is no place for the politically half-hearted. Local people are proud of their radicalism and **burn effigies of politicians—including the current president—**at raucous New Year's Eve parades. Many feel it is their duty to kick out poorly performing leaders, something they have done with remarkable regularity.

**After just five years in power, Correa is the longest-serving president in a century. US embassy cables leaked by WikiLeaks described him as the most popular president the country had ever had. Without exception, everyone interviewed for this story said Correa had been good for Ecuador. Even the fiercest critics of his media policies praised the president's work on health and education.** As his cavalcade drove up to the interview venue, girls leaned out of the window and screamed as if they had seen a rock star.

The question now is whether the Assange case will consolidate or erode this popularity if it drags on until the presidential elections next February. Correa was unwilling to speculate. "I am an economist, not an astrologer. I can't say how long it will take. It could be solved tomorrow. It depends on the UK. Or it could take a long time. What is the next step? Keep talking. We have never closed the door to conversation. From the beginning, we have been talking to Britain, Sweden and even the USA to solve this situation. But we will never lower our principles or risk the life or rights of Assange."

## Julian Assange row: OAS gives Ecuador partial support

BBC

24 August 2012

Foreign ministers from the American continent have passed a motion backing the "inviolability of diplomatic missions" amid the row between the UK and Ecuador over Julian Assange. The Wikileaks founder is in Ecuador's London embassy fighting extradition to Sweden over sexual assault claims.

Ecuador called for the Organisation of American States vote saying the UK had threatened to storm the embassy. **But the resolution was reworded after the UK insisted it had made no threat.**

The BBC's Kim Ghattas said the resolution expressed solidarity with Ecuador but, despite a strong plea from Ecuador's foreign minister, Ricardo Patino, there was no reference to any threat against his country's embassy in London.

The United States withdrew its opposition to the resolution after the text was amended....

The meeting of the OAS, which represents 35 states in the Caribbean and North and South America, was called by Ecuador after it received a letter from the UK last week. Ecuador said the letter, which drew attention to the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987 which would potentially allow the UK to lift the embassy's diplomatic status to allow police to enter the building, was a "threat".

The Foreign Office later said the letter had been sent to clarify "all aspects of British law that Ecuador should be aware of". *[Experienced British diplomats confirmed that it was of course a blatant threat. --A.B.]*

During the meeting in Washington DC, Mr Patino had called on the UK to withdraw its threat and guarantee it would not storm the diplomatic mission. The UK, which has observer status at the OAS, insisted no threat was ever made and the UK remained committed to honouring international law.

The representative of the Dominican Republic had questioned why the meeting was called since the row over Mr Assange was not going to be solved there, especially not with any grandstanding by Ecuador.

Earlier this week Ecuador's President Rafael Correa told the BBC the diplomatic row over Mr Assange "could be ended tomorrow" if Britain gave him safe passage to Ecuador. But Mr Correa said without that, the situation could go on for years....

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SvD. 24 augusti 2012

## Det finns klokare vägar än bara maktspråk

*Att förhöra Julian Assange i England är fortfarande fullt möjligt — och behöver inte stå i strid med det förfarande som redan har inletts. Det skriver advokat Hans Strandberg, som själv har erfarenhet av förhör utomlands när det gäller ekonomisk brottslighet.*

Hanteringen av Julian Assange-ärendet har dessvärre kommit att bli mycket kostsamt för Sverige genom att landets trovärdighet som rättsstat allvarligt har ifrågasatts. Sverige uppfyller naturligtvis med råge kraven för att vara en rättsstat, men på grund av den negativa press som Sverige fått runt om i världen sprids en bild som kan ta lång tid att rätta till. Det handlar inte om huruvida den kritik som framförts mot det svenska rättssystemet är berättigad eller ej utan hur det, fel eller rätt, presenteras och uppfattas runt om i världen.

Har det då varit nödvändigt att försätta Sverige i denna situation?

Svenska myndigheter har säkerligen inte gjort några formella fel utan tillämpat regelverket så som det kan tillämpas enligt sin lydelse och brittiska myndigheter har gjort sina provningar utifrån dessa förutsättningar. Resultatet i form av beslut om utlämning framstår som självklart.

Det fel som har gjorts är att man från svenska myndigheters sida— åklagarmyndighetens sida— **valt att i kraft av gällande bestämmelse tala maktspråk i stället för att välja ett klokare tillvägagångssätt.** Det alldeles självklara i den situation som har förelegat hade varit att genomföra förhören med Assange i Storbritannien och då lämpligen på den svenska ambassaden. Därigenom skulle åklagaren kunna skaffa sig det underlag som behövs för att kunna bedöma om anmälningarna skall leda till åtal eller ej och därefter, om Assange inte självant inställt sig i Sverige, begära honom häktad och på den grunden begära honom utlämnad till Sverige. Alltså om och efter åtal väckts.

**Det som ytterligare kunde motivera ett sådan tillvägagångssätt skulle vara att utredningen rimligen måste vara behäftad med vissa tveksamheter eftersom en tidigare åklagare lagt ned förundersökningen.**

Frågan har ställts varför Assange skall tillåtas få en "gräddfil" och få bli förhörd i Storbritannien. Detta synsätt vilar enligt min mening på en missuppfattning. Målet med en brottsutredning måste vara att komma fram till en slutsats om en person skall åtalas eller ej, det vill säga om åklagaren anser sig kunna emotse en fällande dom. Det handlar inte om att vid varje tillfälle ta till det mest ingripande maktmedlet som står till buds. Genom att välja det tillvägagångssätt som nu skett har utredningen fördröjts, och kommer att fördröjas ytterligare, sannolikt med år samtidigt som situationen har skapat svåra internationella förvecklingar. Man kan också fråga sig varför detta val har gjorts och **en tanke man inte kan frigöra sig ifrån är att kombinationen av en offentlig person och sexbrott gjort att åklagarmyndigheten fallit för pressen att visa handlingskraft.**

Vilket alternativ har då stått till buds? Efter att i mer än 25 år ha varit verksam som försvarsadvokat i ekonomiska brottmål med i många fall internationella inslag, har jag

i min egen vardag kunnat se hur kloka åklagare kunnat lösa liknande problem betydligt snabbare och på ett mycket effektivare sätt. Bland de internationella inslagen har i många fall varit att den misstänkte är svensk och antingen är bosatt utomlands eller av andra skäl befinner sig utomlands. Situationen har ofta varit sådan att det stått klart att om den misstänkte skulle inställa sig i Sverige för förhör skulle han också gripas och sannolikt bli häktad. Skyldigheten att inställa sig till ett polisförhör påverkas naturligtvis inte av sådana omständigheter, men verkligheten är en annan.

Om en person som anser sig oskyldig, vet om att en inställelse vid ett polisförhör i Sverige leder till anställande och sannolikt häktning framstår det som självklart att han tvekar. Denna tvekan framstår som ännu mer rimlig om man dessutom känner till att **häktning många gånger sker efter en mycket summarisk prövning där åklagaren väldigt ofta får sin vilja igenom och får den misstänkte häktad.**

Även i stora mycket komplicerade ekonomiska brottmål, för att inte säga särskilt i dessa, går **domstolen/domaren oftast på åklagarens linje, efter en presentation av utredningen och misstankarna som är ytterligt summarisk och som försvaret och den misstänkte i allmänhet fått tillfälle att studera endast under kort tid före förhandlingen.**

Mot denna bakgrund är det inte märkligt om en person som anser sig oskyldig tvekar att inställa sig till förhör i Sverige på kallelse. Om det dessutom förhåller sig på det sättet att den misstänkte upplever en risk att han också kommer att bli utlämnad till annan stat, även om det i verkligheten saknas fog för denna risk, så är detta ett i högsta grad förståligt mänskligt beteende.

Det förfarande som jag menar åklagaren borde tillgripit skulle istället varit att acceptera, enligt vad som framgått av tidningsuppgifter, Assanges erbjudande att medverka vid förhör i London. Åklagaren skulle därefter kunna göra sin bedömning.

Detta förfarande har tillämpats under den långa tid jag själv varit verksam. Jag har medverkat vid en mängd förhör som hållits på Svenska ambassaden i London och på ambassader runt om i Europa. På det sättet har utredningar kunnat föras framåt och det har även vid flera tillfällen utmynnat i att åklagaren efter förhören kunnat lägga ned förundersökningen, vilket skett i till exempel Trustor- och Obol-utredningarna. Det vill säga den misstänkte har sluppit att bli frihetsberövad under längre eller kortare tid för att därefter bli förklarad oskyldig.

Bekymret nu är naturligtvis att man inte kan vrida klockan tillbaka. Allt för mycket har redan hänt **och allt för mycket prestige finns inblandad.** Att idag tro att svenska myndigheter med ett brittiskt utlämningsbeslut i handen skulle välja att gå Assanges till mötes framstår som högst osannolikt.

Om man emellertid ägnar tanken ytterligare någon minut så kommer man fram till att ett sådan tillvägagångssätt inte behöver stå i strid med det förfarande man redan inlett. Skulle åklagaren efter förhör komma fram till att det finns grund för åtal och också väcka ett sådant har Sverige knappast kommit i ett sämre läge, samtidigt som ett motsatt resultat av förhören, det vill säga att förundersökningen läggs ned, skulle få slut på hela denna tråkiga historia och ifrågasättandet av Sverige som varande en rättsstat.

Det kan kanske vara tveksamt om Ecuador tillåter ett förhör på sin ambassad efter att ha givit Assange politisk asyl, men med samtycke från Assange skulle man troligen acceptera och ta möjligheten att försöka lösa den svåra situation man hamnat i.  
[Ecuador har redant gått med på detta. --A.B.]

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## **The New Statesman must correct its error over Assange and extradition**

*The claim that Swedish courts, not government, have final say on extradition is a crucial mistake that distorts the Assange case*

Glenn Greenwald  
The Guardian  
24 August 2012

The New Statesman owes its readers a correction for a clear and crucial falsehood contained in this much-cited argument by its legal correspondent, David Allen Green. As I noted on Wednesday, Green purported to debunk what he called "common misconceptions" and "myths" being spread by supporters of Ecuador's asylum decision in the Assange case, but in doing so, he propagated his own myth on the key question in this matter. By doing so, he misled large numbers of readers not only at the New Statesman but in many other venues which cited his claims. Regardless of one's views on the asylum matter, nobody should want clear errors on the central issues to be left standing in major media outlets.

The falsehood here is clear and straightforward. One of the "myths" Green purported to debunk was that "Sweden should guarantee that there be no extradition to USA." Assange's lawyers, along with Ecuadorean officials, have repeatedly told Sweden and Britain that Assange would immediately travel to Stockholm to face these allegations if some type of satisfactory assurance against extradition to the US could be given. This is the paramount issue because it shows that it is not Assange and Ecuadorean officials—but rather the Swedish and British governments—who are preventing the sex assault allegations from being fairly and legally resolved as they should be.

But Green claimed that "[i]t would not be legally possible for Swedish government to give any guarantee about a future extradition, and nor would it have any binding effect on the Swedish legal system in the event of a future extradition request." He said that this is so in part because "any final word on an extradition would (quite properly) be with an independent Swedish court, and not the government giving the purported 'guarantee'." He then cited a British lawyer (notably, not a Swedish one) who made the same claim: "[I]t appears that if the extradition is contested as it would be in Assange's case then it is a matter for the court not the government to decide if he is extradited."

**This is completely and unquestionably false. It is simply untrue that it is Swedish courts, rather than the Swedish government, who are the final decision-makers in extradition requests. It is equally untrue that the Swedish government has no final decision-making power regarding extradition requests that are legally sanctioned by the Swedish judiciary. These are not matters for reasonable debate. The law is clear. Green's claim is false.**

Last night, international law professor Kevin Jon Heller at Melbourne Law School emailed me and wrote: "[I]t is incorrect to say that the final decision to extradite Assange from Sweden to the US would be made by the courts."

He directed me to this analysis from Mark Klamberg— a professor of international law at the University of Stockholm— who dissects Sweden's extradition law and makes Green's error as clear as it can be:

"How does procedure work if somebody is to extradited from Sweden? ... [I]f the person referred to in the request has not consented to being extradited, the case shall be tried by the supreme court. Section 20(1) provides that if the supreme court has considered that there is a legal obstacle to extradition the request may not be granted.

**"Even if the supreme court has found that there are no obstacles, the government can refuse extradition.** This is because section 1(1) provides that if certain conditions are fulfilled, a person 'may' not 'shall' be extradited. In other words, even if the prosecutor-general and the supreme court finds that all conditions for extradition are fulfilled **the government may veto such extradition. It does not work in the reverse way, the government can not grant extradition if the supreme court has found that any of the required conditions are lacking.**"

Let's repeat that: "Even if the supreme court has found that there are no obstacles, the government can refuse extradition." And: "Even if the prosecutor-general and the supreme court finds that all conditions for extradition are fulfilled the government may veto such extradition." In other words, under clear Swedish law, the Swedish government has exactly the final decision-making authority over extradition that Green told his readers it lacks.

Professor Klamberg is far from alone in making this clear. As I noted on Wednesday, this Swedish-Moroccan lawyer analyzed Swedish extradition law in rigorous detail to make the same point: "Swedish extradition law clearly states that the Swedish government is the body deciding on any extradition request."

Moreover: "No provision gives any court the right to decide on an extraditions request."

**The court's role in extradition requests is limited to this situation: "The government may not extradite someone for whom the supreme court has found that an extradition would not be in conformity with the law."**

As I noted on Wednesday, his analysis of the law (exactly like Professor Klamberg's) shows there are two possible outcomes once the contested extradition request goes to the Swedish court: first, the court rules the extradition request is not cognizable under relevant law, in which case the Swedish government is barred from extraditing; or second, the court rules the extradition request is cognizable under relevant law, in which case the Swedish government has the option not to extradite. As he put it: **"The deciding body is thus the government, with an input by the prosecutor general."**

Swedish extradition law is written to ensure that if an extradition is to occur, Swedish government officials, not its courts, are the final decision-makers on whether that should take place.



More clear evidence of Green's error, first noted by this superb debunking of Green, comes from documents sent by the Australian diplomatic mission in Sweden to its home government on the Assange/extradition matter (they were declassified and released to the public by the Australian government). In response to questions from Canberra about what an extradition request to Sweden would entail, **the Australian diplomatic mission explained:**

**"The process require[s] a request from another state, a decision by Sweden's supreme court on whether extradition was possible, and finally a decision by government to go forward with the extradition."**

The internal communications in the Australian government go on to note: "The Swedish government could deny an extradition or temporary surrender that the supreme court had approved, but if the supreme court denied an extradition or temporary surrender application, then the matter ended there; ie, the government could not approve a process that the supreme court had rejected."

**Again: the Swedish courts simply decide whether extradition is legally possible, but the final decision as to whether to extradite is vested in the Swedish government.**

This is not some sort of strange or exotic feature of Swedish law. As Professor Heller wrote when explaining that the Swedish government possesses exactly the final decision-making authority Green denied it has: "Nor is that unusual; **I don't know of any states that give the final decision to courts instead of to the executive.**"

In light of this abundant evidence, I trust that even the most hardened Assange critic will acknowledge that Green was radically wrong on this key point. **It should be noted that those sources I just cited are not Assange supporters, but rather are the opposite:** they are all, to varying degrees, hostile to his fight against extradition to Sweden. Professor Klamberg (along with Professor Heller) is highly skeptical that Sweden would extradite Assange to the US. The Swedish-Moroccan lawyer I cited began his analysis by declaring: "First, let me state that I am as adamantly in favour of Julian Assange being extradited to Sweden as I am opposed to him being extradited to the USA for any WikiLeaks-related offense."

And the Australian government has been infamously unsupportive of the rights of its citizen. But they nonetheless all make crystal clear that Green's statement about the Swedish government lacking the power to decide extradition is factually false.

It is inconceivable that the New Statesman would allow such a flagrant error on this key issue to remain unretracted, particularly since it was offered under the guise of Green's legal expertise. Indeed, when replying to Green on Wednesday, I myself assumed that there must be some reasonable basis to his claim about the lack of authority on the part of the Swedish government over extradition requests, and thus too readily vested his claim with credibility: a mistake I immediately corrected with updates upon learning that his claim was false. The New Statesman has the absolute journalistic obligation to prominently correct this error.

It may be true that there are other independent reasons to argue that Sweden should not offer Assange the assurance against extradition that he seeks. One may contend, for

instance, that Sweden should, or even must, wait until it receives an extradition request and its courts rule on its legality before it can make a determination as to whether it will comply. That is an argument Green makes. Professor Klamberg notes there "is nothing in the extradition of criminal offences act that deals with this scenario, but it would depart from established practice."

I happen not to find that objection valid. At the very least, one can imagine all sorts of ways that Sweden, Ecuador and Assange's lawyers could negotiate a resolution that provides Assange with meaningful protections against his fear of extradition to the US while following standard procedure on extraditions. Swedish authorities could, for instance, publicly state that they view espionage charges for the "crime" of reporting on government secrets to be a "political crime" not subject to extradition, but still reserve the right to formally decide upon any extradition request if and when they receive one. In the last four paragraphs of his analysis, this lawyer lays out exactly how such a deal could be reached consistent with Swedish law.

**If there were any real desire to find a resolution, one could be found. It is Sweden's steadfast refusal even to negotiate these matters that led the Ecuadoreans to be suspicious of their motives and to conclude that asylum was necessary here to protect Assange from political prosecution.**

But all of that is a completely separate issue from the glaring error in Green's post about whether it is the Swedish government or its courts that have final decision-making authority. The fact that Green made other arguments in support of his ultimate conclusion does not remotely mitigate his false claim that "any final word on an extradition would (quite properly) be with an independent Swedish court, and not the government giving the purported 'guarantee'." Nor does it relieve the New Statesman of the obligation to prominently correct this error.

I'm certainly not accusing Green of bad faith— i.e., of knowingly making false claims. It is difficult to discern Swedish extradition law without being a Swedish legal expert or relying on them, which is why it's a good idea for people like Green not to do it, especially in a periodical. But motives aside, what he told his readers under the guise of legal expertise is unquestionably false, and it had serious consequences for how this whole debate has been perceived.

This is why this is so crucial: if Sweden (and/or Britain) would provide some meaningful assurance that Assange would not be extradited to the US to face espionage charges for WikiLeaks' journalism, then the vast majority of asylum supporters (including me) would loudly demand that he immediately travel to Stockholm to confront those allegations; Assange himself has said he would do so. That gives the lie to the ugly slander that those who have expressed support for Ecuador's asylum decision are dismissive of the sex assault claims or do not care about seeing them resolved.

Speaking for myself, I have always said the same thing about those allegations in Sweden from the moment they emerged: they are serious and deserve legal resolution. It is not Assange or his supporters preventing that resolution, but the Swedish and British governments, which are strangely refusing even to negotiate as to how Assange's rights against unjust extradition and political persecution can be safeguarded along with the rights of the complainants to have their allegations

addressed. Green's false claim that the Swedish government is unable to act because it has no final authority over extradition has seriously distorted this issue, and it is why it should be promptly and prominently corrected by the New Statesman.

UPDATE: In addition to all the other sources I cited, here is the Swedish government's official website on the process of extradition:

If the Supreme Court finds that there is any legal impediment to extradition, the Government is not allowed to approve the request. The Government can, however, refuse extradition even if the Supreme Court has not declared against extradition, as the law states that if certain conditions are fulfilled, a person "may" be extradited— not "shall" be extradited.

Can that be any clearer? At this point, only the most wilfully irrational person can deny that Green made a factually false claim when he wrote that "any final word on an extradition would (quite properly) be with an independent Swedish court, and not the government giving the purported 'guarantee'."

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## **Ecuador president says UK has no right to lecture over Assange after its failure to extradite Pinochet a decade ago**

*Phil Vinter  
Daily Mail  
23 August 2012*

Ecuador's President Rafael Correa says Britain is not in a position to preach about its decision to offer asylum to Julian Assange when it failed to extradite former Chilean President Augusto Pinochet.

Correa has infuriated British officials by offering protection at the Ecuador embassy in London to the Wikileaks founder who is wanted for sex assault and rape allegations in Sweden.

The South American nation's socialist leader says he shares the former computer hacker's fears that he could be sent from Sweden to the U.S. to face charges over WikiLeaks's publication in 2010 of thousands of secret U.S. cables.

Both U.S. and European government sources say no criminal charges against Assange have been issued by the U.S. and that Washington has launched no attempt to extradite him.

Britain says it is determined to fulfill a legal obligation to send Assange to Sweden. But Correa said London had made its own rules in the past— specifically, by not extraditing Pinochet, who was charged with multiple human rights violations.

'Pinochet was not extradited for humanitarian reasons, when there were dozens of Europeans and thousands of Latin Americans who were murdered, and tens of

thousands of people were tortured during the Pinochet dictatorship,' he told reporters in the country's capital Quito.

Pinochet was arrested by British police at a hospital in London in 1998 after Spain demanded his extradition for alleged torture and murder, including of Spanish citizens, during his 1973-1990 rule. The British government decided in 2000 that the frail Pinochet was unfit to stand trial and free to fly home. He died six years later in Santiago, Chile, aged 91.

'If Pinochet was not extradited for humanitarian reasons then it's clear that they can take the decision not to extradite Mr. Julian Assange,' Correa said.

Correa is part of a leftist alliance of Latin American leaders that includes Venezuela's Hugo Chavez and Bolivia's Evo Morales who have taken a critical line against the U.S. in recent years and have strengthened ties with China, Russia and Iran.

The Ecuadorean government remains angry at a veiled [???] threat by Britain to enter its embassy and arrest Assange. On Tuesday Correa denounced it as 'rude, impertinent and unacceptable.'

But on Wednesday he repeated that Ecuador was ready to negotiate over the 41-year-old's fate.

Ecuador's government wants Assange to receive written assurances that he would not be extradited from Sweden to a third country. 'We have always been open to dialogue and we are still open to dialogue,' the president said.

But he criticized the Swedish government for declining an offer by Ecuador to make Assange available for questioning inside the embassy. He also said he doubted the seriousness of his alleged crimes.

**'The alleged sexual offences are not considered crimes in Latin America, or in 95 per cent of the world,' Correa said.**

He has won broad support for his position on Assange from other South American governments, framing the embassy saga as a struggle between his small country and 'imperialist' powers.

'We cannot ignore the fact that some countries have a lot of weight,' Correa said. **'But something has changed: Latin America no longer has patrons. We don't bow to pressure. We will not accept neo-colonialism, wherever it may come from.'**

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2192566/Ecuador-president-says-UK-right-lecture-Julian-Assange.html>

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## Ambassadors visit Ecuador embassy in London

AFP

August 25, 2012

AMBASSADORS from several South American countries visited the Ecuadoran embassy in London on Friday to express their support for its decision to offer asylum to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.

The move came after Britain wrote to the embassy urging a diplomatic solution over Mr Assange, whom London has insisted it will extradite to Sweden where prosecutors want to question him over allegations of sex crimes.

The Foreign Office confirmed a "formal communication" had been sent, but would not reveal the contents.

Ecuador has said Britain threatened to send police into the embassy to arrest Mr Assange, who has not left the premises for more than two months. Britain insists it simply made the Ecuadoran government aware of a little-used law which in theory would allow it to suspend the embassy's diplomatic status and enter the premises.

After the visit from the ambassadors, a spokesman from the embassy said: "This display of support for the Ecuadoran government by South American ambassadors is a clear indication of the level of support Ecuador has amongst countries in America."

The spokesman added that it was also "a clear statement opposing the UK government's threats against the integrity and sovereignty of its embassy in London."

Ecuadoran President Rafael Correa said the diplomatic row "could be ended tomorrow" if Britain gave the founder of the website safe passage to South America.

Mr Correa told the BBC: "This could end tomorrow if the UK grants safe passage, or it could go on for months and years if Mr Assange can't leave the embassy of Ecuador in London."

WikiLeaks angered the United States by releasing tens of thousands of classified files about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as sensitive cables from US embassies around the world.

Mr Assange, a 41-year-old Australian, has said he fears he will eventually be extradited to the United States.

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/breaking-news/ambassadors-visit-ecuador-embassy-in-london/story-e6frf7k6-1226457828325>

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*Smiles all around: Woman A, left, at a dinner with Julian Assange, centre, host Richard Falkvinge, Anna Troberg and Sara Sangberg*

## **Is this the photo that could clear Assange?**

*Grinning for the camera, WikiLeaks boss and 'Woman A' who says he sexually assaulted her 48 hours earlier*

*Abul Taher  
Daily Mail (U.K.)  
25 August 2012*

It seems an unremarkable image: a group of friends smiling broadly. But this is the photograph Julian Assange hopes will clear his name. The face of the woman on the left has been obscured for legal reasons.

For although she is seen beaming, she would later tell police that 48 hours before the picture was taken, the WikiLeaks founder pinned her down in her flat and sexually assaulted her.

If the case ever reaches court— Mr Assange is currently holed up in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London— his lawyers will argue that the photograph undermines the 33-year-old woman's entire story. And, they claim, there is more.

In the two days after the alleged assault in Sweden, Mr Assange and Woman A, as she is known, attended a conference and two dinner parties where it is claimed they were practically inseparable.

During one party, Woman A tweeted that she was 'with the world's coolest, smartest people!'.

The photograph was taken on August 15, 2010, at the Glenfiddich restaurant in Stockholm, at a dinner of meatballs and schnapps hosted by Rickard Falkvinge, the founder of the Swedish Pirate Party (PP), which campaigns for greater government transparency.

Although by all accounts it was a jolly occasion, there was some serious discussion that at times became 'passionate and intense'.

Mr Falkvinge said the purpose of the dinner, which lasted three hours, was to sign a contract between the PP and WikiLeaks so Mr Assange's organisation could use the party's computer servers.

Also present was the deputy leader of PP, Anna Troberg, and the party's IT manager, Richard Olson, who brought along his then fiancée, Sara Sandberg.

Since the assault charges were brought, Mr Falkvinge and Ms Troberg have given detailed statements to the police in support of Mr Assange. Mr Falkvinge said their testimony included observations about the body language between Mr Assange and Woman A, who arrived with another woman, called Pietra, who stayed just for the starter.

Mr Falkvinge sat next to Mr Assange, with Woman A sitting diagonally opposite them.

'Most of the night, Julian was speaking with me,' Mr Falkvinge said. 'This was a heads of organisation meeting and everybody had a counterpart to talk to. It was a professional dinner.'

**For Mr Falkvinge, one of the things that was striking about it, in view of what he later learned, was that Woman A volunteered to become Mr Assange's press secretary during the meal.** Mr Falkvinge has refused to go into details about the way Woman A behaved with Mr Assange, because he has to give evidence in court if a trial is held.

But he made it clear that he did not think Woman A behaved like a victim or someone who had suffered a traumatic sexual experience only two days earlier.

He said: 'You can look at objective facts and draw far-reaching conclusions: the fact that we are at the dinner and it was with very passionate people and with good food and drinks; the fact that I and Anna Troberg have left depositions as key defence witnesses in the upcoming trial— that does tell you a lot.'

If Assange's case was to go to court after extradition to Sweden upon leaving the Ecuadorian Embassy, pictured, his lawyers will use the photo and evidence of the events that followed the alleged assault in his defence

If Assange's case was to go to court after extradition to Sweden upon leaving the Ecuadorian Embassy, pictured, his lawyers will use the photo in his defence

'You can say what we saw was more consistent with the defence than the prosecution.'

Due to Woman A's complaint to the police, as well as that of another alleged victim, Mr Assange has been fighting extradition to Sweden from Britain for the past two years.

He insists he has been set up, and fears that going to Sweden is a ruse for him to be quickly extradited to America, where he could stand trial for leaking hundreds of thousands of classified US military documents on the WikiLeaks website.

His two-year fight against extradition took a bizarre twist when Mr Assange entered the Ecuadorian Embassy in June seeking asylum.

He was granted asylum by Ecuadorian president Rafael Correa last week, igniting a diplomatic rift between Ecuador and Britain.

The Mail on Sunday has also learned that just hours after the alleged attack, Woman A accompanied Mr Assange to a Social Democratic Party conference.

According to police reports, it was there that Mr Assange met Woman B, aged 29, who would accuse him of rape.

The two women's lawyer, Claes Borgstrom, said yesterday: 'We will only discuss the dinner at the restaurant and the picture in court.'

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2193641/Julian-Assange-rape-claim-Is-photo-clear-him.html>

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*My Vingren har gått igenom argumenten som  
Julian Assanges PR-firma saluför på sin hemsida.*

## **Assange— ingen idealisk våldtäktsman precis**

*My Vingren*  
2012-08-25



Julian Assange har ägnat sig åt det i särklass vanligaste beteendet efter sexuella övergrepp, och de som anmält honom har utsatts för den sedvanliga smutskastning som våldtäktsoffer alltid får räkna med, men som är särskilt svår att bemöta när förövaren är en hjälte. Det konstaterar My Vingren som tittat närmare på vad Assange fått ut av att anlita en PR-byrå till sitt försvar.

My Vingren arbetar som verksamhetsledare på Stockholms Tjejjour och är en fjärdedel av den feministiska spoken word-orkestern Krigstribunalen. Hon är även grundare av bloggen Macho i Kollektivtrafiken.

Artikeln är först publicerad på hennes hemsida.

När Julian Assange blev misstänkt för sexuella övergrepp mot två svenska tjejer gjorde han inte bara som de flesta som blir anklagade för ett eller flera allvarliga brott, anlitar en försvare. Nej, förutom Leif Silbersky anställer Julian Assange även en PR-byrå.

Självklart är det problematiskt ur ett rättssäkerhetsperspektiv när någon som är skäligt misstänkt för flera allvarliga brott anlitar en PR-firma för att påverka och förändra opinionen under en pågående förundersökning. Speciellt allvarligt är det när Assange gör det istället för att lämna egna vittnesmål.

Jag tyckte det därför var ganska intressant att titta närmare på vad för roll denne PR-byrå fick, framförallt i Sverige. Hur har Ullman PR påverkat debatten? Vad har egentligen debatten handlat om? Och varför? Harald Ullman, vem är du?

När jag bildgooglar "Ullman PR" är två av de första bilderna på en mer än salongsberusad, ja, ärligt talat snarare tokpackad, 65-årig gubbe som rödmosig och glad trycker sig mot två unga tjejer. När jag letar vidare hittar jag en bild på tre av Ullmans kvinnliga anställda som under årets politikervecka i Almedalen var klädda i varsin t-shirt med Ullmans ansikte tryckt över bägge bröstvårtorna.

Under 1996 kritiserades Ullman i svensk media runt den så kallade spionaffären, också benämnd som HSB-skandalen. Sedan 2006 sitter Harald Ullman i Sveriges största polisenämnd, City Polisenämnd, som vice ordförande. Nämndens uppdrag är att varje år fastställa budget och verksamhetsplan. Verksamhetsplanen är sedan den dokumentationen som bestämmer mål och inriktning för polisverksamheten i respektive polisområde.

Jag antar att detta var en av anledningarna till att Assange valde just Ullman PR att representera honom. Självklart måste det vara en tillgång att Ullman har en högt uppsatt position inom samma verksamhetsområde som polisanmälningarna mot Assange gjordes.

Under 2011 bildade Ullman ett nytt nätverk, Nordic News Network, vars syfte är att fria Assange från alla anklagelser. Enligt Ullmans pressutskick innehåller hemsidan, som nätverket Nordic News Network står bakom, bland annat en fallhistoria med kronologisk redogörelse av de svenska anklagelserna. Jag har tittat närmare på hemsidan och det 57-sidiga dokumentet "Misstänkt beteende". Alla citat är hämtade därifrån.

Vad används då för argument, vilka är de här häpnadsväckande, revolutionerande bevisen som ska rädda Assanges anseende?

Till att börja med, för att klarlägga. Det är följande anklagelserna som Assange står som skäligen misstänkt för:

Olaga tvång— genom att Assange höll fast X:s armar och tvingat isär hennes ben samt liggandes över henne med sin kroppstyngd hindrat henne från att röra eller förflytta sig.

Sexuellt ofredande— att Assange har varit medveten om att användande av skydd vid samlag i form av kondom varit en förutsättning för det sexuella umgänget, har Assange, utan X:s vetskap, genomfört ett fullbordat oskyddat samlag med henne. Samt att 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.

Våldtäkt— att uppsåtligen genomfört ett samlag med X genom att otillbörligt utnyttja att hon på grund av sömn befunnit sig i ett hjälplöst tillstånd.

Nätverkets syfte är som sagt att fria Assange från anklagelser. De publicerar ovanstående händelseförlopp, baserat på polisens förundersökning. Hade jag varit Nordic News Network hade jag förmodligen försökt fria Assange genom att motbevisa ovanstående anklagelser. Men Ullmans och c/o resonerar annorlunda. Inte någonstans dementeras uppgifterna eller anklagelserna, snarare bekräftas historien.

Istället används tre andra vinklar för att rädda Assange. Håll i er, för nu kommer klyschorna!

Inga riktiga våldtäktsoffer: "Vissa lunchgäster förbryllades av närvaron av den unga kvinna som inte tycktes passa in."

"Då ringde det enormt många varningsklockor.... Utseendemässigt, så var det en tjej som gjorde allt för att spela på sin sexualitet...."

Varningsklockor ringde! Håll i er, för i helvete: Hon hade en rosa tröja på sig! Det var självklart tydligt för "alla inblandade" under Assanges föreläsning och den kommande lunchen att den här unga kvinnan gjorde allt för att visa upp sig. Läs: Hon var en slampa, det märkte alla. Och ni vet, slampor kan inte bli våldtagna.

Att skylla på offret är det i särklass vanligaste beteendet efter sexuella övergrepp, både hos gärningsmannen och bland omgivningen. Ni minns ju säkert Bjästa, ett helt samhälle som spårar ur och två tjejer som inte bara blir våldtagna utan utfrysta, trakasserade och tvingas flytta från orten.

För att inte tala om den oändliga mängd domstolsbeslut och fallexempel som visar hur vårt rättssystem avskriver gärningsmannens ansvar med indikationsfaktorer om offrets kläder, tidigare sexuella beteende, relation till förövaren. Blir du våldtagen när du är lättklädd och onykter kommer du med all sannolikhet få höra att du hade dig själv att skylla. Om du dessutom känner personen? Om personen där utöver är en världskändis? En frihetshjälte? Ja. Ni fattar.

Den natten idkar de en lång session av samtyckande sex, då hon inte med ett enda ord uttrycker någon invändning eller något missnöje, skriver Ullmans nätverk om nätterna innan ena övergreppet.

Bjöd du med honom hem, hade du sex med honom, fick du orgasm, tyckte du om det?— då kan du inte sedan bli våldtagen av samma person. Nordic News Network

går in på en lång och tröttsam argumentation kring hur de utsatta tjejerna inte betedde sig så som våldtäktsoffer ska. Samtidigt som kvinnorna kritiseras för att de pratade med polisen överhuvudtaget ifrågasätts deras trovärdighet för att de inte gjorde en "vanlig" polisanmälan, utan att det var åklagaren som fattade beslut om att Assange står anhöllen för sexbrott inom ramen för allmänt åtal.

Rent teoretiskt tar de flesta, jag skulle rent av säga alla, avstånd från våldtäkter och våldtäktsmän. På flashback skrivs det i trådar om våldtäkter att våldtäktsmän borde bestraffas med tvångssterilisering, bli kastrerade med samurajsvärd i mörka gränder, plåga dem jävlarna tills de gråter av skräck och får känna hur det egentligen känns, och så vidare. Men när det kommer till realiteten, när våldtäktsmannen visar sig vara någon de känner, har respekt för, är det plötsligt inte samma visa.

Och det är inte så himla konstigt. Katarina Wennström skriver i boken Flickan och skulden om att det är enklare för oss att föreställa oss att tjejen som är en hora, att hon ville egentligen, att hon överdriver, än att anklaga någon vi känner/respekterar för att ha begått det gräsligaste, det mest fruktansvärda vi kan föreställa oss.

Tanken på att en våldtäktsman kan vara vem som helst, att det inte är en svartmusig sinnessjuk man utan någons pappa, brorsa, pojkvän. Kanske din bästa kompis? Just för att våldtäkt målas upp som det mest otänkbara, blir det för mycket att konfrontera. När vi måste välja, vilket vi tydligen måste, tenderar det att vara mycket enklare att skylla på tjejen.

Det är också därför människor inte inser att Assange kan vara bra. Viktig. Värdefull för samhället och samtidigt vara en våldtäktsman. För vi vet ju alla vad en våldtäktsman är. Eller hur? Det är det värsta vi kan föreställa oss. Det är någon som förtjänar tortyr. Då måste vi välja. Wikileaks eller Assange.

Det är simpel PR. Vi människor är enkla, vi vill inte problematisera. Och vi tror vi måste välja. Det är precis det Nordic News Network och Ullman PR säger: Välj mellan världens största hjälte och två svenska slampor. Välj mellan mannen som offrade sin frihet för vår skull och två tjejer som gnäller om kondom.

Ingen riktigt våldtäktsman: Med samma engagemang Nordic News Network väljer att framställa de utsatta tjejerna som slampiga ägnar nätverket avsevärt många sidor att beskriva Assange som en attraktiv och eftertraktad man, en man som är lite lagom och brukligt svag för kvinnlig fägring.

Han attraherar väldigt många kvinnor. Alltså det är så anmärkningsvärt. Och det är på, ja det är väl lite rockstjärnefenomen så att säga.... Jag har ju sett väldigt många kvinnor — jag kan säga den övervägande majoriteten av kvinnorna som har kommit i närheten av honom — har fallit pladask... Det är en förbluffande anstormning kvinnor. Alltså, det tar sekunder, alltså det är märkbart.

Johannes Wahlström har iakttagit samma fenomen: "Det jag upptäckte väldigt snabbt var att Julian väckte något slags kändisintresse bland tjejer. Och framförallt bland tjejer som jag förväntade mig vara mer professionella... De limmade liksom på honom, så kan jag säga... Det var journalister från väldigt prestigefyllda publikationer som betedde sig som skolflickor när de såg honom. Fnitrar, försöka krama. Försöka ta handen på låret på honom..."

Ja. Egentligen är det ju Assange som är offret i den här historien. Här försöker han tillfredsställa kvinnorna i hans närhet tills han blir blå i ansiktet, kämpar och kämpar och kämpar, men aldrig är de nöjda. Det är inte Assanges fel att kvinnor blir som galna i hans omgivning. Inte behöver han våldta, Assange kan få vem som helst han vill.

De missar dock en stor poäng i den här incitamentet. Män som våldtar gör det inte för att de har en okontrollerbar biologisk drift, att de inte får tillräckligt mycket från frugan eller har för ful näsa för att få ligg. Våldtäkt handlar om makt. Genom att trycka ner henne i sängen och hålla fast hennes händer. Genom att trycka sin erigerade kuk mot någon som tydligt visar att hon inte vill. Genom att skratta högt när hon säger nej.

Det var inte bara journalister från ansedda publikationer berättar Wahlström: "Jag märkte att det fanns för många, om jag ska uttrycka det utan att verka föraktfull mot någon, det fanns för många groupies utav kvinnlig karaktär som cirkulerade runt omkring honom... [Mot dessa kvinnor:] Han sänkte garden på ett annat vis jämfört med om han skulle samtala med dig eller med mig."

"...då förstår jag att XX är en av de här, man kan kalla de för groupies eller stalkers eller de som attraheras av hans stjärnglans."

Det här faller tillbaka på en stereotyp och destruktiv bild av vem som egentligen är en våldtäktsman. Vilka vi vill ska vara våldtäktsmän. Vi vill att det ska vara konstiga, udda män som inte får ligga. Desperata hormonstinna varelser med krampande pung, impulskontrollproblematik, gärna med överdrivet många psykiatriska diagnoser.

Assange är knappast en idealisk våldtäktsman. Han är vit, välartikulerad, smart. För att han kämpar för rättvisa och yttrandefrihet. Assange var vår hjälte. Vi vill att våldtäktsmän ska vara omänskliga, galna, abnormala. Inte riktiga människor. Och verkligen inga hjältar.

Det är Ullmans främsta lyckovinst. Det är därför så mycket av Nordic News Networks material handlar om att omyndighetsförklara de två kvinnorna. Det är därför Assanges jurist Leif Silbersky, en advokat som är populär bland just misstänkta våldtäktsmän, lägger energi på att skuldbelägga offren och ifrågasätta deras beteende. I en kommentar till Tumba-målen för några år sedan menade han att kvinnor med "dåligt ölsinne" kanske inte borde gå på krogen överhuvudtaget. Det är därför Harald Ullman i en diskussion på facebook så snyggt slänger ur sig:

Jag kan tänka mig att många män går omkring med någon form av rädsla att bli orättvist anklagade för att vara våldtäktsmän. Att beskriva Assange som utsatt och påhoppad är en viktig del av att bygga opinion för hans fördel.

Men Assange är inte bara utsatt för att bli mörkmålad som våldtäktsman, han riskerar livslångt fängelse, kanske dödsstraff för sitt journalistiska arbete. Nordic News Network återkommer om och om igen till andra fall inom historien där betydelsefulla och utsatta män fallit offer för hyrda prostituerade. Att bygga upp bilden av ett manligt offer, en martyr är inte bara nödvändigt utan rent av till godo för Assanges offentliga profil.

Till skillnad från två kvinnor som har fått sina karriärer, rykten, liv förstörda har Assange utnyttjat den här historien till sin fördel. Om och om igen påpekas det hur

många träffar Assange + Rape får på google. Ja, det är jättemånga. Men de allra flesta är till Assanges fördel. Nordic News Network publicerar inte bara namnet på de två utsatta tjejerna. De publicerar även bilder, ålder, civilstatus, dåvarande yrke samt vad för kläder de bar första gången de träffade Assange.

Vad tjänar då Assange på att anlita en PR-firma? Antagligen hur mycket som helst.

Varken Assange eller Ullman är korkade. Det klart de vet att Assange inte riskerar att bli skeppad till USA så fort han bestiger svensk mark. Han vet definitivt att det har varit högre sannolikhet för att det ska hända under de två åren har funnits sig på engelska landsbygden. Assange vet varför svenska myndigheter inte vill ta förhöret per telefon eller via skype. För att det inte enbart handlar om ett förhör. Han ska bli anhållen och åtalad, vilket är svårt att göra per telefon. Assange vet varför Sverige, eller något land, på förhand inte lämnar skriftliga garantier på att han inte kommer överlämnas. Han vet att sådana dokument är en juridisk omöjlighet. Det är undanflykter.

Jag är övertygad om att anledningen till att Assange sökte asyl i Ecuador är för att han är smart. Han vet att bevisbördan inte ligger till hans fördel. Han vet att han riskerar flera års fängelse.

Det här är egentligen ingen spektakulär historia. Och Ullman med gängets retorik kring anklagelserna gör det smärtsamt tydligt. Det är samma retorik som användes av Bjästa, samma retorik som av ungdomar och vuxna i Jokkmok efter att två kvinnor blev våldtagna på en marknad. Nordic News Networks argument om "hon hade en chockrosa tröja", "hon sa en gång att hon tyckte han var beundransvärd och modig", "hon hade haft sex med honom innan", "de sov i samma säng", "hon verkade inte tillräckligt ledsen efteråt", jag tror nog ni känner igen retoriken. Det är samma retorik som de allra flesta offer för liknande brott tvingas höra. Du överdrev, lilla gumman. Egentligen är du svartsjuk. Det är samma retorik som dömda våldtäktsmän försvaras med. Han var snygg, hade lätt att få tjejer, inga psykiska problem.

Nej, Julian Assange är knappast en idealisk våldtäktsman. Jag säger inte att han är skyldig, det vet jag inte. Men jag kan säga, rent statistiskt, är han en helt vanlig våldtäktsman.

• *My Vingren arbetar som verksamhetsledare på Stockholms Tjejjour och är en fjärdedel av den feministiska spoken word-orkestern Krigstribunalen. Hon är även grundare av bloggen Macho i Kollektivtrafiken.*

<http://feministisktperspektiv.se/2012/08/25/assange-ingen-idealisk-valdtaktsman-precis/>

*[Obs! I stort sett allt som My Vingren påstår om Nordic News Network är fel, och så vitt jag kan se har hon inte heller någon koll på Ullman PR --A.B.]*

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## Selective Asylum and International Hypocrisy

*Yazan al-Saadi*  
*Al Akhbar*  
*August 27, 2012*

Reprisals for exposing the dishonest or illegal activities of governments, corporations, and other organizations can be fatal. WikiLeaks, the most famous whistle-blowing organization on the planet, is no stranger to this danger.

At the moment, Julian Assange, WikiLeaks founder, remains holed up at the Ecuadorian embassy in London in an attempt to escape extradition to Sweden. Swedish prosecutors are demanding his handover, backed by a warrant issued from Interpol, in order to question him on charges of sexual assault.

Assange and his supporters fear that his deportation to Sweden would lead to his extradition to the United States, which has been itching to charge him for the leaking of thousands of US diplomatic cables, as well as information regarding misconduct and crimes during its occupation of Iraq. A grand jury in Virginia has already prepared a case against the Australian national for espionage, and a secret, sealed indictment has purportedly been issued.

Opponents and supporters of Assange remain divided over the Swedish case. Many point to the fact that Swedish prosecutors have questioned suspects based abroad for far more serious crimes without extraditing them, while others maintain that his extradition from Sweden to the US would be far more difficult than many believe.

However, Sweden has in the past circumvented its own legal system to accommodate American demands. The most notable example involved Ahmed Agiza and Mohammed al-Zari, two Egyptian asylum-seekers, who were deported to Egypt from Sweden on December 2001 following a request by the CIA, despite real concerns that the two could face torture — in contravention of Swedish law.

Additionally, neither British nor Swedish authorities have agreed to offer guarantees that Assange would not face extradition to the US— a key demand of Assange's defense team.

The row over the WikiLeaks founder reached new heights this past week. British authorities surrounded the Ecuadorian embassy and threatened to revoke its diplomatic status under a little-known 1987 law in order to capture Assange. Moreover, British police have been secretly ordered to arrest Assange “under any circumstances” if he leaves the Ecuadorian embassy.

An overwhelming sense of hypocrisy permeates the case— on a multitude of fronts. Yet, it is the factor of diplomatic asylum, which Ecuador has granted Assange, as well as the outrage over Ecuador's decision, where this hypocrisy is most flagrant.

There are crucial differences between diplomatic, territorial, and political asylum. Diplomatic asylum is requested at diplomatic missions abroad, commonly embassies, while territorial asylum is requested within the borders of a state. Political asylum, on the other hand, is usually used interchangeably for both diplomatic and territorial asylum by the media, though it has no real legal grounding.

**Diplomatic asylum, which is relevant in Assange's case, is not actually defined in international law. In fact, the matter is left to nations and is ordinarily granted under the norms of international customs** respecting the inviolability of diplomatic premises and personnel. Indeed, the Latin American region is one of the few areas in the world where requests for diplomatic asylum are taken seriously and are actively incorporated and regulated by the legal system. Beyond Latin America, it is commonly enforced or revoked depending on the interests of the states involved in a dispute.

In the case of Assange, both the UK and the US have stated that they do not recognize diplomatic asylum. But this does not conform with their history.

**Diplomatic asylum has been celebrated by Western states when those who seek it reinforce a positive image of the West as a haven of freedom and good governance.** The twentieth century, particularly during the Cold War, saw countless examples of diplomatic asylum being granted and hailed by the West against its perceived enemies.

In 1956, asylum was granted to Jozsef Mindszenty, a Catholic cardinal and opponent of communism, after he walked into the US embassy in Budapest. He remained there for 15 years unable to leave the grounds, before agreeing to exile in Austria. A decade later, Josef Stalin's daughter Svetlana Alliluyeva walked into the US embassy in New Delhi, burned her passport and denounced her father. She was allowed to move to the US and lived there for the rest of her days.

More recently, the British denounced Zimbabwe in 2000 for forcefully opening an impounded diplomatic bag in Harare. The British Foreign Office minister called the breach of international conventions "grave," and said that it was "not the act of a civilized country."

**In the past year alone, the US granted two Chinese nationals access to diplomatic premises in order to escape the Chinese authorities.** The first, in February, concerned the Chinese police chief Wang Lijun who fled to the US consulate in Chengdu in order to divulge the murder of British businessman Neil Heywood—a murder that had electrified political circles within the Chinese government. Lijun, however, disappeared after leaving the consulate, and is believed to have been abducted by the authorities. The more famous of the two recent cases, involved Chinese activist and lawyer Chen Guangcheng, who daringly escaped house arrest and fled to the US embassy in Beijing. Following negotiations between the American and Chinese authorities, Guangcheng, who is blind, and his family were permitted to travel to New York.

The intense desire of British authorities to arrest and extradite Assange for "questioning" on sexual assault charges is rather striking. The UK itself has been known to drag its feet in very serious extradition cases, most notably that of Augusto Pinochet—the former president of Chile. When Pinochet arrived in the UK in 1998 for medical treatment, he was placed under house arrest due to an international arrest warrant issued by a Spanish judge. A 16-month legal battle ensued over his extradition, with Margaret Thatcher and George Bush Sr. criticizing Pinochet's imprisonment. In the end, his extradition was overruled by British Home Secretary Jack Straw, justified on grounds of ill health, and Pinochet was allowed to return to Chile.

The former Chilean dictator died in 2006 having evaded conviction on charges of torture, murder, and other crimes committed during his repressive rule.

Indeed, British authorities have commonly not felt compelled to arrest or charge individuals wanted for serious crimes during their stay on British territory, including Pinochet and Rifaat al-Assad—the brother of former Syrian president Hafez al-Assad widely believed to have overseen the 1982 Hama massacre....

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## Assange smear campaign drowns out 'secrecy' story

*Wikileaks founder had consensual sex*

Geoff Olson  
Vancouver Courier  
August 29, 2012

What's up with the media chorus on the cornered founder of Wikileaks? "Assange berates U.S. from balcony of Ecuador Embassy" pronounced a Reuters headline from Aug. 19. "Assange berates United States from Ecuador embassy balcony" echoed CNBC. "Julian Assange appeared on the first-floor balcony of Ecuador's London Embassy to berate the United States" echoed the San Francisco Chronicle. "Defiant Assange berates U.S." parroted the Oman Tribune.

"His hypocrisy and cowardice is rivaled only by his self-aggrandizement and arrogance," fulminated the Australian. "In pleading his case for martyrdom, he was quick to berate U.S. and British authorities, but conveniently ignored the serious allegations of sexual assault against him."

As of this Wednesday, a Google search of the terms "Assange," "berate" and "Ecuador" netted 171,000 hits (5,930 hits on Google News alone). **The problem is there was no actual "berate,"** at least according to the dictionary definition of the verb: to "scold, rebuke, reprimand, reproach, reprove, admonish, chide, criticize, upbraid." Rather, the hunted activist calmly called on U.S. president Barack Obama to "do the right thing" and stop the U.S. persecution of his whistleblowing organization and its members.

**During his 2008 election campaign, Obama promised protection for whistleblowers, defending their "acts of courage and patriotism, which can sometimes save lives and often save taxpayer dollars, should be encouraged rather than stifled."** Ironically, his administration has turned out to be even more enthusiastic than George W. Bush's minions in targeting men and women of conscience for prosecution. The sixth person to be charged under the Espionage Act, CIA whistleblower John Kiriakou, has the distinction of being the only figure charged in connection with the Bush-era rendition and torture program. The accusation: he revealed classified information about the program itself, including names of colleagues.

Is this the endgame for Britain/U.S./Sweden's sport of whack-a-mole with Assange, with the complicity of a mynah-bird media: to turn him into a human hazard light for any insiders who get the funny notion of exposing high-level crimes and misdemeanors? If he is extradited to Sweden, Assange fears he will be bounced to the U.S. and jailed like the still-untried soldier Bradley Manning, who has been sitting in solitary confinement for over 800 days for allegedly releasing the infamous State Department cables to Wikileaks.



As for the serious allegations of rape, both accusers agreed they had consensual sex with Assange. A female Swedish prosecutor, since over-ruled, threw out the initial arrest warrant for the Australian activist after finding no evidence of criminality.

If there was a singular voice of sanity in last week's Assange-watch, it belonged to Glenn Greenwald at the Guardian. "Is it not remarkable that one of the very few individuals over the past decade to risk his welfare, liberty and even life to meaningfully challenge the secrecy regime on which the American national security state (and those of its obedient allies) depends just so happens to have become— long before he sought asylum from Ecuador— the most intensely and personally despised figure among the American and British media class and the British "liberal" intelligentsia?"

Assange won the 2011 Martha Gellhorn prize for journalism, with the judges congratulating him on giving "the public more scoops than most journalists can imagine." Since then, the actual reporting on Wikileaks has segued from the content of the cables to the character of its founder, including tabloid-like speculations on his toilet habits and hygiene from the likes of Bill Keller of the New York Times.

The character focus seems like a TMZ-style diversion from the real story—the international secrecy / security complex that has ballooned since 9/11.

In 2010, the Wikileaks-released " collateral damage video" spread like global wildfire on broadcasts, broadsheets and blogs. It revealed a 2007 U.S. air strike in Baghdad against Iraqi civilians that resulted in the deaths of eight men, including two war correspondents for — wait for it — Reuters. Images and words from the stomach-turning video even made the front page of the Vancouver Sun. (Last week the online edition of the paper reproduced the original Reuters wire story, "Assange berates U.S. from balcony of Ecuador Embassy".)

Hundreds of media outlets across the world took part in repeating, rewording and incorporating the b-word into their copy. To this observer, it smells like something between the manufacture of consent / contempt and lazy, high school cut-and-paste.

www.geoffolson.com

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## Don't Call Me A Rape Apologist

*"Ethical Girl" (?)*

*August 29, 2012*

A lot has been written about rape in the last few weeks. Some of it was in response to Republican congressman Todd Aiken, who said pregnancy as a result of rape was rare because in "legitimate rape" the female body "has ways to shut that whole thing down". **Despite the baffling stupidity of that statement, most of the vitriol continued to be aimed at Julian Assange**, and anyone who wasn't outraged by Ecuador's decision to grant him asylum.

I had grown increasingly frustrated by comments on Twitter from people I liked and respected along the lines of "ugh my timeline is crawling with rape apologists". How odd that otherwise intelligent people would hurl such an abusive accusation at people,

merely for supporting Assange's right to asylum. Assange, after all, hasn't yet been charged with anything—let alone rape—yet millions already have him banged to rights. **Annoyed, I made this small contribution to the debate.**

**"As a rape survivor I'd like to point out calling #Assange supporters rape apologists is offensive. This is about US detention w/out trial."**

That little tweet from me was retweeted well over two hundred times. It's unheard of for so many people to agree with me. You'd be forgiven for thinking I'd hit upon popular opinion, but I'm not sure that I have; support for Assange seems to have gone so quiet lately, and men holding a similar view to my own would probably be openly vilified in the same way George Galloway was when he said Assange was only guilty of "bad sexual etiquette".

On the surface, I'm an unlikely "rape apologist". I've had personal experiences which I don't intend to describe here (however, if you want a personal account of rape Eliza James and Laurie Penny have written vividly about their own experiences and I applaud their bravery in doing so). I have more than one close friend I know to be rape survivors. I know how insidious rape is, and how often it's committed without the perpetrator really knowing or understanding what they've done. I think it's probably right that victims should be believed and the burden of proof should be on the accused, as is the case in Sweden. I have never and will never defend rape. And yet my view on the Assange case is the one people tell you can only exist in the minds of those that either don't understand rape or don't think it's important. Let me tell you: that's nonsense.

**What I've heard time and again is that Assange supporters purport the allegations are 'not proper rape' and therefore they are rape apologists.** This post on The Practical Pinko blog 'Wikileaks, hero-worship and the left' is a brilliant example of the hysteria this has provoked. The author writes:

"Right, well then, imagine their messianic leader, their blond bombshell is accused of rape. He is accused of pinning a woman down and having sex with someone who did not want to and was frightened."

**Well imagine it you'll have to, because that bears no resemblance to the accusations made against Assange. It's excellent proof of the old saying "mud sticks";** I have no doubt the author is a well-meaning person seeking to make accurate points about the importance of taking so-called "date rape" allegations extremely seriously. And everything she says about rape is true. **But something crucial has been forgotten in all of this — the statements made by the women to the police.**

When Owen Jones wrote for the Independent about the allegations of Miss A, he included in great detail her attempts to avoid penetration without a condom concluding that "many of his supporters argued that this would not constitute rape according to English law, which is simply untrue". **Sadly he missed out a fundamental fact: Assange asks her what's wrong, she tells him to put a condom on, he does and then they have sex. Does that constitute rape?** Where is the sex without her consent? What she actually alleges is that during the course of consensual sex he deliberately broke the condom. That is an entirely different matter. Whatever your views on the seriousness of that allegation it is not rape. Consensual sex does not constitute rape.

On to Miss W. She had a whirlwind romance with Assange and they had sex several times. What we typically hear said about this case is that Assange had sex with her while she was asleep. Miss W never approved or signed her statement to the police. Once she found out police planned to use her statement to charge Assange with a sex crime she refused to cooperate with them. The women approached police to ask that Assange be forced to submit to a HIV test, not to report rape. The statement published does say she woke by feeling him penetrate her. This is the only allegation against Assange that may constitute rape. She “let him continue”. She is alleged to have said in an SMS that she was “half asleep”. There isn’t enough detail here to ascertain whether a crime is alleged to have taken place at the precise point of penetration i.e. was she awake enough to have consented and/or did Assange reasonably believe he had her consent. **Even as a hardliner I can see how Assange would have reasonably assumed he had her consent to wake her by initiating sex and took her letting him continue to mean this was the case.** Ultimately, it’s Miss W’s body and she withdrew her statement on hearing Police intended to accuse him of rape which would seem to indicate she has not accused him of it.

I can’t stress this enough: people say the accusations against Assange aren’t proper rape because they’ve read the statements, not just a newspaper story. It’s not because you can’t be raped by someone you’ve slept with before. It’s not because heroes can’t be rapists. **It’s because consensual sex cannot be rape.** I am no rape apologist; it’s the people so willing to condemn Julian Assange that are trivialising rape and the harm that someone’s use of your body without your consent does. It’s them that hide behind the “rights of his accusers” when the women’s own statements and subsequent comments don’t even seem to back up the idea either of these two women are accusing Julian Assange of raping them. Assange’s own version of events don’t exactly cover him in glory but consensual sex, with or without a condom, does not compare to rape.

I would love to see this much police time spent hunting people that genuinely are on the run from rape allegations, but ask yourself if we would ever spend so much time and money trying to detain and extradite Assange had he never founded WikiLeaks.

If you’re in any doubt about how much the USA would like to get hold of Julian Assange, refresh your memory by watching the collateral murder video and think hard about Bradley Manning, the 24-year old Army Intelligence Analyst accused of releasing it. Manning has been detained for over two years in conditions the UN called “cruel and inhuman”, and faces up to 52 years in prison if convicted of ‘knowingly supplying information to the enemy’ via WikiLeaks. Can any of us really blame Assange for fearing a similar fate?

<http://theloudmouths.org/2012/08/29/dont-call-me-a-rape-apologist/>

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## **For Julian Assange, Justice Foreclosed**

*JoAnn Wypijewski  
The Nation  
August 29, 2012*

Every once in a while, a situation arises that so completely captures the spirit of the time—in this case, the horror moving like an amoeba under the surface of our pleasant days, our absurd distractions, our seemingly serious politics—that ordinary assumptions, ordinary arguments and their limited conclusions serve only to obliterate honesty, and so any hope of grappling with the real. Such is the case of Julian Assange now.

He is the wanted man. Wanted for the purpose of conducting criminal proceedings, ostensibly on sexual misconduct allegations in Sweden, but maybe not; maybe on charges of espionage or conspiracy in the United States instead; maybe to face indefinite detention, maybe torture or life in prison. It's so hard to know... But one thing is not mysterious: the law is no more capable of delivering justice in his case today than it was for a black man alleged to have raped a white woman in the Jim Crow South.

I am not comparing the founder of WikiLeaks, a white man benefiting from not only white-skin privilege and straight-man privilege but also class and celebrity privilege, with black men on the other side of a lynch mob. This is not about the particulars of oppression; it is about the political context of law, the limits of liberal expectations and the monstrosity of the state.

Liberals have no trouble generally acknowledging that in those rape cases against black men, the reasoned application of law was impossible. It was impossible because justice was impossible, foreclosed not by the vagaries of this white jury or that bit of evidence but by the totalizing immorality of white supremacy that placed the Black Man in a separate category of human being, without common rights and expectations. A lawyer might take a case if it hadn't been settled by the mob, but the warped conscience of white America could do nothing but warp the law and make of its rituals a sham. **The Scottsboro Boys might have been innocent or they might have been guilty; it didn't matter, because either way the result would be the same.**

**With Assange, the political context is the totalizing immorality of the national security state on a global scale.** The sex-crime allegations against Assange emerged in Sweden on August 20, 2010, approximately four and a half months after WikiLeaks blazed into the public sphere by releasing a classified video that showed a US Apache helicopter crew slaughtering more than a dozen civilians, including two journalists, in a Baghdad suburb. By that August, Pfc. Bradley Manning, the reputed source of the video and about 750,000 other leaked government documents, was being held without charge in solitary confinement at the Marine Corps brig in Quantico, subjected to what his attorney, David Coombs, describes in harrowing detail in a recent motion as "unlawful pretrial punishment." In plain terms, Manning was tortured. He faces court-martial for aiding the enemy and has been denounced as a traitor by members of Congress.

For disseminating classified materials that exposed war crimes, Assange has been called a terrorist. A coloring book for children, *The True Faces of Evil – Terror*, from Big Coloring Books Inc. out of St. Louis, includes his face on a sheet of detachable trading cards, along with Timothy McVeigh, Jared Lee Loughner, Ted Kaczynski, Maj. Nidal Hasan and Bill Ayers. A commentator on Fox News urged President Obama to order his assassination. Vice President Joe Biden called him a "high-tech terrorist" and suggested that the Justice Department might be angling for a prosecution; that was two years ago. Indications of a secret grand jury investigation and imminent indictment have helped ratchet up the rhetoric and tension in and around the Ecuadorian embassy in London, where Assange has received political asylum.

It has been common for the media to compartmentalize: on the one hand, there are complaints of sexual misconduct against Assange by two women in Sweden, which must be seen as a straightforward matter for law enforcement; on the other hand, there is his political activity, also his “attention-seeking,” “narcissism” and “arrogance,” which, come to think of it, sound a lot like traits in a rapist’s profile. Only rarely has anyone— notably Naomi Wolf and the team from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation’s Four Corners program— begun with the intrinsic political challenge posed by WikiLeaks and proceeded from there to scrutinize the Swedish prosecutorial machinery.

That machinery is tricky. Police were so quick to initiate the arrest process that one of the women who came to them— to see if Assange could be forced to take an STD test after she’d had unprotected sex with him— became distraught and refused to give further testimony. The Swedish prosecutor’s office issued an arrest warrant for rape and molestation on one day and withdrew it the next, saying there was no reason to suspect rape, and that the other claim wasn’t serious enough for a warrant. About a week later, the Swedish director of prosecution reopened the investigation, and a court later approved her request to detain Assange for rape, molestation and unlawful coercion. By then he was in London, having been told he was free to leave Sweden. Assange was working with the New York Times and the Guardian in advance of launching the Iraq War Logs when the Swedes issued an international arrest warrant. He was readying the release of a cache of diplomatic cables when Interpol got involved, issuing a “red notice” for his arrest. In London, his legal efforts to block extradition were rejected by the High Court— whose strained decision was praised by the New Statesman’s David Allen Green as the ultimate in reasoned justice— and by the UK Supreme Court.

If the Swedish claims against Assange had involved anything but sex, it’s unlikely that liberals, and even some self-described radicals, would be tiptoeing around this part of the story, either by asking “So I guess he’s a bad guy?” or by arguing “Of course he needs to answer for his crimes.” **If it were anything but sex, we would insist on the presumption of innocence.** We have instead gotten comfortable with presuming guilt and trusting in the dignified processes of law to guarantee fairness.

“Believe the victim” entered the lexicon decades ago for historically understandable reasons. Women had been denied their own due process, in a sense— their right to make a complaint and expect justice, not vilification or worse. They are still being denied and derided, as the idiot spewings of Republican Senate candidate Todd Akin illustrate. The mutation of basic rights into an imperative for belief, and of full citizens into victims, has not made women any safer, but its cultural manipulation— particularly in high-profile cases— has struck at the foundations of civil liberty in a way that may not have been anticipated.

So here is the spectacle of Assange, as yet unindicted, bearing the dual brand of Sex Offender and Terrorist, the subhuman beings of the twenty-first century. **The fusing of abuse and terror in his case thus implies two victims who must be believed, the women and the state. But the women’s claims are murky, and the state is not credible.**

It should be possible to imagine a resolution outside the criminal justice system for problems that arise in the course of consensual sexual coupling: dissatisfaction over the

use (or ill use) of condoms, constraints that keep people from expressing their wishes or intuiting those of another, selfishness, insensitivity, confusions as “yes” slides into “no” and back to “yes,” perhaps wordlessly—all issues that seem to apply in the Assange case but exist beyond it. That will require a braver sexual politics (and at least another column), and it does not demean experience to recognize that the language of punishment is a poor substitute for the lost language of love.

About the state, though, there must be no illusions. A nation that goes to war on fraud, that insists “We don’t torture” when evidence to the contrary abounds, that kidnaps foreign nationals and puts them on planes to be delivered to dungeons, that spies on its people, asserts its right to lock them up indefinitely and lets documented CIA torturers off the hook of accountability because they were only following orders: that nation will plot, and it will double-cross, and it will kill. Sweden participated in the US program of extraordinary rendition. The United Kingdom has threatened to storm Ecuador’s embassy. The United States now says it does not recognize the historic right of persons to seek diplomatic asylum. Assange’s lawyers have said that he will go to Sweden if he gets an absolutely firm guarantee from the Obama administration that it will not arrest him. Such a guarantee is impossible in an empire of lies.

[www.thenation.com/article/169632/julian-assange-justice-foreclosed](http://www.thenation.com/article/169632/julian-assange-justice-foreclosed)

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PRESS RELEASE  
Republic of Ecuador  
August 29, 2012

### **Intellectuals and world personalities make public their support to the sovereign decision of asylum to Julian Assange**

At least 270 intellectuals, musicians, artists, and activists from 32 countries signed an open letter of support to the sovereign decision of Ecuador of granting diplomatic asylum to the Australian citizen Julian Assange and the inviolability of the diplomatic premises. Among the signatories of the letter, subscribed in the world support registered by the country, outstanding personalities like Eduardo Galeano, Pablo Gonzáles Casanova, Nils Castro, Armand Mattelart, Ignacio Ramonet, Frei Betto, among others.

To the above mentioned joined the support of organizations of the civil society and regional and hemispheric integration organisms to the decision of Ecuador of granting diplomatic asylum to Julian Assange and to reject the threat of the United Kingdom of intervening in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London to arrest him.

We attached the text of the open letter:

Freedom of information has had one of its biggest defenders in Julian Assange, today persecuted for showing the world the real and deep bottoms of the international relations. Unveiling the true face of the power games has lead Assange to the imputation of absurd charges, at the same time unleashing the dynamic of a surprising violation of the international law and the international codes of behavior with the threat of Great Britain of intervening on Ecuadorian territory (Embassy, official cars, etc) to keep Assange’s right to asylum from consummating.

For the sovereignty of Ecuador and the right to asylum of Julian Assange sign:

Germany:

Rainer Schlittgen, Ricarda Schlittgen.

Argentina:

Atilio Boron, Mabel Thwaites Rey, Claudio Katz, Stella Calloni, Susana Murillo, José Luis Tagliaferro, Patricio Echegaray, Marcelo F. Rodriguez, Manuel Bertoldi, Inés Izaguirre, Emilio Taddei, Carlos Ernesto Motto, Juan Manuel Karg, Enrique Elorza, Nestor Kohan, Jorge Boccanera, Beatriz Rajland, Mirta Clara.

Australia:

Federico Fuentes, Robert Austin Henry.

Belgium:

François Houtart, Eric Toussaint.

Bolivia:

Alejandro Dausá, Hugo Moldiz, Ma. Bolivia Rothe, Victor Vacaflores, Anibal Garzón, Sonia Brito, Luis Oporto, Oscar Silva, Fernando Rodríguez.

Brazil:

Thiago de Mello, Joao Pedro Stédile, Frei Betto, Fernando Moraes, Virginia Fontes, Gabriel E. Vitullo, Rita Laura Segato, Carlos Walter Porfio-Gonçalves, Chico Diaz, Maurício Vieira Martins, Elder Andrade de Paula, Demian Bezerra de Melo, Ildo Luís Sauer, Adelaide Gonçalves, João Márcio Mendes Pereira, Horacio Martins de Carvalho, Plinio de Arruda Sampaio Jr., Jose Vicente Tavares, Silvia Beatriz Adoue, Roberto Leher, Carlos Frederico María Luisa Mendonça, Marés de Souza Filho, Edélcio Vigna, Ana Laura dos Reis Corrêa, Roberto Malvezzi, Carla Luciana Silva, Gilberto Calil, Rui Portanova, Ayrton Centeno, Cebrapaz.

Canada:

Michael Lebowitz, Pierre Mouterde, John M. Kirk.

Chile:

Marta Harnecker, Eduardo Henríquez.

Colombia:

Diego Otero Prada, Fernando Arellano Ortiz, Hernando Calvo Ospina, Humberto Betancourt Rodríguez.

Costa Rica:

Wim Dierckxsens.

Cuba:

Silvio Rodríguez, Roberto Fernández Retamar, Fernando Martínez Heredia, René González Schwerert, Aurelio Alonso, Fabio Grobart, Eloísa Le Riverend, Emilio Comas Paret, Natalia Revueltas, Juan Valdés Paz, Julio César Guanche, Francisco López Segrera, Carlos Tablada, Manuel E. Yepe, Ibrahim Hidalgo Paz, Niurka Pérez Rojas, Ileana Sorolla Fernández, Lino Borroto López, Ricardo Quizá Callejas, Armando

Chaguaceda, Fausto Martínez García, Natalia Bolívar Aróstegui, Norma Balcazar Silva, Néstor García Iturbe, Isbel Díaz Torres, Jimmy Roque Martínez, Haroldo Dilla Alfonso, Marlene Azor Hernández, Noemí Crosas, Rosa Báez, Nelson Aboy Domingo, Reynaldo García Blanco, Mireya Suardíaz, Elisa Masiques, Manuel David Orrio del Rosario.

Ecuador:

Magdalena León, Alejandro Moreano, Raúl Pérez Torres, Irene León, Jorge Orbe, Sally Burch, Osvaldo León, Alexis Ponce, Mauro Cerbino.

El Salvador:

Roque Dalton Foundation, Juan José Dalton, Carlos Molina.

Spain:

Juan Carlos Monedero, Ximena de la Barra, Salvador López Arnal, Lois Pérez Leira, Carlos Fernández Liria, Antoni Puchalt Cea, Ángel Vale González, Montserrat, Ponsa Tarrés.

United States:

Immanuel Wallerstein, James Early, Saul Landau, Al Campbell, Agustín Lao-Montes, Arturo Escobar, Padre Roy Bourgeois, Lisa Sullivan, Father Luis Barrios, David Laibman, Eloise Linger, John Catalinotto, Javad Butah, Humberto R. Brown, Bill Ryan, Al Campbell, Gregory Wilpert, Viviana Ramirez.

France:

Armand Mattelart, Ignacio Ramonet, Samir Amin, Bernard Cassen, Jean Ortiz, Paul-Emile Dupret, Marielle Nicolas, Dominique Gautier, Annie-Lacroix Riz, Salim Lamrani, Virgilio Ponce.

Great Britain:

David Slater

Greece:

Costas Isychos,

Guatemala:

Simona Yagenova, Héctor Nuila Ericastilla, Alba Estela Maldonado, Mayra Godoy, Silvia Beatriz Adoue

Italy:

Francesco Vespoli, Marco Consolo, Marina Minicuci

Mexico:

Pablo González Casanova, Miguel Concha, John Saxe Fernández, Enrique Semo, Ana Esther Ceceña, Enrique Leff, Carlos Fazio, John Holloway, Gilberto López y Rivas, Frida Modak, José Steinsleger, Beatriz Stoliczka, Ricardo Melgar Bao, Gudrun Lenkersdorf, Ana María Aragonés, Humanity Defense Network, Héctor Díaz Polanco, Diana Guillén, Angel Guerra, Hugo Aboites, Jaime Estay, Jerónimo Rajchenberg, Nayar López Castellanos, Julio Muñoz Rubio, Marcos López, Maricarmen Montes, Cristina Steffen, Efraín León, Ana María Rivadeo, Daniel Inclán, Aldo Rabiela, Miguel Socolovsky, Margarita Favela, Damián Camacho, Claudia Sandoval, Walter Martínez, Josefina Morales, Mónica Millán, Enrique Cortés, Carlos Prigollini, Camilo Pérez



Bustillo, Leonor Aída Concha, Rebeca Peralta Mariñelarena, Teresina Gutiérrez-Haces, Arantxa Tirado, Rosa Barranco, Elizabeth Alejandre, Angeles González, Paz Carmona, Isabel Sanginés Franco, Ma. de Lourdes del Villar, Víctor García Zapata, Carlos Beas, Bertha Vallejo, Women for dialogue, Alfonso Anaya, Carmen Mendoza, Andrea Fernández, Leticia Gutiérrez, Marco Velázquez, Gabriela Hernández, Mirabel Mejía Rodríguez, Eréndira Mejía Rodríguez.

País Vasco:  
Katu Arkonada.

Panama:  
Nils Castro, Marco A. Gandásegui, Jorge Ventocilla.

Paraguay:  
Marielle Palau, Martín Almada, Gonzalo Deiró.

Peru:  
Javier Diez Canseco, Oscar Ugarteche, Linda Lema Tucker.

Portugal:  
Miguel Urbano.

Russia:  
Dmitri Prieto Samsónov.

Sweden:  
Eva Björklund

Switzerland:  
Raymond Muller.

Tunisia:  
Rashid Sherif.

Uruguay:  
Eduardo Galeano, Daniel Viglietti, Raúl Zibechi, Antonio Elías, Gonzalo Perera, Anahit Aharonian, Enrique Ortega Salinas.

Venezuela:  
Luis Britto García, Fernando Báez, Carmen Bohórquez, Paulino Núñez, Tamanaco de la Torre, Dayaaleth Alfonzo, Rafael Uzcategui, Hindu Anderi, Itinerant Forum of Popular Participation, Andrés Bensart, Karen Silva-Aristeguieta.

PRESS RELEASE No. 983

<http://www.mmrree.gob.ec/eng/2012/bol0983.asp>

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## Ecuadoriansk journalist får asyl i USA

*Journalisten*  
31 augusti, 2012

USA ger den ecuadorianske kolumnisten Emilio Palacio politisk asyl. Palacio flydde Ecuador förra året efter att ha dömts till mångmiljonböter och fängelse för att ha förtalat presidenten Rafael Correa.

Palacio ställdes inför rätta för en kolumn han skrev förra året i dagstidningen El Universo där han kallar Correa "diktatorn" och kritiserar Correas agerande i ett blodigt polisuppror, skriver The Guardian.

Efter att han och tidningens ägare dömts till fängelse och 40 miljoner dollar i böter flydde Palacio till USA, där han nu får uppehållstillstånd.

• *Hanna Lundquist*

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## The Anti-Empire Report

*William Blum*  
September 1st, 2012

"We pledge allegiance to the republic for which America stands  
and not to its empire for which it is now suffering." <sup>1</sup>

Louis XVI needed a revolution, Napoleon needed two historic military defeats, the Spanish Empire in the New World needed multiple revolutions, the Russian Czar needed a communist revolution, the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires needed World War I, the Third Reich needed World War II, the Land of the Rising Sun needed two atomic bombs, the Portuguese Empire in Africa needed a military coup at home. What will the American Empire need?

Perhaps losing the long-held admiration and support of one group of people after another, one country after another, as the empire's wars, bombings, occupations, torture, and lies eat away at the facade of a beloved and legendary "America"; an empire unlike any other in history, that has intervened seriously and grievously, in war and in peace, in most countries on the planet, as it preached to the world that the American Way of Life was a shining example for all humanity and that America above all was needed to lead the world.

The Wikileaks documents and videos have provided one humiliation after another... lies exposed, political manipulations revealed, gross hypocrisies, murders in cold blood... followed by the torture of Bradley Manning and the persecution of Julian Assange. Washington calls the revelations "threats to national security", but the world can well see it's simply plain old embarrassment. **Manning's defense attorneys have asked the military court on several occasions to specify the exact harm done to national security. The court has never given an answer.** If hell hath no fury like a woman scorned, consider an empire embarrassed.

And we now have the international soap opera, L'Affaire Assange, starring Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States, Ecuador, and Julian Assange. The United States' neo-colonies of Sweden (an active warring member of NATO in all but name) and the United Kingdom (with its "special relationship" to the United States) know what is expected of them to earn a pat on the head from their Washington uncle. We can infer that Sweden has no legitimate reason to demand the extradition of Julian Assange from London from the fact that it has repeatedly refused offers to question Assange in the UK and repeatedly refused to explain why it has refused to do so.

The Brits, under "immense pressure from the Obama administration", as reported to former British ambassador Craig Murray by the UK Foreign Office,<sup>2</sup> threatened, in a letter to the Ecuadoran government, to raid the Ecuadoran embassy in London to snatch Assange — "[You] should be aware that there is a legal basis in the United Kingdom, the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act of 1987, which would allow us to take action to arrest Mr. Assange in the existing facilities of the embassy". Over the August 18 weekend the London police actually made their way into the building's internal fire escape, coming within a few feet of Assange's room, as he could hear. The law cited by the Brits is, of course, their own law, one not necessarily with any international standing.

The UK has now formally withdrawn its threat against the embassy, probably the result of much international indignation toward Her Majesty's Government. The worldwide asylum system would fall apart if the nation granting the asylum were punished for it. In this violent world of terrorists, imperialists, and other dreadfuls it's comforting to know that an old fashioned value like political asylum can still be honored.

A look back at some US and UK behavior in regard to embassies and political asylum is both interesting and revealing:

In 1954, when the United States overthrew the democratically-elected social democrat Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala and replaced him with a military government headed by Col. Carlos Castillo Armas, many Guatemalans took refuge in foreign embassies. US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles insisted that the new Guatemalan government raid those embassies and arrest those individuals, whom he referred to as "communists". But Castillo Armas refused to accede to Dulles' wishes on this issue. Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, in their comprehensive history of the coup,<sup>3</sup> state:

"In the end, Castillo Armas disregarded Dulles' suggestions. He himself was a product of the widespread belief in Latin America that embassy asylum and safe-conduct passes were a fair resolution to political conflicts. **Virtually every politically active Guatemalan, including Castillo Armas, had sought political asylum in an embassy at one time or another and had obtained safe conduct from the government.** Dulles' suggestion for a 'modification' of the asylum doctrine was not even popular within the American Embassy."

**It should be noted that one of those who sought asylum in the Argentine Embassy in Guatemala was a 25-year-old Argentine doctor named Ernesto "Che" Guevara.**

Baltasar Garzon, the Spanish judge who is one of Assange's lawyers, came to international attention in 1998 when he indicted former Chilean dictator Augusto

Pinochet while he was in England. But the British declined to send Pinochet to Spain to face the indictment, in effect giving him political asylum, and allowed this proverbial mass murderer and torturer to walk free and eventually return to Chile. Julian Assange, not charged or found guilty of anything, is a *de facto* prisoner of the UK; while the New York Times and the BBC and the numerous other media giants, who did just what Assange did by publishing Wikileaks articles and broadcasting Wikileaks videos, walk free. [*They are not suspected of "rape" in Sweden.* --A.B.]

This past April, Chinese dissident Chen Guangcheng escaped house arrest in China and took refuge at the American Embassy in Beijing, sparking diplomatic tension between the two countries. But the "authoritarian" Chinese government did not threaten to enter the American Embassy to arrest Chen and soon allowed him to accept an American offer of safe passage to US soil. How will Julian Assange ever obtain safe passage to Ecuador?

In August 1989, while the Cold War still prevailed many East Germans crossed into fellow-Soviet-bloc state Czechoslovakia and were granted political asylum in the West German embassy. How would the United States — which has not said a word against the British threat to invade the Ecuadoran embassy — have reacted if the East Germans or the Czechs had raided the West German embassy or blocked the East Germans from leaving it? As matters turned out, **West Germany took the refugee-seekers to West Germany by train without being impeded by the Soviet bloc.** A few months later, the weaker "Evil Empire" collapsed, leaving the entire playing field, known as the world, to the stronger "Evil Empire", which has been on belligerence autopilot ever since.

In 1986, after the French government refused the use of its air space to US warplanes headed for a bombing raid on Libya, the planes were forced to take another, longer route. When they reached Libya they bombed so close to the French embassy that the building was damaged and all communication links were disabled<sup>4</sup>

In 1999, NATO (aka the USA), purposely (sic) bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia.<sup>5</sup>

After Assange took refuge in the Ecuadoran embassy and was granted asylum by the South American country, the US State Department declared: "The United States is not a party to the 1954 OAS [Organization of American States] Convention on Diplomatic Asylum and does not recognize the concept of diplomatic asylum as a matter of international law."<sup>6</sup>

Ecuador called for a meeting at the OAS of the foreign ministers of member countries to discuss the whole situation. The United States opposed the request. For Washington the issue was simple: The UK obeys international law and extradites Assange to Sweden. (And then, chuckle-chuckle, Sweden sends the bastard to us.) End of discussion. Washington did not want the issue blown up and prolonged any further. But of the 26 nations voting at the OAS only three voted against the meeting: The US, Canada, and Trinidad & Tobago; perhaps another example of what was mentioned above about a dying empire losing the long-held admiration and support of one country after another.

The price Ecuador may pay for its courage ... Washington Post editorial, June 20, 2012: "There is one potential check on [Ecuadoran president Rafael] 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 several occasions President Obama, when pressed to investigate Bush and Cheney for war crimes, has declared: "I prefer to look forward rather than backwards". Picture a defendant before a judge asking to be found innocent on such grounds. It simply makes laws, law enforcement, crime, justice, and facts irrelevant. Picture Julian Assange before a military court in Virginia using this argument. Picture the reaction to this by Barack Obama, who has become the leading persecutor of whistleblowers in American history.

Since L'Affaire Assange captured world headlines the United States, as well as the United Kingdom, have on several occasions made statements about the deep-seated international obligation of nations to honor extradition requests from other nations. **The United States, however, has a history of ignoring such requests**, whether made formally or informally, for persons living in the US who are ideological allies. Here's a partial sample from recent years:

Former Venezuelan president Carlos Andres Perez, whom the Venezuelan government demanded be turned over to stand trial for his role in suppressing riots in 1989. He died in 2010 in Miami. (Associated Press, December 27, 2010)

Former Bolivian President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada fled to the United States in 2003 to avoid a trial for the death of about 60 people in La Paz during a military crackdown on demonstrators. In 2008, Bolivia formally served the US government with a request to extradite him back to Bolivia, which was not acceded to. (Associated Press, February 13, 2006; also see his Wikipedia entry)

In 2010, a US federal judge denied Argentina's extradition request for former military officer Roberto Bravo, who was facing 16 murder charges stemming from a 1972 massacre of leftist guerrillas in his homeland. (Associated Press, November 2, 2010)

Luis Posada, a Cuban-born citizen of Venezuela, masterminded the bombing of a Cuban airline in 1976, killing 73 civilians. Inasmuch as part of the plotting took place in Venezuela, that government formally asked the United States for his extradition in 2005. But instead of extraditing him, the United States prosecuted him for minor immigration infractions that came to naught. Posada continues to live as a free man in the United States.

In 2007 German prosecutors issued arrest warrants for 13 suspected CIA operatives who had abducted German citizen Khaled el-Masri in 2003 and flown him to Afghanistan for interrogation (read torture). **The CIA then realized they had kidnapped the wrong man and dumped el-Masri on the side of an Albanian road.** Subsequently, the German Justice Minister announced that she would no longer request extradition, citing US refusal to arrest or hand over the agents. (The Guardian (London), January 7, 2011)

In November 2009 an Italian judge convicted a CIA Station Chief and 22 other Americans, all but one being CIA operatives, for kidnapping a Muslim cleric, Abu Omar, from the streets of Milan in 2003 and flying him to Egypt for the usual interrogation. All those convicted had left Italy by the time of the judge's ruling and were thus tried in absentia. In Italy they are considered fugitives. Although there were verdicts, arrest warrants and extradition requests in the case, the Italian government refused to formally forward the requests to their close allies, the Americans; which, in any event, would of course have been futile. (Der Spiegel [Germany] online, December 17, 2010, based on a Wikileaks US cable)

### **The hidden, obvious, peculiar, fatal, omnipresent bias of American mainstream media concerning US foreign policy**

There are more than 1,400 daily newspapers in the United States. Can you name a single paper, or a single TV network, that was unequivocally opposed to the American wars carried out against Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, Panama, Grenada, and Vietnam? Or even opposed to any two of these wars? How about one? (I've been asking this question for years and so far I've gotten only one answer — Someone told me that the Seattle Post-Intelligencer had unequivocally opposed the invasion of Iraq. Can anyone verify that or name another case?)

**In 1968, six years into the Vietnam war, the Boston Globe surveyed the editorial positions of 39 leading US papers concerning the war and found that "none advocated a pull-out".<sup>7</sup>**

Now, can you name an American daily newspaper or TV network that more or less gives any support to any US government ODE (Officially Designated Enemy)? Like Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, Fidel or Raul Castro of Cuba, Bashar al-Assad of Syria, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran, Rafael Correa of Ecuador (even before the current Assange matter), or Evo Morales of Bolivia? I mean that presents the ODE's point of view in a reasonably fair manner most of the time? Or any ODE of the recent past like Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, Moammar Gaddafi of Libya, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, or Jean-Bertrand Aristide of Haiti?

Who in the mainstream media supports Hamas of Gaza? Or Hezbollah of Lebanon?

Who in the mainstream media is outspokenly critical of Israel's domestic or foreign policies? And keeps his/her job?

Who in the mainstream media treats Julian Assange or Bradley Manning as the heroes they are?

**And this same mainstream media tell us that Cuba, Venezuela, Ecuador, et al. do not have a real opposition media.**

The ideology of the American mainstream media is the belief that they don't have any ideology; they are instead what they call "objective".

It's been said that the political spectrum concerning US foreign policy in the American mainstream media "runs the gamut from A to B."

Long before the Soviet Union broke up, a group of Russian writers touring the United States were astonished to find, after reading the newspapers and watching television, that almost all the opinions on all the vital issues were the same. "In our country," said one of them, "to get that result we have a dictatorship. We imprison people. We tear out their fingernails. Here you have none of that. How do you do it? What's the secret?"<sup>8</sup>

On October 8, 2001, the second day of the US bombing of Afghanistan, the transmitters for the Taliban government's Radio Shari were bombed and shortly after this the US bombed some 20 regional radio sites. US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld defended the targeting of these facilities, saying: "Naturally, they cannot be considered to be free media outlets. They are mouthpieces of the Taliban and those harboring terrorists."<sup>9</sup>

## Notes

1. Sam Smith, editor of the Progressive Review
2. Craig Murray, "America's Vassal Acts Decisively and Illegally: Former UK Ambassador", Information Clearing House, August 16, 2012
3. Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story of the American Coup in Guatemala (1982), pp.222-3
4. Associated Press, "France Confirms It Denied U.S. Jets Air Space, Says Embassy Damaged", April 15, 1986
5. William Blum, Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower, pp.308-9
6. Josh Rogin, "State Department: The U.S. does not recognize the concept of 'diplomatic asylum'", Foreign Policy, August 17, 2012
7. Boston Globe, February 18, 1968, p.2-A
- 8.. John Pilger, New Statesman (London), February 19, 2001
9. Index on Censorship (London), October 18, 2001

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## Eight things we would not know without WikiLeaks:

<http://img809.imageshack.us/img809/380/wikileaksinfographic.png>

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DN: 2012-09-06

## Putin kallar Assangefall "politiskt"

Rysslands president Vladimir Putin tycker att fallet med Julian Assanges eventuella utlämning till Sverige verkar "politiskt".

– De beslutade att utlämna honom. Varför då? Självklart är det dubbelmoral, sade han i en intervju med tv-kanalen RT på torsdagen.

Bristen på garantier för att Assange inte senare skulle skickas vidare till USA "leder en självklart att tro att det är ett politiskt rättsfall", sade Putin. Rättssystemet i Ryssland har ofta anklagats för att vara politiskt påverkat och den informationen som läcktes av Wikileaks 2010 var inte helt välkommen läsning för landet.

Men Assange har sedan dess omfamnat av ryska statsmedier som en förkämpe för västkritisk journalistik. RT sände tidigare i år bland annat Assanges intervju med Ecuadors president Rafael Correa, som förra månaden beviljade honom asyl.

TT-AFP

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## Assange case: Sweden's shame in violating human rights

*Even in the past, Sweden had "collaborated with its Washington allies" to violate human rights and international law.*

Mark Weisbrot  
Al Jazeera  
6 Sept. 2012

It was like a scene from a Hollywood movie, where the kidnapper walks up from behind, with a gun protruding from his trench coat pocket. "Keep walking, and don't say anything," he warns.

Such was the U.K. government's threat three weeks ago to Ecuador, that British police could invade the Ecuadorian embassy if necessary to arrest WikiLeaks' founder, Julian Assange. But Ecuador's foreign minister didn't keep walking, and said something, to the great embarrassment of the U.K. Foreign Office. The Foreign Office tried to say it wasn't a threat — although it was now available to the world in writing — and then took it back.

But the unprecedented threat to violate the Vienna convention that protects diplomatic missions brought serious criticism from the Union of South American Nations, and then — despite being watered down by Washington — another rebuke from the Organization of American States.

The U.K.'s threat also made it clear that this case was not about questioning Julian Assange regarding a possible criminal case in Sweden. **Few could believe that the U.K. government would have resorted to such extreme and illegal measures if this were just a matter of extraditing a foreign citizen to a foreign country where he is not even charged with a crime.**

But what about Sweden's role in this sordid affair? Most obviously, Sweden has had the opportunity to interview Assange in the U.K., but has repeatedly refused to do so. The Swedish government also refused Ecuador's offer to interview Assange at its London embassy. **As in the past, no justification was offered.**

The Swedish government also refused to negotiate with Ecuador for an extradition



under which Assange would go to Sweden but not be subject to extradition to the U.S. This would be very easy for Sweden (or the U.K., for that matter) to arrange. Once again, the Swedish government offered no reason for its refusal to consider this obvious solution to the diplomatic impasse.

Contrary to much press commentary, there is no need for conspiracy theories here to draw the logical conclusion. If the Swedish government really wanted to pursue the investigation of sexual offense allegations against Assange, they could do so....

This also casts serious doubt on all the people who have opposed Assange's asylum on the grounds that they care about the two women who have accused Assange. (It is worth noting that neither of the two women accused Assange of rape, although that is one of the allegations that has been spread throughout the media and the world). Anyone who was really concerned about pursuing this case would aim their fire at the Swedish prosecutor, and at least ask her why she has abandoned the investigation.

This includes the lawyer representing the plaintiffs, Claes Borgstrom, who was reportedly instrumental in getting the third prosecutor (Marianne Ny) to go after Assange. (The previous prosecutor assigned to the case had dropped it because the evidence is so weak). Borgstrom has been in the media defending the United States and its allies, rather than his clients, asserting that Assange "must know" that the case "has nothing to do with WikiLeaks".

**But Borgstrom must know that there is a wealth of evidence that the US is very much interested in punishing Assange, and it keeps growing:** on August 18, the Sydney Morning Herald reported that Australia's foreign service was aware that US authorities had been pursuing Assange for at least 18 months. And on August 24, Craig Murray, a former UK ambassador and 20-year career diplomat there, reported that his colleagues at the UK foreign office knew better than to make the unprecedented threat of invading Ecuador's embassy, but did so under pressure from Washington.

Like many European countries, including of course the UK, Sweden's foreign policy is closely allied with that of the US government. This is not the first time that Sweden has collaborated with its Washington allies to violate human rights and international law. In 2001, the Swedish government turned over two Egyptians to the CIA so that they could be sent to Egypt, where they were tortured.

Sweden's action brought condemnation from the UN and the government was forced to pay damages to the victims; both were later cleared of any wrongdoing. **Polls showed that Swedes considered this crime the worst political scandal in their country in 20 years.**

Sweden is a highly developed social democracy that has many guarantees of civil rights and liberties to its citizens. The people of Sweden should not allow their government to continue to disgrace itself in another international governmental crime -- this one a pernicious attack on freedom of expression -- simply because Washington wants them to do so.

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## **A Tale of Two Asylums: Assange, Palacio, and Media Hypocrisy**

*Keane Bhatt*

*North American Congress on Latin America*

*September 6, 2012*

Every so often, world affairs offer us paired examples—two nearly identical instances through which we can better understand the role of powerful institutions, like the media. So when Ecuador granted asylum to Australian journalist Julian Assange in mid-August, and then, two weeks later, the United States provided asylum to Ecuadorian journalist Emilio Palacio, the two cases laid bare the hypocrisy of the establishment press.

On August 16, the government of Ecuador offered WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange political asylum at its London embassy, after it appeared that fair treatment would be denied to him over his alleged sexual misconduct in Sweden—Sweden rejected offers to question Assange in London or at the Ecuadorian embassy, providing no explanation.

Even more troubling, Sweden refused to offer any assurance that it wouldn't extradite Assange to the United States if he voluntarily were to go to that country; the United Kingdom's Foreign Office, despite multiple inquiries, declined to say whether it would exercise its powers to deny a U.S. extradition request once Assange were in Sweden; and the United States gave no indication that it will not attempt to extradite Assange.

These facts did not bode well for Assange, considering that Vice President Joe Biden once likened him to a "high-tech terrorist" for his work in releasing classified U.S. documents, and that Sweden previously violated international law by working with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency to transfer two asylum seekers suspected of terrorism to Egypt, where they were later tortured.

The New York Times has not focused on such issues. Instead, like other media organizations on both sides of the Atlantic, the newspaper has taken the opportunity to highlight Ecuador's double standards. In an August 16 news article, the Times wrote, "It struck many as odd that Mr. Assange, who shot to fame as a fighter for media freedom, chose Ecuador as a potential refuge. [President Rafael] Correa has presided over a crackdown on journalists there." Indeed, the Times has often [13] seized upon the case of the Guayaquil-based El Universo newspaper, whose three directors and editorial page editor were sued by Correa, and at one point faced fines of \$40 million and three-year prison terms for criminal libel. (Correa had previously indicated his willingness to drop the suit if El Universo offered an unconditional apology; when the men's sentences were upheld, Correa pardoned them of all convictions.)

In Britain, The Economist considered Correa "a glasshouse dweller throw[ing] stones" for his "lack of regard for freedom of speech at home." His decision to grant Assange asylum was either "diplomatic or lunatic"; after all, Sweden is "a country whose respect for human rights is beyond serious reproach," said the magazine, conveniently

disregarding Sweden's violation of the United Nations' Convention Against Torture. Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State P.J. Crowley, writing for the BBC, admitted that "it is true that the U.S. Department of Justice continues an investigation that presumably includes Mr. Assange," but criticized Assange for ignoring the fact that Ecuador has also practiced "media intimidation."

In the United States, The Los Angeles Times echoed such arguments, observing that "critics noted the irony of Assange appealing for help to a man accused of cracking down on journalists." Reuters quoted **Freedom House, an organization largely funded by the U.S. government**, which condemned Assange for "aligning himself with one of the greatest adversaries of freedom of the press in South America." Renee Montagne, the host of National Public Radio's "Morning Edition," also underscored this apparent contradiction: "It seems rather a great irony that it's Ecuador granting Julian Assange asylum, when Ecuador does not have a really stellar reputation for the way it treats journalism and freedom of speech." And The Miami Herald ran an August 27 op-ed that heaped scorn on the Correa government: "Ecuador judging the performance of anybody else's legal system is a bit like the Octomom offering classes on abstinence."

**So on August 30, when the United States granted asylum to El Universo's editorial page editor Emilio Palacio, who fled to Miami last year after being sued by Correa, the news media's reactions were staggering in their hypocrisy. In covering the story, neither Reuters nor the BBC noted the irony in Palacio's choice to seek asylum within a country whose record on press freedom includes the six-year, due-process-free imprisonment of Al Jazeera cameraman Sami Al-Hajj at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. No media outlet quoted critics of the U.S. government over its relentless prosecution of whistleblowers like the National Security Agency's Thomas Drake, who revealed the waste of hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to The Baltimore Sun. No news agency found it "ironic" or even "odd" that the U.S. government granted Palacio asylum, even though in 2011, it pressured Yemeni dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh to continue to imprison journalist Abdulelah Haider Shaye, who reported on the U.S. cluster bombing of dozens of civilians in al-Majalah, Yemen. No newspaper accused Palacio of hypocrisy in accepting asylum in the United States, where police have repeatedly assaulted and jailed journalists covering Occupy protests.**

Even more noteworthy, perhaps, are the media's contrasting portrayals of Assange and Palacio's journalistic merits. Assange has been responsible for providing the public with evidence that U.S. helicopter pilots gunned down over a dozen Iraqi civilians, including two Reuters journalists; that Secretary of State Clinton ordered U.S. diplomats to collect private information and biometric data on key UN officials; that Yemen deceitfully took responsibility for missile attacks that the United States actually carried out; and that the Obama administration pressured Spain to terminate its torture probe of Bush officials. In response to these and many other WikiLeaks revelations of wrongdoing and dishonesty at the highest levels of government, the U.S. media either yawned or gushed.

Palacio, on the other hand, is the author of an example of abject journalistic malfeasance. His 2011 El Universo op-ed falsely accused "the Dictator," President Correa, of committing "crimes against humanity" by purportedly ordering troops to fire at a "hospital full of civilians and innocent people" during a coup attempt against him in 2010. **Palacio didn't provide a shred of evidence for his claims. But the U.S.**

**media have scrubbed the baselessness of Palacio's charges from their coverage of his asylum approval**— Reuters said that Palacio simply “criticized [Correa's] actions,” and NPR stations around the country aired a flattering interview with Palacio's lawyer, Sandra Grossman, who said there was “much debate and disagreement in Ecuador about what really happened that day, so my client addressed this event in his article and criticized the president for his handling of the revolt.” Regarding U.S. approval of Palacio's asylum request, Grossman added, “I see President Correa's actions as very contradictory, considering how he treats journalists in his own country. And maybe the United States is using this opportunity to make that point as well.” A point was made, although not the one Palacio's attorney had in mind.

Despite running libelous commentary, El Universo has become the darling around which the U.S. media have rallied. A reflection of the dishonorable conventions of the mainstream press can be witnessed in this year's Maria Moors Cabot Prizes, the oldest awards in international journalism, which are administered by the preeminent Columbia School of Journalism. **Next month, Columbia University President Lee Bollinger will present the Cabot certificate of citation to El Universo, honoring the paper for having “courageously defended” the right “to speak out for a democratic society.”** Apparently, allowing Palacio's blatant falsehoods to be printed on its pages does not preclude El Universo from receiving a prestigious journalism award.

Incidentally, the gold medalists of the 74th annual Cabot Prize for outstanding reporting on Latin America and the Caribbean include Juan Forero. Forero's \$5,000 award was announced just days after The Washington Post published his piece on threats to Latin American democracy, which scrupulously excluded any mention of the recent overthrows of left-leaning, democratically elected leaders by reactionary elites in Paraguay and Honduras. But Forero's omissions did not prevent the Cabot Prizes' official press release from describing him as “an equal opportunity reporter” whose work uncovers “abuses by the powerful across all ideological scales.”

As the cases of Assange, Palacio and the award-winning El Universo demonstrate, the establishment press doesn't simply observe hypocrisy and irony—it embodies them.

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## **Naivt att betrakta Assanges rädsla som paranoia**

*Folkrättspecialist: Om USA skulle begära Julian Assange utlämnad från Sverige är det faktum att Assange löper reell risk att åtalas och straffas, låt vara med fängelse och inte med döden.*

*Newsmill*  
2012-09-08

Den senaste tidens rapportering i svensk media har varit full av mer eller mindre öppet raljerande över Julian Assanges agerande och de skäl han hänvisar till. Än mer skeptiska har kommentarerna till Ecuadors beslut att bevilja Assange politisk asyl varit. Ledarsidor, reportrar, politiker och experter har avlöst varandra med syrliga kommentarer som har utmålat Assange som en självupptagen paranoiker som med juridiskt trixande och genom sin ikonstatus försöker undkomma en legitim svensk rättsprocess. Samtidigt framställs Ecuadors beslut att bereda Assange skydd som illegitimt och ogrundat, politiskt demagogiskt eller i bästa fall som ett löjligt och meningslöst "slag i luften". Men gemensamt för de allra flesta inlägg i diskussionen är att man helt förefaller missa att uppmärksamma flera avgörande omständigheter.

Den brittiska regeringen har i dagarna beskrivit det som osannolikt att Assange skulle komma att utlämnas från Sverige till USA, ett förfarande som även skulle kräva brittiskt medgivande. Samtidigt är det ett faktum att federala amerikanska myndigheter just nu utreder misstankar om att Assange gjort sig skyldig till mycket allvarlig brottslighet i USA, i samband med att Wikileaks offentliggjort hemligstämplad information. Det är mot denna bakgrund inte alls särskilt osannolikt att Assange kan komma att begäras utlämnad av amerikanska myndigheter och att han i vid en utlämning i förlängningen skulle kunna komma att dömas till ett hårt straff i USA. Det politiska stämningsläget i USA i relation till Wikileaks avslöjanden kan inte heller antas påverka en process mot Assange till hans fördel.

Naturligtvis är det otänkbart att Sverige, eller något annat europeiskt land för den delen, skulle lämna ut någon till USA ifall han där skulle riskera att dömas till döden eller utsättas för sådan behandling som omfattas av tortyrbestämmelsen i Europakonventionen. Men Sverige och Storbritannien skulle i ett sådant läge kunna komma att begära diplomatiska garantier från USAs regering om att han kommer att behandlas på ett sätt som är förenligt med svensk lag och Sveriges internationella förpliktelser. Man kan också mycket väl tänka sig att USA skulle lämna sådana garantier och att Sverige i ett sådant läge, efter att Storbritannien gett klartecken, skulle kunna överlämna Assange till den amerikanska rättvisan. Detta förutsatt att Sverige, liksom Storbritannien, delar den amerikanska bedömningen att Assange gjort sig skyldig till straffbar gärning.

De avgörande frågorna är således inte de som stötts och blötts i pressen: huruvida Assange verkligen behöver vara rädd för att dömas till döden efter en eventuell utlämning till USA, eller huruvida Assange löper större risk att överlämnas till USA från Sverige än från Storbritannien. Eftersom beslutet om häktning av Assange kommer att verkställas så fort han sätter sin fot i Sverige är naturligtvis risken att bli utlämnad *de facto* oerhört mycket större än om han inte vore frihetsberövad och då till exempel skulle kunna ta sin tillflykt till ett vänligt sinnat land eller till sitt hemland Australien, varifrån han inte skulle riskera att utlämnas.

Mycket viktigare för att förstå såväl Julian Assanges som Ecuadors agerande är frågan om hur de gärningar som Assange/Wikileaks har företagit sig i ett sådant läge skall bedömas. Är publicerandet av de hemliga amerikanska dokumenten att betrakta som en kriminell handling som bör bestraffas i USA, liksom den på motsvarande sätt skulle gjorts i Sverige, eller ägnar sig Julian Assange åt legitim opinionsbildande verksamhet vars syfte är journalistiskt och bör omfattas av press- och yttrandefrihet?

Enligt min uppfattning är frågan glasklar och det är tråkigt att vi alls behöver ställa

den. Wikileaks har genom publicering av hemlig amerikansk information på ett avgörande sätt spridit kunskap om bland annat grova folkrättsbrott begångna av den amerikanska militären i Irak. Förmodligen faller dokumentation av de flesta folkrättsbrott begångna i världen under någon stats hemligstämpel, men tanken att låta detta ligga till grund för att behandla dess avslöjare som kriminella är naturligtvis absurd. Ingen vettig människa skulle ens övervägt den tanken ifall avslöjandet gällt krigsbrott begångna i Demokratiska republiken Kongo, Sudan eller Colombia. Det faktum att Wikileaks även läckt en del för allmänheten kanske mindre intressant information förändrar knappast bedömningen att Wikileaks publiceringar omfattas av yttrandefrihet.

I Ecuador befarar man uppenbarligen att USA inte delar denna uppfattning, och att Sverige kan komma att inte heller göra det. Tyvärr skulle det kunna visa sig att oron är befogad, särskilt om vi tar det politiska tryck en amerikansk begäran om utlämning skulle utgöra på inblandade svenska rättsinstanser och den svenska regeringen i beaktande. Under sådana omständigheter är det faktum att Assange löper reell risk att åtalas och straffas, låt vara med fängelse, för sin journalistiska verksamhet, i sig tillräcklig grund för att bevilja honom skydd i enlighet med 1951 års flyktingkonvention och de flesta länders nationella asyllagstiftning. Mot denna bakgrund framstår Assanges rädsla för att sitta frihetsberövad i Sverige, alltmedan den amerikanska brottsutredningen fortskrider och en utlämningsbegäran förbereds, som allt annat än paranoid.

### **Om författaren**

*Jag är specialist inom folkrätt med många års erfarenhet av arbete (inkl rådgivning och föreläsning), bland annat med flyktingrätt och skydd av mänskliga rättigheter inom anti-terrorism, för internationella organisationer, NGOs och myndigheter, i bland annat Afrika, Latinamerika och Östeuropa.*

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### **Leo Kramár om Wikileaks**

#### **Assange löper inte större risk för utlämning i Sverige**

*Författare: Mårten Löfbergs antagande om att Assange skulle löpa större risk att utlämnas till USA från Sverige än från Storbritannien är oriktigt och hans tolkning av folkrätten extrem och verklighetsfrämmande.*

*News  
2012-09-13*

Det är möjligt, som Mårten Löfberg skriver i sin debattartikel, att Assange inte alls är paranoid utan fullt frisk. Det kan vara så att hans jurister har resonerat på samma sätt som Löfberg och att Assange agerar helt rationellt när han till varje pris vill slippa utlämningen till Sverige.

Mikael Löfberg menar alltså att Assange har rätt när han fruktar utlämningen. Han skriver "Assange löper större risk att överlämnas till USA från Sverige än från Storbritannien". Att den brittiska regeringen har en annan syn på saken stör inte

folkrättsexperten Löfberg, han resonerar på följande sätt: Om Assange kommer till Sverige sätts han omedelbart bakom lås och bom. Så länge han finns i Storbritannien är han inte frihetsberövad och kan därför fly, exempelvis till Australien. Risken att bli utlämnad till USA är därför "de facto oerhört mycket större" i Sverige.

Är det verkligen så att Assange kan, när helst han vill, fly från Storbritannien? Antingen är Löfberg felinformerad om rättsläget eller också brister hans logik. I avvaktan på utlämningen blev Assange häktad i Storbritannien men frisläppt mot borgen. Efter flykten till den ecuadorianska ambassaden har hans borgen förverkats och Assange kommer att anhållas i samma ögonblick han sätter sin fot utanför ambassadhuset. Så valet han har är att sitta bakom lås och bom i Storbritannien eller i Sverige eller sitta inlåst på den ecuadorianska ambassaden. Hans rörelsefrihet är lika begränsad i Storbritannien som den skulle bli i Sverige. Skillnaden i hans situation är snarare den att han i Sverige skulle få chansen att bli rentvådd från våldtäktsanklagelserna och kunna lämna landet som en fri man.

Men risken för utlämningen till USA då? Löfberg redogör i detalj för bestämmelserna om dödsstraff, något som knappast är aktuellt, men han glömmer att berätta att det finns fler regler som kringgärdar ett utlämningsbeslut. Det är inte bara så att Assanges brott måste vara straffbart även i Sverige och att han inte kan dömas till dödsstraff eller utsättas för tortyr. En begäran om utlämning prövas av svensk domstol som ställer beviskrav enligt svenska rättsregler. Det utländska häktningsbeslutet måste hålla för kriteriet sannolika skäl och här har HD vid tidigare prövning dessutom skärpt kravet till utom rimligt tvivel. Eventuell utländsk dom prövas på samma sätt och en utlämning kan avstyrkas om man anser domen uppenbart oriktig.

Assange kommer inte att utlämnas om han skulle riskera att ställas inför en extraordinär (militär) domstol eller anklagas för ett militärt eller politiskt brott och inte heller om han skulle löpa risken för att anklagas eller förföljas för sin politiska uppfattning, eller om utlämningen skulle strida mot humanitetens krav. Sverige kan också ställa villkor på rättvis juridisk process och skydd för Assanges mänskliga rättigheter. Då Storbritannien är involverat kommer de brittiska domstolarna att göra samma prövning. Och i sista hand är det så, att även om alla villkor för en utlämning uppfylls och Högsta domstolen tillstyrker den kan regeringen vägra.

Men vad händer om Assange anklagas i USA för ett brott mot sekretesslagen eller motsvarande, som är straffbart även i Sverige, som har ett straffvärde på minst ett år och där alla övriga kriterier för utlämning är uppfyllda?

För Mårten Löfberg är frågan "glasklar". Assange är en hjälte som avslöjat folkrättsbrott, tanken på att straffa honom är absurd, skriver han. Men här lämnar Löfberg juridikens trygga hamn och ger sig ut på moralfilosofins och politikens minerade vatten. Och där går han raskt på den ena minan efter den andra.

För det första har vi den lagstiftning vi har, både i Sverige i USA, och jag förmodar också i Ecuador. USA och Sverige har en vidsträckt press- och yttrandefrihet, Sverige och USA ligger i toppen på den listan till skillnad från Ecuador. Men ingen frihet är absolut och även i en demokrati måste yttrandefriheten begränsas, exempelvis av hänsyn till statens säkerhet. Om någon, som Assange, känner ett obetvingligt moraliskt tvång att bryta mot demokratiskt stiftade lagar tar han en medveten risk, något Assange säkert visste. En kantiansk privat moral befriar ingen från straffansvar.

Att tro att de svenska rättsvårdande myndigheterna eller den svenska regeringen skulle dela Löfbergs uppfattning om att Wikileaks skulle ha något slags obegränsad yttrandefrihet och att Assange är en hjälte berättigad till asyl som politisk flykting förefaller rätt osannolikt, eller snarare naivt. Sverige har ett bindande avtal med USA, USA är inte någon diktatur utan en rättsstat och för en utlämning krävs dubbel straffbarhet – den handling Assange anklagas för måste vara kriminell även i Sverige. Att vägra utlämningen i ett sådant fall och dessutom tillerkänna Assange rätt till asyl skulle inte bara innebära att Sverige bryter mot sina avtalsenliga förpliktelser utan också att man desavouerar sin egen lagstiftning.

Löfbergs antagande om att det politiska stämningssläget i USA skulle påverka processen är en ren spekulatio. Han skulle göra bättre att överlåta överväganden om rättssäkerheten till de justitieråd som eventuellt skall pröva och bedöma om ett förfarande mot Assange följer grundläggande processuella regler.

Den politiska aspekten förbigår Löfberg helt. I sin värdering av Assanges "journalistiska och opinionsbildande verksamhet" berör han inte den politiska sidan, eller snarare slagsidan i Assanges avslöjanden. Om Assange var den moraliskt högstående sanningssökare han utger sig för att vara skulle det vara klädsamt om hans avslöjanden varit mindre selektiva. I praktiken har Wikileaks inte varit annat än ett verktyg i Assanges privata krig mot USA. Assanges paranoidea hat mot och skräck för USA är ingen hemlighet, det är väldokumenterat genom hans egna uttalanden.

Löfberg kan inte vara okunnig om detta och ej heller om att Ecuador, Chávez och de latinamerikanska politiker som hyllar Assange knappast är några pressfrihetens matadorer på hemmaplan. För dem är han intressant bara så länge han irriterar USA. Försök bara att föreställa er vad som skulle hända med Assanges asyl om Wikileaks plötsligt skulle byta färg och börja avslöja det skumrask som dessa politiker själva ägnar sig åt. Löfbergs oreserverade ställningstagande för Assange och hans beskrivning av Ecuadors spektakulära räddningsaktion som ett lysande försvar av press- och yttrandefriheten är ingen seriös analys av folkrätten, det är en partsinlaga av en engagerad vänsterpolitiker.

### ***Om författaren***

*Ökonom och statsvetare, författare till "Rasismens ideologer", skribent, översättare*

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## **Mårten Löfberg om Wikileaks**

### **Försvaret av yttrandefriheten det centrala i Wikileaksaffären**

*Replik av folkrättsspecialist: Leo Kramár sätter ofrivilligt huvudet på spiken. Det är just möjligheten, att Sveriges rättsvårdande myndigheter och regering skulle dela en eventuell amerikansk uppfattning att Wikileaks avslöjanden är kriminella, som gör risken för svensk utlämning och amerikanskt åtal reell.*

*Newsmill*

2012-09-16



Leo Kramár menar i sin artikel om Assangefallet [se ovan] att min analys av detsamma är "extrem" och "en politisk partsinlaga". Resonemanget är genomgående retoriskt skickligt och samtidigt intressant eftersom hans verklighetsbeskrivning stärker legitimiteten i Ecuadors beslut att ge Assange asyl, d v s den visar på att Assange mycket väl kan ha anledning att frukta att bli utlämnad och ställd inför rätta i USA för Wikileaks avslöjanden. Den avgörande punkten förblir huruvida Wikileaks avslöjanden är att betrakta som kriminella.

I diskussionen om risken för utlämnande är det dock viktigt att bättre hålla isär begreppen. Assange stod, i och med att brittisk domstol slutgiltigt beslutat om överföring till Sverige, inför valet mellan att antingen sitta inlåst i Sverige medan brottsutredning fortskred i USA, eller att söka skydd på Ecuadors ambassad. Att på motsvarande sätt sitta frihetsberövad i Storbritannien, med risk att utlämnas till USA, har aldrig varit ett alternativ, eftersom ett brittiskt frihetsberövande av Assange, då som nu, skulle innebära en snar överföring till Sverige. Att söka skydd på ambassaden för att undgå det enda alternativet -- en överföring till Sverige -- och därmed risken för utlämning till USA, var därför helt rationellt. Om Kramár läste min artikel noggrant skulle han nog inse att han i stora delar missuppfattat argumenteringen. Han skulle också se att citatet jag tillskrivs -- "Assange löper större risk att överlämnas till USA från Sverige än från Storbritannien" -- är helt gripet ur luften. Tvärtom står det att frågan om varifrån Assange, vid tidpunkten för asylansökan, mest sannolikt skulle riskera att utlämnas, inte är den intressanta. Det intressanta är vad Assange hade anledning att frukta ifall han inte sökt -- och beviljats -- skydd av Ecuador.

Kramár låter förstå att det svenska regelverket kring utlämningförfarandet, för vilket han helt riktigt redogör, garanterar Assange en rättvis process. Men han visar också att han förstår att den avgörande punkten är frågan om huruvida Wikileaks avslöjanden i ett sådant läge skulle betraktas som straffbara även här i Sverige. Kramár frågar sig: "Men vad händer om Assange anklagas i USA för ett brott mot sekretesslagen eller motsvarande, som är straffbart även i Sverige, som har ett straffvärde på minst ett år och där alla övriga kriterier för utlämning är uppfyllda? (...) Om någon, som Assange, känner ett obetvingligt moraliskt tvång att bryta mot demokratiskt stiftade lagar tar han en medveten risk". Han fortsätter senare: "Sverige har ett bindande avtal med USA (...) Att vägra utlämningen i ett sådant fall och dessutom tillerkänna Assange rätt till asyl skulle inte bara innebära att Sverige bryter mot sina avtalsenliga förpliktelser utan också att man desavouerar sin egen lagstiftning".

**Ofrivilligt sätter Kramár huvudet på spiken. Det är just denna möjlighet, att Sveriges rättsvårdande myndigheter och regering skulle dela en eventuell amerikansk uppfattning att Wikileaks avslöjanden är kriminella, som gör risken för svensk utlämning och amerikanskt åtal reell. Intressant nog är Kramárs egen bedömning att det vore naivt att tro något annat. Resonemanget förstärker alltså snarast slutsatsen att Ecuadors beslut att ge Assange skydd, grundat på verklig risk för politisk förföljelse, var välgrundat.**

Naturligtvis är yttrandefriheten inte oinskränkt, det är därför bedömningen av Wikileaks publiceringar blir central. Gällande publiceringen av bevis för USAs påstådda krigsbrott är frågan, både ur juridisk och moralisk synvinkel, hur rimlig är en tolkning av de mänskliga rättigheterna som innebär att sådana journalistiska avslöjanden inte omfattas av press- och yttrandefrihet, eftersom uppgifterna i fråga

hemligstämplats av den ansvarige staten? Hur kan krigsbrott då avslöjas? Man kan fråga sig om denna diskussion över huvud taget skulle ha uppkommit ifall avslöjandena gällt en stat för vilken Kramár hyst mindre sympati.

**USA är måhända en rättsstat, men det är i så fall en rättsstat som gör sig skyldig till grova folkrättsbrott**, där Guantanamo och Abu Ghraib, liksom Irakinvasionen i sig, utgör mer kända exempel. Genom Wikileaks avslöjanden har vi också fått övertygande bevisning för att grova krigsbrott har begåtts av amerikansk militär i Irak. Antydandet att Assanges åsikt om USAs politik, det Kramár kallar "slagsidan i Assanges avslöjanden", skulle göra Wikileaks avslöjanden mindre skyddade av yttrandefrihet, är naturligtvis absurt både i juridiskt och demokratiskt avseende.

Medan Kramár menar att jag borde "överlåta bedömningen av rättssäkerheten till justitieråden" anser jag tvärtom att allmänhetens granskning och engagemang i rättsfrågor är en förutsättning för vårt rättssystemets legitimitet. **Idén att juridiken ger uttryck för objektiva värden som bara experter begriper är en odemokratisk kvarleva från en förliberal rättstradition.**

För att undvika fler och allvarigare missförstånd vill jag här också framhålla att jag naturligtvis delar uppfattningen att Assange inte på något sätt bör särbehandlas i den svenska rättsprocessen, och jag tror absolut inte på teorier om en svensk-amerikansk komplot mot Assange. Jag menar att det är mycket viktigt att vi skiljer på frågan om den pågående svenska rättsprocessen å ena sidan, och frågan om vad Assange skulle riskera i fråga om utlämnande till USA och ett amerikanskt åtal å andra sidan.

Processen i Sverige kan alltså mycket väl vara legitim samtidigt som Ecuadors beslut att ge Assange skydd också kan vara legitimt. Det finns ingen automatisk motsättning däremellan.

Ifall Kramár någon gång skulle ge sig på att titta närmare på Wikileaks många avslöjanden skulle han också förväntat upptäcka att organisationen inte alls angripit enbart USA. Det är också märkligt att antyda att demokratiska brister i Ecuador på något sätt skulle vara ett argument mot att Assange skulle riskera politisk förföljelse. Glöm inte heller bort att **Ecuadors bedömning av Assanges behov av skydd backats upp, både från höger och vänster, av demokratiskt valda regeringar i hela Latinamerika.**

Att jag sympatiserar med yttrandefriheten som sådan är naturligtvis ett politiskt ställningstagande, en partsinlaga för demokratiska friheter om man så vill, men det diskvalificerar knappast den teoretiska analysen. Det är för övrigt inte alldeles lätt att se vad i bedömningen att Wikileaks publiceringar bör omfattas av yttrandefrihet som är att betrakta som extremt. Det är i så fall en extremism som delas av väldigt många.

<http://www.newsmill.se/artikel/2012/09/15/f-rsvaret-av-yttrandefriheten-det-centrala-i-wikileaksaff-ren>

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## **Julian Assange to receive Aboriginal Passport**

*Green Left Weekly*  
September 10, 2012

The Indigenous Social Justice Association (ISJA) and the Support Assange and WikiLeaks Coalition released the statement below on September 9.

\* \* \*

It is with a sense of pride and complete social justice that this Association has worked with the Sydney Support Assange and WikiLeaks Coalition to have the privilege of successfully arranging for Julian Assange to be able to be issued with an Aboriginal Nations Passport that his father, John Shipton, will accept on his behalf at the Welcome to Aboriginal Land Passport Ceremony to be held at The Settlement, 17 Edward Street, Darlington from 11am to 4pm on Saturday 15 September, 2012.

We strongly endorse the words of Linda Pearson of the Support Assange and WikiLeaks Coalition, see below, on the total lack of support by our federal government to assist Julian against being press-ganged to America to face corrupt charges against him for informing the world's people of the absolute lies that all governments continue to tell their people.

Whilst it is true that all governments lie, it is well known that America leads the pack in their eternal quest for American hegemony of the world's resources. It is well known that all Australian governments since the dismissal of the Whitlam government in 1975, that was assisted and orchestrated by America's CIA, have meekly put our country at the policies of the American foreign policy interests. Julian is but another example.

The Ceremony is being held at the behest of many migrant, refugee and non-Aboriginal Australians who wish to fully recognise the Traditional Owners of the many Aboriginal Nations that still exist to this very day. They wish to show their full respect to the true history of this land and that is that we Aborigines still have full sovereignty over our Lands.

Always was ... always will be ... Aboriginal Land.

The crimes of the 1788 invasion and the subsequent colonisation still need to be addressed and accounted for but we believe that the Passport Ceremony is the first of many steps that are required by those who wish to participate in a multicultural and pluralistic Reconciliation.

Not the assimilationist reconciliation wanted by Australian governments and other racists but the real and honourable reconciliation of removing the-white-blindfold of our joint history and allowing a mutual respect to be created.

By agreement we will be issuing both Julian Assange, via his father, and Mamdoub Habib, who will be present, an Aboriginal Nations Passport that will allow both to respectfully travel through the Aboriginal Nations — Mamdoub now and Julian on his return to Aboriginal Australia.

Both these men were denied any assistance, first by the Howard government and then by the Gillard government respectively. These nefarious actions were taken by these two governments to appease their American masters. We will attempt to right that wrong.

All those who wish to be issued with a Passport may obtain one by, firstly, signing the Pledge, giving some personal details to be added to the Passport, supplying a passport sized photo and a charge of \$10 to help in affraying costs. The Passports are for use by non-Aboriginal people only and can only be used to travel through the Aboriginal Nations. This does not apply to Aborigines as we have our own cultural methods of travelling through Country.

The ceremony at The Settlement will include music, dancers, food and a wonderful sense of Welcome and Solidarity to all those attending. This will be an alcohol and drug free event.

We give the final word to Linda Pearson of the Support Assange and WikiLeaks Coalition: "We are extremely grateful to the Indigenous Social Justice Association for highlighting the injustice faced by Julian Assange, and for this opportunity to show our solidarity with the Aboriginal owners of this land.

"Australia is built on the injustices of invasion and colonisation. We condemn racist government polices like the Northern Territory intervention which continue to inflict untold harm on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We benefit from the occupation of stolen land, while Aboriginal people are incarcerated at five times the rate of black South Africans under apartheid."

The ISJA's decision to issue Julian Assange an Aboriginal Passport comes as he remains confined in the Ecuadorian embassy in London. Despite international obligations to respect Assange's status as a political refugee, the UK government has made clear its intention to arrest him if he tries to leave the embassy.

The Australian government should be negotiating with the UK to ensure Assange's safe passage to Ecuador. However, our politicians have consistently put their alliance with the United States before Assange's human rights, even when his life has been threatened.

The issuing of an Aboriginal Passport to Julian Assange brings further shame on the Australian government. It recognises that Assange's Australian passport has been completely worthless to him."

<http://www.greenleft.org.au/node/52203>

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**Julian Assange's Legal Limbo: Interview with Jennifer Robinson**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUUizXQ9HPY&feature=youtu.be>

## Respect chief Salma Yaqoob quits over George Galloway rape row

*Andrew Woodcock  
The Independent  
12 September 2012*

The leader of Respect, Salma Yaqoob, has resigned, blaming a breakdown in "relations of trust and collaborative working" at the top of the party. Ms Yaqoob clashed with Respect's only MP, George Galloway, over his comments about the sexual assault allegations against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.

In a podcast last month, the Bradford West MP said allegations against Mr Assange did not constitute rape "as most people understand it", and amounted to no more than "bad sexual etiquette". Mr Galloway later clarified his remarks, insisting he had always believed non-consensual sex was rape.

Ms Yaqoob condemned the original comments as "deeply disappointing and wrong" and said at the time that the complaints made by two women in Sweden should not be "belittled or dismissed". Mr Assange has denied the allegations.

The Respect leader announced her resignation "with deep regret" in a message on the party website last night. "The last few weeks have been extremely difficult for everyone in the party," said Ms Yaqoob. "I feel necessary relations of trust and collaborative working have unfortunately broken down. I have no wish to prolong those difficulties, and indeed hope that they may now be drawn to a close.

"I remain committed to the principles and values that led me to help found Respect. The policies we have fought for need to be voiced as loud as ever in opposition to a political establishment that remains out of touch with working people.

"I would like to thank everyone in the party for their support over the years. I wish everyone the very best for the future and in those common struggles for peace, justice and equality that I am sure we will all continue to be involved in."

Respect national secretary Chris Chilvers said: "While we are obviously very sorry that Salma has decided to leave Respect, we would like to thank her for the great contribution she has made to Respect over the last decade. We look forward to working with Salma in the future in pursuit of our shared values and objectives."

Ms Yaqoob served as a Respect councillor on Birmingham City Council from 2006-11 and fought the Birmingham Hall Green constituency for the party in 2010, securing second place.

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## **Australian author Kathy Lette and US television presenter Ruby Wax visit Julian Assange at Ecuadorean embassy**

*Kevin Rawlinson  
The Independent  
11 September 2012*

Julian Assange may have been holed-up in a west London embassy building for nearly four months but at least he has not been abandoned to loneliness. The Wikileaks founder has been kept company by Australian author Kathy Lette and US television presenter Ruby Wax, who both dropped in to visit this afternoon.

The pair, who were said to be “having tea” with Mr Assange, turned up at the Ecuadorean embassy at around 4pm and stayed for around an hour and a half.

Their visits came on the day that it emerged that transparency evangelist Mr Assange sought to pressure a US film festival into not showing a film about his organisation. He was reported by the Guardian newspaper to have threatened legal action against the South by Southwest Festival, which was planning to air WikiLeaks: Secrets and Lies.

Neither Ruby Wax nor Kathy Lette was available today to discuss their conversations with Mr Assange, who faces sexual assault charges in Sweden and is wanted for allegedly breaching his bail by entering the embassy in June.

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## **Assange, WikiLeaks & the Law in a Post 9/11 World**

*Lawyer and human rights activist Kellie Tranter delivers a breath-taking speech at Parliament House, Sydney on September 12th, 2012 for the “Assange, WikiLeaks & the Law in a Post 9/11 World” conference.*

*September 13, 2012*

I’d like to thank the NSW Greens for hosting this forum and may I say how honoured I am to be a part of such a distinguished panel.

The tragic events of September 11 created an atmosphere that our government, and the United States government it followed, could do no wrong in their response. One courageous voice of reason following September 11 came from Arundhati Roy. She immediately saw what was coming and wrote a lengthy article in September 2001, challenging the instinct for retribution.

But it was too late.

Vengeance and fear and self-interested opportunism spread like weaponised anthrax through the blood and organs of Western liberal democracies. Now, more than a decade later, what remains of them is little more than a shell.

Too many of us had— and sadly, too many still have— blind faith that our political institutions would act in our best interests, so we were prepared to permit intrusions

upon our civil liberties, justice and freedom of speech. We gullibly swallowed the lies and half-truths spouted by our politicians and officialdom which were reliably parroted in mainstream media.

On average a new anti-terror statute was passed every 6.7 weeks during the post 9/11 life of the Howard government. Experts say that represents a higher level of legislative output than that of nations facing much greater threats from terrorism.

Our capitulation to fear, to the “be alert, but not alarmed” phenomenon, provided a fertile field for our government to enhance and expand the use of state power.

All citizens became potential suspects and victims, with laws restricting freedom of speech through sedition offences; detention and questioning for up to a week by ASIO of citizens not suspected of any crime; the banning of organisations by executive decision; control orders enabling house arrest for up to a year, detention without charge or trial for up to 14 days and warrantless searches of private property by police officers; warrants able to be issued against family members, journalists, children under 18 and innocent bystanders; and more recently powers to carry out surveillance offshore in relation to Australia’s economic interests, and to spy on people and organisations overseas, all with a thirst for data retention.

It’s no quantum leap to look towards the future and see how these instruments of control have the capacity to be misused and abused, particularly where Australia is the only democratic nation in the world without a national human rights law or bill of rights.

Governments and security apparatuses— perhaps unwittingly, perhaps not— shepherded a feeding frenzy of suspicion by individuals towards one another, towards minority groups, towards people of different ethnic backgrounds and religions in the name of national security.

While we were busy parting the curtains and holding a prying eye on our suspicious looking neighbour, some of the real criminals and perpetrators of violence were slipping out the back door, dressed in their business suits, ready to commit their own “officially sanctioned” crimes. It’s crimes of that sort which have been revealed by WikiLeaks, thanks to its sources.

For far too long, particularly now that we have the means of gathering and disseminating information almost immediately, there has been far too little awareness, discussion or accountability. And it was the focus on informing quickly rather than on informing well that prepared the ground for WikiLeaks.

A global political and economic landscape with the powerful and the strong seeking to eliminate government as a buffer between the powerful and the weak, and many governments like our own fawning to superpowers, was the perfect climate in which Julian Assange and WikiLeaks could flourish. The search for truth by people everywhere created their market. And learning the truth created the push for political reform for the oppressed, the deceived, the disenfranchised and the marginalised.

The late Donella Meadows, a famous systems theorist, captured the landscape this way: “If you see behaviour that persists over time, there is likely a mechanism creating

that consistent behaviour (ie feedback loop) ... Using accumulated wealth, privilege, special access, or inside information to create more wealth, privilege, special access or inside information are examples of the archetype called 'success to the successful'. This system trap is found wherever the winners of a competition receive as part of the reward, the means to compete even more efficiently in the future (reinforcing feedback loop). Everything the winner wins is extracted from the loser."

Julian Assange made similar points at a conference in Malaysia in 2009.

Looking at just a few of the documents released by WikiLeaks shows "success to the successful" at play. There are documents that reveal threats to nations who oppose Monsanto's genetically modified (GM) crops, with military-style trade wars; the Ministry of Defence telling the US that Britain had 'put measures in place' to protect American interests during the Chilcot inquiry; troops being sent in to protect New Zealand dairy giant Fonterra's lucrative United Nations contract to supply Iraq. And of course, there are the many documents revealing endemic corruption in Afghanistan, India, Croatia, Kenya, Morocco, Tunisia, Uzbekistan, Uganda, Saudi Arabia and so on.

Other WikiLeaks documents include or address kill and capture lists; assassination squads; US soldiers handcuffing and executing children as young as five months of age, and ordering an air strike aimed at covering up their crime; "hundreds" of former employees of Blackwater, barred from Iraq over a deadly 2007 shooting, later working with other firms guarding US diplomats there; and the Australian government, to avoid a stoush with US and Singapore, secretly winding back a critical environmental protection for the Great Barrier Reef against shipping accidents.

Fortunately all systems, whether economic or political, contain within them balancing loops that ultimately constrain them. The work of WikiLeaks represents a critical balancing feedback loop because it gives the public high quality information on matters of public interest that has the capacity to generate political reform. That's probably what most scares the successful; it certainly helps to explain the efforts to purge it from the system.

The purging process has been relentless.

For WikiLeaks the organisation: financial blockades by Paypal, Mastercard and Visa. Apple removing its application from its Apps store. Swiss bank freezing assets. Amazon severing its ties. From government, a 32 page Pentagon report outlining recommendations to damage or destroy WikiLeaks and deter others. From the private sector, Palantir Technologies suggesting discrediting WikiLeaks by spreading disinformation and developing a media campaign to push the radical and reckless nature of WikiLeaks activities.

For Assange the person: throw a Red Interpol notice on a person not charged with any crime in any country and combine it with a secret grand jury and an espionage investigation of "unprecedented scale and nature"; ensure that no government will provide an assurance against onward extradition to the United States; make sure no official categorises him as an online publisher and journalist; cajole his own country into sitting on its diplomatic hands; subject his alleged source to cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment; intimidate lawyers and associates at airports and at home; introduce laws which attempt to cast a net over his operations, and even threaten to



storm an embassy in flagrant disregard for the Vienna Convention. It's easy to get a sense of the desired objectives and the reasons for the methods.

As some say, the elephant has taken a run up to squash an ant.

Still, government representatives try earnestly to sound convincing when they tell us this case is not political.

Julian Assange, like Manning, deserves equal treatment before the law. The presumption of innocence has long been lost through incessant media commentary both here and abroad, and it doesn't help when our Prime Minister peremptorily declares the actions of Julian Assange to be illegal or when the President of the United States declares that Bradley Manning had broken the law. You'll still note that there's no evidence linking the leaks to anyone's death or harm, or of any specific charge against Assange.

US national security officials allege Bradley Manning aided Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) leaking documents to WikiLeaks. Prosecutors allude to evidence including an AQAP magazine and a video featuring an English-language spokesman for the group. An issue of AQAP's "Inspire" magazine published in late 2010 quoted Assange.

One can only assume that the video in which they refer is that titled "A Message to the Members of the Media" by the late US born Sheikh Anwar Al-Awlaki (killed by a US drone strike in Yemen along with his teenage son which includes this passage in its narrative: "America struggles to block a website like WikiLeaks for merely quoting the truth about some events of the US war in Iraq and dialogues between American politicians and their lackeys around the world..And today, the owner of WikiLeaks has been accused of the same [immoral crimes], to distract and swerve him from his work of leaking the inner secrets of the rotten White House."

Julian Assange was quoted in the Inspire magazine but so was Anti-War Campaigner Richard Boyd Barrett. A later edition of Inspire included quotes from respected journalists Robert Fisk and Michael Hastings, from whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg and from Joe Biden, Vice President of the United States.

Of course Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula is active in Yemen. You'll recall that WikiLeaks released cables showing that the Yemeni government covered up US drone strikes against Al-Qaeda, claiming the bombs were its own. Only a week ago 13 civilians were killed by drone strikes in a country that has dire water shortages, an impending famine and is the poorest Arab nation in the world.

I've written elsewhere on the various indicators that Assange's extradition to Sweden for questioning obviously is the first step in extraditing him to the United States. Everything points that way. But perhaps what's most telling is that every country in the chain has refused to give a diplomatic assurance that Assange will not be extradited to the United States. They wouldn't give that assurance to Assange and they wouldn't give it to Ecuador. If there was no intention to extradite him to the United States why wouldn't the assurances readily have been given.

**What faces Assange if he is extradited to the United States is, at the very least, inhumane treatment of the kind presently being doled out to Bradley Manning. It's**

**abundantly clear that the purpose of incarcerating and mistreating these people is not just personal punishment but demonstration by example of what happens to any person who dares to cross the powers that be.** In jurisprudential jargon, it's the twin purposes of punishment and deterrence.

I've also voiced my criticism of the stance taken by the Australian government since Assange surrendered himself in England. Not only has our government done nothing to protect him, it's done nothing even to assist him. Foreign Minister Bob Carr's assurances otherwise are contradicted by the assistance offered to the Australian lawyer recently imprisoned in Libya and more recently, to Austin Mackell an independent journalist detained in Egypt. **Bob Carr's assurances really become incredible when you look at the assistance offered to an Australian arms dealer in Iraq, Bradley John Thompson.**

I haven't spoken with or met Julian Assange but I certainly agree with AC Grayling that conformist societies that frown on individuality are not merely repressive and reactionary, but stagnant, and that we must all be hospitable to eccentricity, innovation, experimentation and the abandonment of traditions that have outlived their usefulness and become a barrier to progress.

Grayling's also right to say: "Consider what is required for people to be able to claim other liberties, or defend them when they are attacked. Consider what is required for a democratic process, which demands the statement and testing of policy proposals and party platforms, and the questioning of governments. Consider what is required for due process at law, in which people can defend themselves against accusation, accuse wrongdoers who have harmed them, collect and examine evidence, make a case or refute one.

"Consider what is required for genuine education and research, enquiry, debate, exchange of information, challenges to falsehood, proposal and examination of opinion. Consider what is required for a free press, which although it always abuses its freedoms in the hunt for profit, is necessary with all its warts as one of the two essential states of a free society (the other being the independent judiciary)."

WikiLeaks and Julian Assange came along at a time of crisis in truth in our political and economic systems. Or perhaps, more accurately, they came along when finally it became possible to expose the lack of truth in our political and economic systems.

WikiLeaks was there to receive that kind of information— information of critical importance to every citizen of the world— and it was prepared to assess, edit and publish that information to enable global citizens to assess the actions of corrupt governments and corporations. Often for the first time, the glaring light of truth burned on what was really happening in places near and far, on what people in a multitude of positions and circumstances were doing to others, and on political and financial arrangements involving corruption, duplicity and inhumanity.

Corporate mainstream media organisations haven't drilled down in these areas, and they won't. WikiLeaks will. But if it is to be able to do so we have to do something now to protect this little green shoot of honesty from being trampled by the hobnailed boots of opportunism and expediency. We have to stand up to protect WikiLeaks and to protect Julian Assange.

<http://thing2thing.com/?p=2663>

## Pressure Put on Manning to Implicate Assange

*Paul Jay and Michael Ratner*  
*The Real News Network*  
*15 September 2012*

Michael Ratner: As Wikileaks Founder Nears 100 Days in Ecuadorian Embassy Sweden's refusal to interview Assange in London suggests they are working with US towards extradition.

PAUL JAY, SENIOR EDITOR, TRNN: Welcome to The Real News Network. I'm Paul Jay in Baltimore. Julian Assange continues to reside in the embassy of Ecuador in London. Now joining us is his U.S. attorney, Michael Ratner. Michael is president emeritus at the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York, also a board member of The Real News. Thanks for joining us, Michael.

MICHAEL RATNER, PRESIDENT EMERITUS, CENTER FOR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS: Good to be with you, Paul.

JAY: So where do things stand with Julian Assange, and what's the situation in the U.S.?

RATNER: With Julian Assange, September 27, about ten days from now, Julian Assange will have been in the Ecuadorian Embassy for 100 days. That's a long time, but I think he's prepared to stay there much longer, until some kind of agreement can be reached.

This has to be solved politically. I mean, there's all kinds of legal things going on, and we can talk about that briefly, but in the end I think the key thing to solve this is for Sweden to get over whatever is going on in terms of its pride or whatever else is going on in Sweden, and to come to London and question Julian Assange about the sexual misconduct allegations in Sweden. It's unclear to me why they haven't done that, because —

JAY: What is their answer to that? I'm sure they've been asked it a thousand times. What's the official answer?

RATNER: **Well, they have given different answers, which is what's interesting in itself.** Their first answer is there's no procedure for doing it. Now they admit there's a procedure for doing it, and we even came up with a case where they've questioned an alleged murderer in Serbia recently. So there's a procedure.

Now they're sort of saying, well, who is he to dictate the terms? He's the punitive person who's— the allegations are made against. So they're sort of standing on pride. And what that does, it brings out two reactions in me. One is, look it, in a case that's created such an incredible diplomatic standoff, where the U.K. threatened to go into the embassy, the Ecuadorian Embassy— and of course has now retreated— but where it caused the Organization of American States to actually take the U.K. to task for that, where that's happened, where there's all of this, you know, \$80,000 a day to guard the embassy by the U.K., you would think the Swedish prosecutor would get on a plane and go question Julian Assange at the Swedish— at the Ecuadorian Embassy. So it makes you wonder: why haven't they done it?

And what it makes me worried about is that really— which is what I suspected all along— is that behind the Swedish allegations, behind the Swedish efforts to get Julian Assange so badly and not actually just go question him in London, is the hand of the United States. **I believe the United States is manipulating all of this. I believe, and I have a legal basis, I believe, for saying it, that once Julian Assange gets to Sweden, he will be on a plane very rapidly to the United States and to prison conditions that are the equivalent of what Bradley Manning was held under.**

JAY: And what is the legal basis for you thinking this?

RATNER: The legal basis is that for almost two years now, I and others have been following what we call the WikiLeaks grand jury. There's a grand jury sitting in Alexandria, Virginia. Its number is 10-GJ-3-793. 10 is the year it began, GJ is grand jury, 3 is the conspiracy statute, 793 is espionage. They've been looking at Julian Assange to indict him for espionage. They've called witnesses that have come public before that grand jury about it.

**The U.S. wants to get its hands on him, and they know that's not going to be so easy from the U.K. The U.K. has a very robust fight against extradition.** There's a man named McKinnon there who hacked into a Pentagon computer, supposedly, has already fought for eight years. Julian has a lot of support in the U.K.

**Sweden, they have a very rapid possible extradition procedure that they could use, and he doesn't have the kind of support. The U.S. understands that. If he goes to Sweden, he is imprisoned immediately. Sweden doesn't have a bail system.** So there's every reason for him to be terrified, in my view, of the U.S. ever getting its hands on him.

JAY: And the legal point here, if they do try to proceed against Julian Assange, is that they're claiming or will claim that he didn't just receive information from Bradley Manning; he somehow induced it or collaborated with Manning to get it.

RATNER: That will be their claim, that's correct, Paul, because, obviously, if they go after Julian Assange for sitting there like I'm at his computer and all of sudden a bunch of documents come in, how is Julian Assange different than The New York Times? How is he different than The Guardian? How is he different than other newspapers? And so they're going to have to try and figure out: how do we get Julian implicated more deeply than The New York Times or The Guardian?

JAY: And what's happening with Bradley Manning? 'Cause you would think that's the only way they could do it is to get Manning to, quote-unquote, roll over on Assange.

RATNER: Assuming Manning knows anything, which is not clear to any of us, that is exactly right, Paul. They would want him to testify or roll over against Julian. And it's not me making that up. **The lawyer for Bradley Manning, David Coombs, has said openly in court that they are going after Manning with so much toughness, with wanting a 40-year sentence or whatever he said in court, because they want him to testify against Julian Assange.** A remarkable story here in some way is that Bradley Manning— whether he knows something or not I have no idea, or [whether] there's even something to know— has so far not buckled to incredible torture in prison and a potential of a life sentence from a U.S. court. And so that's remarkable.

I mean, the Manning case is a complete charade. Let's just be honest about it. I've been down there. I mean, you're in Baltimore. We should actually go together one day

to Fort Meade, Paul, because it's been— it's extraordinary. It's such secrecy, even of public documents, that we in the Center for Constitutional Rights had to bring a lawsuit, which on October 10 will be heard at the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, because they're not allowing even public documents out of the Bradley Manning case. It's a complete— **really, it's just a kangaroo court, a secret tribunal.** It's outrageous. But it's all an effort to bend Bradley Manning to their will, because, yes, they're going to try and nail Bradley Manning. And, yes, he might— I don't know what kind of sentence he'd get, but in the end they're really after Julian Assange.

JAY: And what is the next stage of the Manning process?

RATNER: They're going through motions. But the next one is an interesting one. There's three days or so every month of hearings down at Fort Meade, and the next one is going to be in October, and it's about the torture of Bradley Manning in the underground prison or in the prison he was in when he— at Quantico, and where he was stripped completely naked, forced to stand at attention naked, you know, the whole business of what happened to him that the UN rapporteur called tantamount— equivalent to, certainly, cruel and inhuman treatment, and then possibly amounting to torture.

So that's— Manning's hearing is going to be on that issue and whether the charges have to be dismissed because of the way he was treated in pretrial detention. Now, this judge has been very stiff and wouldn't— I don't expect that she's going to allow these charges to be dismissed. I do suspect, as the lawyer for Manning has said, is that any sentence he might get perhaps will be reduced because of the inhumane way he was treated at Quantico.

And, of course, when we look at that, as Julian Assange's legal team looks at that, you have to say: wait until they get their hands on Julian Assange. It'll make—it won't make Bradley—he'll be treated as bad or worse than Bradley Manning.

JAY: Thanks for joining us, Michael.

RATNER: Thank you for being here, Paul.

JAY: And thanks for joining us on The Real News Network. Don't forget, if you want to see more interviews like this, there's a "Donate" button over here. If you don't do that, we can't do this.

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## **No DNA link to Assange in condom central to sex assault case**

*RT*

*17 September, 2012*

A ripped condom given to Swedish police by one of Julian Assange's accusers does not contain the WikiLeaks founder's DNA, forensic scientists have reportedly found.

In a 100-page document shown to Assange's lawyers, it was revealed that the torn prophylactic, having been examined by staff at two forensic laboratories, did not bear conclusive evidence that Assange had ever worn it, the Daily Mail reported on Sunday.

Assange's lawyers said the lack of DNA evidence on the condom, which was allegedly used during a supposed August 2010 sexual assault, indicates that a fake one could have been submitted.

The woman in question, now aged 33, claims to have been molested by Assange at her flat in Stockholm. She says that at one point he deliberately broke a condom in order to have unprotected sex with her.

Assange claims he had consensual sex with the woman, but denies intentionally tearing the condom. He had previously told police that he continued to stay at her residence for the week following the alleged incident, saying his accuser never made any mention of the ripped condom.

But DNA purportedly belonging to Assange was present on a condom submitted by a second woman, who has accused him of rape [*no she has not --A.B.*], prompting Swedish authorities to push ahead with their bid to have him extradited from the UK.

However, his second accuser, now 29, who claimed to have been raped in her sleep by Assange [*No, she did not. --A.B.*], apparently told police she had not been opposed to having unprotected sex with him despite previous statements to the contrary, the daily reported. [*This is all wrong. See police interview with Sofia Wilén. --A.B.*]

Assange denies the allegation of rape, maintaining he had consensual sex with the second woman as well. The Swedish prosecutor's office refused to comment on the report, saying that the investigation was ongoing.

The whistleblower has been holed up at Ecuador's Embassy in London since June, after the UK Supreme Court upheld his extradition warrant to Sweden.

In August he was granted political asylum by the country's president, Rafael Correa, out of fear he could be handed over to American authorities upon setting foot in Sweden, and eventually charged with leaking classified documents.

Safe passage to Ecuador has not been secured by British authorities, however, as the UK maintains it will arrest him if he leaves the embassy, deporting him to Sweden.

In August, Assange told Ecuador's Gama television network that he expected the diplomatic impasse with the UK to be resolved within a year.

And while Canberra has often been accused of turning a blind eye to Assange's plight, the Indigenous Social Justice Association, an Australian group which wants recognition of Aboriginal sovereignty, showed their support by offering him an Aboriginal Nations passport on Sunday, the Sydney Morning Herald reports.

His father, John Shipton, accepted the document on Assange's behalf at a celebration in Sydney, which was attended by more than 200 people.

"Australian governments of every color are happy to abandon their citizens when they're in difficult situations overseas," the daily reports him as saying.

The group, which also accused the Australian authorities of failing to provide sufficient aid to one of its citizens, said the passport will be sent to Assange in London

SvD: 22 september 2012

## Ambassadbyte för Assange avfärdas

Ännu ett utspel i cirkus Assange. Ecuadors utrikesminister föreslår att Julian Assange flyttas från ambassaden i London till den i Stockholm. Reaktionen i Sverige varierar från "osannolikt" till "en absurd tanke".

Assange är sedan i juni på Ecuadors ambassad i London och har under högljutt brittiskt morrande beviljats ecuadoriansk asyl. Nu säger utrikesminister Ricardo Patino att bästa alternativet för Ecuador vore att Storbritannien tillät Assanges förflyttning till Ecuadors ambassad i Stockholm, uppger AFP.

Folkrättsexperten Pål Wrange ser det som mycket osannolikt. Både de svenska och brittiska regeringarna måste först säga ja, men i grunden ligger även en europeisk arresteringsorder med beslut av fristående svenska och brittiska domstolar om att överlämna Assange till svenska myndigheter.

-- Jag undrar om regeringarna överhuvudtaget kan gå med på det här för det skulle innebära att man så att säga suspenderar ett beslut som är fattat i behörig ordning av de juridiska instanserna, säger Wrange till TT.

-- Jag gissar att både svensk och brittisk lagstiftning skulle sätta stopp för det.

Ärendet har satt press på Ecuador. Enligt Patino skulle ett ambassadbyte göra att australiern Assange kan "vara kvar under vårt beskydd samtidigt som det svenska rättssystemets begäran tillgodoses".

Patino säger nu också att "flera bevis har avfärdats" i det svenska rättsfallet.

Advokat Claes Borgström, målsägarbiträde för de två kvinnor som anmält Assange för sexuella övergrepp, borde i så fall känna till det. Men han avfärdar helt ministerns uttalande:

- Han vet inte vad han pratar om, säger Borgström till TT.

Han påpekar också att Assange är häktad i sin frånvaro i Svea hovrätt som misstänkt för våldtäkt.

-- Att han skulle få sitta på en ambassad är en absurd tanke. Det är häpnadsväckande. Det saknas helt anledning att behandla Assange på annat sätt än andra människor i den situationen. Det ska vara likhet inför lagen.

TT

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## US calls Assange 'enemy of state'

*Philip Dorling  
Sydney Morning Herald  
September 27, 2012*

THE US military has designated Julian Assange and WikiLeaks as enemies of the United States -- **the same legal category as the al-Qaeda terrorist network and the Taliban insurgency.**

Declassified US Air Force counter-intelligence documents, released under US freedom-of-information laws, reveal that military personnel who contact WikiLeaks or WikiLeaks supporters may be at risk of being charged with "communicating with the enemy", a military crime that carries a maximum sentence of death.

The documents, some originally classified "Secret/NoForn" -- not releasable to non-US nationals -- record a probe by the air force's Office of Special Investigations into a cyber systems analyst based in Britain who allegedly expressed support for WikiLeaks and attended pro-Assange demonstrations in London.

The counter-intelligence investigation focused on whether the analyst, who had a top-secret security clearance and access to the US military's Secret Internet Protocol Router network, had disclosed classified or sensitive information to WikiLeaks supporters, described as an "anti-US and/or anti-military group".

The suspected offence was "communicating with the enemy, 104-D", an article in the US Uniform Code of Military Justice that prohibits military personnel from "communicating, corresponding or holding intercourse with the enemy".

The analyst's access to classified information was suspended. However, the investigators closed the case without laying charges. The analyst denied leaking information.

Mr Assange remains holed up in Ecuador's embassy in London. He was granted diplomatic asylum on the grounds that if extradited to Sweden to be questioned about sexual assault allegations, he would be at risk of extradition to the US to face espionage or conspiracy charges arising from the leaking of hundreds of thousands of secret US military and diplomatic reports.

US Vice-President Joe Biden labelled Mr Assange a "high-tech terrorist" in December 2010 and US congressional leaders have called for him to be charged with espionage.

Sarah Palin and Mike Huckabee -- both once involved in presidential campaigns -- have both urged that Mr Assange be "hunted down".

Mr Assange's US attorney, Michael Ratner, said the designation of WikiLeaks as an "enemy" had serious implications for the WikiLeaks publisher if he were to be extradited to the US, including possible military detention.

US Army private Bradley Manning faces a court martial charged with aiding the enemy -- identified as al-Qaeda -- by transmitting information that, published by WikiLeaks, became available to the enemy.



Mr Ratner said that under US law it would most likely have been considered criminal for the US Air Force analyst to communicate classified material to journalists and publishers, but those journalists and publishers would not have been considered the enemy or prosecuted.

"However, in the FOI documents there is no allegation of any actual communication for publication that would aid an enemy of the United States such as al-Qaeda, nor are there allegations that WikiLeaks published such information," he said.

"Almost the entire set of documents is concerned with the analyst's communications with people close to and supporters of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks, with the worry that she would disclose classified documents to Julian Assange and WikiLeaks. It appears that Julian Assange and WikiLeaks are the 'enemy'. An enemy is dealt with under the laws of war, which could include killing, capturing, detaining without trial, etc."

The Australian government has repeatedly denied knowledge of any US intention to charge Mr Assange or seek his extradition. However, Australian diplomatic cables released to Fairfax Media under freedom-of-information laws over the past 18 months have confirmed the continuation of an "unprecedented" US Justice Department espionage investigation targeting Mr Assange and WikiLeaks.

The Australian diplomatic reports canvassed the possibility that the US may eventually seek Mr Assange's extradition on conspiracy or information-theft-related offences to avoid extradition problems arising from the nature of espionage as a political offence and the free-speech protections in the US constitution.

Mr Assange is scheduled this morning to speak by video link to a meeting on his asylum case on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. The meeting will be attended by Ecuadorean Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino.

In a separate FOI decision yesterday, the Department of Foreign Affairs confirmed that the release of Australian diplomatic cables about WikiLeaks and Mr Assange had been the subject of extensive consultation with the US.

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/us-calls-assange-enemy-of-state-20120927-26m7s.html>

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## **The Audacity of US Policies**

*The following is the full transcript of Julian Assange's address to UN delegates on Wednesday, September 26, 2012. The founder of Wikileaks offered the remarks via video stream from the Ecuadorean embassy in London where he has sought political refuge from possible extradition to the United States.*

*Julian Assange  
Common Dreams  
September 27, 2012*

Foreign Minister Patino, fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

I speak to you today as a free man, because despite having been detained for 659 days without charge, **I am free in the most basic and important sense. I am free to speak my mind.**

This freedom exists because the nation of Ecuador has granted me political asylum and other nations have rallied to support its decision.

And it is because of Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights that WikiLeaks is able to "receive and impart information... through any media, and any medium and regardless of frontiers". And it is because of Article 14.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which enshrines the right to seek asylum from persecution, and the 1951 Refugee Convention and other conventions produced by the United Nations that I am able to be protected along with others from political persecution.

It is thanks to the United Nations that I am able to exercise my inalienable right to seek protection from the arbitrary and excessive actions taken by governments against me and the staff and supporters of my organisation. It is because of the absolute prohibition on torture enshrined in customary international law and the UN Convention Against Torture that we stand firmly to denounce torture and war crimes, as an organisation, regardless of who the perpetrators are.

I would like to thank the courtesy afforded to me by the Government of Ecuador in providing me with the space here today speak once again at the UN, in circumstances very different to my intervention in the Universal Periodic Review in Geneva.

Almost two years ago today, I spoke there about our work uncovering the torture and killing of over 100,000 Iraqi citizens.

But today I want to tell you an American story.

I want to tell you the story of a young American soldier in Iraq.

The US administration is trying to erect a national regime of secrecy. A national regime of obfuscation.

The soldier was born in Crescent. Oklahoma to a Welsh mother and US Navy father. His parents fell in love. His father was stationed at a US military base in Wales.

The soldier showed early promise as a boy, winning top prize at science fairs 3 years in a row.

He believed in the truth, and like all of us, hated hypocrisy.

He believed in liberty and the right for all of us to pursue happiness. He believed in the values that founded an independent United States. He believed in Madison, he believed in Jefferson and he believed in Paine. Like many teenagers, he was unsure what to do with his life, but he knew he wanted to defend his country and he knew he

wanted to learn about the world. He entered the US military and, like his father, trained as an intelligence analyst.

In late 2009, aged 21, he was deployed to Iraq.

There, it is alleged, he saw a US military that often did not follow the rule of law, and in fact, engaged in murder and supported political corruption.

It is alleged, it was there, in Baghdad, in 2010 that he gave to WikiLeaks, and to the world, details that exposed the torture of Iraqis, the murder of journalists and the detailed records of over 120,000 civilian killings in Iraq and in Afghanistan. He is also alleged to have given WikiLeaks 251,000 US diplomatic cables, which then went on to help trigger the Arab Spring. This young soldier's name is Bradley Manning.

Allegedly betrayed by an informer, he was then imprisoned in Baghdad, imprisoned in Kuwait, and imprisoned in Virginia, where he was kept for 9 months in isolation and subject to severe abuse. **The UN Special Rapporteur for Torture, Juan Mendez, investigated and formally found against the United States.**

Hillary Clinton's spokesman resigned. Bradley Manning, science fair all-star, soldier and patriot was degraded, abused and psychologically tortured by his own government. He was charged with a death penalty offence. These things happened to him, as the US government tried to break him, to force him to testify against WikiLeaks and me.

**As of today Bradley Manning has been detained without trial for 856 days.**

**The legal maximum in the US military is 120 days.**

The US administration is trying to erect a national regime of secrecy. A national regime of obfuscation.

**A regime where any government employee revealing sensitive information to a media organization can be sentenced to death, life imprisonment or for espionage and journalists from a media organization with them.**

We should not underestimate the scale of the investigation which has happened into WikiLeaks. I only wish I could say that Bradley Manning was the only victim of the situation. But the assault on WikiLeaks in relation to that matter and others has produced an investigation that Australian diplomats say is without precedent in its scale and nature. That the US government called a "whole of government investigation."

**Those government agencies identified so far as a matter of public record having been involved in this investigation include:** the Department of Defense, Centcom, the Defence Intelligence Agency, the US Army Criminal Investigation Division, the United States Forces in Iraq, the First Army Division, The US Army Computer Crimes Investigative Unit, the CCIU, the Second Army Cyber-Command. And within those three separate intelligence investigations, the Department of Justice, most significantly, and its US Grand Jury in Alexandria Virginia, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which now has, according to court testimony early this year produced a file of 42,135

pages into WikiLeaks, of which less than 8000 concern Bradley Manning. The Department of State, the Department of State's Diplomatic Security Services. In addition we have been investigated by the Office of the Director General of National Intelligence, the ODNI, the Director of National Counterintelligence Executive, the Central Intelligence Agency, the House Oversight Committee, the National Security Staff Interagency Committee, and the PIAB - the President's Intelligence Advisory Board.

Footage from an air assault on unarmed civilians, including journalists, by two US Apache helicopters was released by Wikileaks in 2010.

The Department of Justice spokesperson Dean Boyd confirmed in July 2012 that the Department of Justice investigation into WikiLeaks is ongoing.

**For all Barack Obama's fine words yesterday, and there were many of them, fine words, it is his administration that boasts on his campaign website of criminalizing more speech that all previous US presidents combined.**

I am reminded of the phrase: "the audacity of hope."

Who can say that the President of the United States is not audacious?

Was it not audacity for the United States government to take credit for the last two years' avalanche of progress?

**Was it not audacious to say, on Tuesday, that the "United States supported the forces of change" in the Arab Spring?**

Tunisian history did not begin in December 2010.

And Mohammed Bouazizi did not set himself on fire so that Barack Obama could be reelected.

His death was an emblem of the despair he had to endure under the Ben Ali regime.

The world knew, after reading WikiLeaks publications, that the Ben Ali regime and its government had for long years enjoyed the indifference, if not the support, of the United States -- in full knowledge of its excesses and its crimes.

**So it must come as a surprise to Tunisians that the United States supported the forces of change in their country.**

Credit should be given where it is due, but it should be withheld where it is not.

**It must come as a surprise to the Egyptian teenagers who washed American teargas out of their eyes that the US administration supported change in Egypt.**

**It must come as a surprise to those who heard Hillary Clinton insist that Mubarak's regime was "stable," and when it was clear to everyone that it was not, that its hated intelligence chief, Sueilman, who we proved the US knew was a torturer, should take the realm.**

It must come as a surprise to all those Egyptians who heard Vice President Joseph Biden declare that Hosni Mubarak was a democrat and that Julian Assange was a high tech terrorist.

**It is disrespectful to the dead and incarcerated of the Bahrain uprising to claim that the United States "supported the forces of change."**

**This is indeed audacity.**

Who can say that it is not audacious that the President-- concerned to appear leaderly-- looks back on this sea change-- the people's change-- and calls it his own?

But we can take heart here too, because it means that the White House has seen that this progress is inevitable.

In this "season of progress" the president has seen which way the wind is blowing.

And he must now pretend that it is his administration that made it blow.

Very well. This is better than the alternative -- to drift into irrelevance as the world moves on.

**We must be clear here.**

**The United States is not the enemy.**

**Its government is not uniform. In some cases good people in the United States supported the forces of change. And perhaps Barack Obama personally was one of them.**

But in others, and *en masse*, early on, it actively opposed them.

This is a matter of historical record.

And it is not fair and it is not appropriate for the President to distort that record for political gain, or for the sake of uttering fine words.

Credit should be given where it is due, but it should be withheld where it is not.

And as for the fine words.

They are fine words.

And we commend and agree with these fine words.

**There are times for words and there are times for action. The time for words has run out.**

We agree when President Obama said yesterday that people can resolve their differences peacefully.

We agree that diplomacy can take the place of war.

And we agree that this is an interdependent world, that all of us have a stake in.

We agree that freedom and self-determination are not merely American or Western values, but universal values.

And we agree with the President when he says that we must speak honestly if we are serious about these ideals.

But fine words languish without commensurate actions.

**President Obama spoke out strongly in favour of the freedom of expression.**

**"Those in power," he said, "have to resist the temptation to crack down on dissent."**

There are times for words and there are times for action. The time for words has run out.

It is time for the US to cease its persecution of WikiLeaks, to cease its persecution of our people, and to cease its persecution of our alleged sources.

It is time for President Obama do the right thing, and join the forces of change, not in fine words but in fine deeds.

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DN: 2012-09-27

## **Amnesty: Sverige bör lova att inte överlämna Assange till USA**

Svenska myndigheter bör utfärda ett löfte om att inte överlämna Julian Assange till USA om han går med på att resa till Sverige, uppmanar Amnesty International.

– Om de svenska myndigheterna har möjlighet att offentligt bekräfta att Assange inte kommer att befinna sig på ett flygplan på väg till USA om han överlämnar sig själv till svenska domstolar, kommer det att leda till två saker, säger Nicola Duckworth, utredningschef vid Amnesty, i ett uttalande.

– För det första kommer det att bryta det rådande dödläget och för det andra kommer det att innebära att kvinnorna som har riktat anklagelser om sexuella övergrepp inte förvägras rättvisa, fortsätter Duckworth.

Amnestys vädjan kommer dagen efter det att den efterlyste Wikileaksgrundaren Assange i går adresserade politiska ledare i FN-högkvarteret och bland annat uppmanade Barack Obama att "sluta jaga Wikileaks".

Människorättsorganisationen hävdar att en utlämning till USA skulle utsätta Assange för en "reell risk för allvarliga brott mot mänskliga rättigheter" som yttrandefrihet, samt att han skulle löpa risk att bli utsatt för tortyr.

Krav på liknande löften från Sveriges håll är ingenting nytt, utan har bland annat framförts från Wikileaks håll sedan tidigare. Utrikesminister Carl Bildt har avfärdat garantier från politiskt håll med argumentet att det då skulle röra sig om ministerstyrelsen.

Eftersom Sverige har ett utlämningsavtal med USA går det heller inte att göra den typen av utfästelser.

– Vi är i princip förpliktigade att utlämna personer som USA begär utlämnade förutsatt att ett antal förutsättningar är uppfyllda, har folkrättsexperten Pål Wrange tidigare sagt till SVT:s Rapport.

Australiensaren Assange har sökt och fått asyl i Ecuador och befinner sig sedan i somras på landets ambassad i London. Svenskt rättsväsende har begärt att han överlämnas till Sverige för att förhöras om sexbrottsanklagelser, någonting som Storbritannien gått med på, men förhandlingarna mellan Ecuador och Storbritannien har hittills varit utan framgång.

• *Matilda Lindwall*

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## Assange 'guarantees' spark Amnesty spat

*Oliver Gee  
The Local  
28 Sept. 2012*

The Swedish division of human rights group Amnesty International said on Friday that it doesn't support demands from its parent that the Swedish government guarantee WikiLeaks-founder Julian Assange would not be extradited to the US should he come to Sweden.

**"The Swedish chapter of Amnesty International does not agree with the way the organization handled the question of guarantees,"** Bobby Vellucci, the Country Information Coordinator with Amnesty in Sweden, told The Local on Friday.

**"We do not consider it to be appropriate or possible to ask the Swedish government to give guarantees ensuring Assange is not extradited to the US."**

The comments come after Amnesty International urged Sweden to give Assange assurances that it will not extradite him to the US if he comes to Stockholm for questioning.

Assange has been holed up at the Ecuadorian embassy in London since June 19th to avoid extradition to Sweden to face questioning in a sex crimes investigation. He was subsequently granted diplomatic asylum by Ecuador, a development which has strained its relations with the UK, which says it is under an obligation to extradite Assange to Sweden.

On Thursday --- Assange's 100th day inside the embassy --- Amnesty said it was "time to break the impasse".

"If the Swedish authorities are able to confirm publicly that Assange will not eventually find himself on a plane to the USA if he submits himself to the authority of the Swedish courts then this will hopefully achieve two things," Nicola Duckworth, Senior Director for Research at Amnesty International's headquarters in London, told the AFP.

"First, it will break the current impasse and second it will mean the women who have levelled accusations of sexual assault are not denied justice."

**When Vellucci was pressed to further elaborate on the Swedish Amnesty chapter's views toward the parent organization's statements, he refused to offer further details,** instead explaining the chapter was focused on Swedish prosecutors' preliminary criminal probe into the sex crimes accusations levelled against Assange.

"Amnesty's primary focus is the Swedish preliminary investigation and that Julian Assange's presence in Sweden would of course assist in the further investigation of the charges against him," he told The Local.

"If at a later stage however, the USA should request that Julian Assange be extradited to face criminal charges in connection with Wikileaks, Amnesty International would oppose an extradition on the grounds that he would be at risk of serious human rights violations in the USA." *[And would be powerless to stop it. --A.B.]*

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## **US investigates possible WikiLeaks leaker for 'communicating with the enemy'**

*US military's new legal theory threatens to convert unauthorized leaks into a capital offense. Who is the real 'enemy'?*

Glenn Greenwald  
The Guardian  
27 September 2012

A US air force systems analyst who expressed support for WikiLeaks and accused leaker Bradley Manning triggered a formal military investigation last year to determine whether she herself had leaked any documents to the group. Air Force investigative documents, obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request, show that the analyst was repeatedly interviewed about her contacts with and support for **WikiLeaks-- what investigators repeatedly refer to as the "anti-US or anti-military group"** -- as well as her support for the group's founder, Julian Assange.

The investigation was ultimately closed when they could find no evidence of unauthorized leaking, but what makes these documents noteworthy is the possible crime cited by military officials as the one they were investigating: namely, "Communicating With the Enemy", under Article 104 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

**That is one of the most serious crimes a person can commit -- it carries the penalty of death -- and is committed when a person engages in "unauthorized communication,**



correspondence, or intercourse with the enemy". The military investigation form also requires investigators to identify the "victim" of the crime they are investigating, and here, they designated "society" as the victim:

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
AIR FORCE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS

**(U) Summary Complaint Report**

(U) REPORT BY: SA [ *46 b7c* ] (U) FILE NO: [REDACTED]

(U) DATE OF REPORT: 26 Apr 11

(U) MATTERS ALLEGED: COMMUNICATING WITH THE ENEMY, 104-D-

(G) SUBJECT(S): [REDACTED], Female Born: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; SSN: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] United Kingdom.

(U) VICTIM(S): SOCIETY

(U) SPECIAL INTEREST: None (U) MISSION AREA: Counterintelligence

Submitted for approval on 26 Apr 11 by: [REDACTED]

How could leaking to WikiLeaks possibly constitute the crime of "communicating with the enemy"? Who exactly is the "enemy"? There are two possible answers to that question, both quite disturbing.

The first possibility is the one suggested by today's Sydney Morning Herald article on these documents (as well as by WikiLeaks itself): that the US military now formally characterizes WikiLeaks and Assange as an "enemy", the same designation it gives to groups such as Al Qaeda and the Taliban. This would not be the first time such sentiments were expressed by the US military: recall that one of the earliest leaks from the then-largely-unknown group was a secret report prepared back in 2008 by the US Army which, as the New York Times put it, **included WikiLeaks on the Pentagon's "list of the enemies threatening the security of the United States". That Army document then plotted how to destroy the group.**

But it's the second possibility that seems to me to be the far more likely one: namely, that the US government, as part of Obama's unprecedented war on whistleblowers, has now fully embraced the pernicious theory that any leaks of classified information can constitute the crime of "aiding the enemy" or "communicating with the enemy" by virtue of the fact that, indirectly, "the enemy" will -- like everyone else in the world-- ultimately learn of what is disclosed.

Indeed, the US military is currently prosecuting accused WikiLeaks leaker Bradley Manning on multiple charges including "aiding the enemy", also under Article 104 of the UCMJ, and a capital offense (though prosecutors are requesting "only" life imprisonment rather than execution). Military prosecutors have since revealed that their theory is that the 23-year-old Army Private "aided al-Qaida by leaking hundreds

of thousands of military and other government documents" --- **specifically, that "Manning indirectly aided al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula by giving information to WikiLeaks."**

It seems clear that the US military now deems any leaks of classified information to constitute the capital offense of "aiding the enemy" or "communicating with the enemy" even if no information is passed directly to the "enemy" and there is no intent to aid or communicate with them. **Merely informing the public about classified government activities now constitutes this capital crime because it "indirectly" informs the enemy.**

The implications of this theory are as obvious as they are disturbing. If someone can be charged with "aiding" or "communicating with the enemy" by virtue of leaking to WikiLeaks, then why wouldn't that same crime be committed by someone leaking classified information to any outlet: the New York Times, the Guardian, ABC News or anyone else? In other words, **does this theory not inevitably and necessarily make all leaking of all classified information -- whether to WikiLeaks or any media outlet-- a capital offense: treason or a related crime?**

**International Law Professor Kevin Jon Heller made a similar point when the charges against Manning were first revealed:** "[I]f Manning has aided the enemy, so has any media organization that published the information he allegedly stole. Nothing in Article 104 requires proof that the defendant illegally acquired the information that aided the enemy. As a result, if the mere act of ensuring that harmful information is published on the internet qualifies either as indirectly 'giving intelligence to the enemy' (if the military can prove an enemy actually accessed the information) or as indirectly 'communicating with the enemy' (because any reasonable person knows that enemies can access information on the internet), there is no relevant factual difference between Manning and a media organization that published the relevant information."

Professor Heller goes on to note that while "WikiLeaks or the New York Times could not actually be charged under Article 104" because "the UCMJ only applies to soldiers", **there is nonetheless "still something profoundly disturbing about the prospect of convicting Manning and sentencing him to life imprisonment for doing exactly what media organizations did, as well".**

**What these new documents reveal is that this odious theory is not confined to Manning. The US military appears to be treating all potential leaks -- at least those to WikiLeaks -- as "aiding" or "communicating with" the enemy. But there is no possible limiting principle that would confine that theory only to such leaks; they would necessarily apply to all leaks of classified information to any media outlets.**

**It is always worth underscoring that the New York Times has published far more government secrets than WikiLeaks ever has, and more importantly, has published far more sensitive secrets than WikiLeaks has** (unlike WikiLeaks, which has never published anything that was designated "Top Secret", the New York Times has repeatedly done so: the Pentagon Papers, the Bush NSA wiretapping program, the SWIFT banking surveillance system, and the cyberwarfare program aimed at Iran were all "Top Secret" when the newspaper revealed them, as was the network of CIA secret prisons exposed by the Washington Post). There is simply no way to convert basic leaks to WikiLeaks into capital offenses -- as the Obama administration is plainly doing -- without sweeping up all leaks into that attack.

Of course, that outcome would almost certainly be a feature, not a bug, for Obama officials. This is, after all, the same administration that has prosecuted whistleblowers under espionage charges that threatened to send them to prison for life without any evidence of harm to national security, and has brought double the number of such prosecutions as all prior administrations combined. **Converting all leaks into capital offenses would be perfectly consistent with the unprecedented secrecy fixation on the part of the Most Transparent Administration Ever™.**

The irony from these developments is glaring. The real "enemies" of American "society" are not those who seek to inform the American people about the bad acts engaged in by their government in secret. As Democrats once recognized prior to the age of Obama -- in the age of Daniel Ellsberg -- people who do that are more aptly referred to as "heroes". The actual "enemies" are those who abuse secrecy powers to conceal government actions and to threaten with life imprisonment or even execution those who blow the whistle on high-level wrongdoing.

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## **Hague says Britain is obliged to extradite WikiLeaks founder**

*Foreign secretary tells Ecuador that UK must extradite Assange, while Amnesty claims Swedish assurances would end impasse*

*Press Association  
27 September 2012*

The British government stressed to Ecuador today that it was under an obligation to extradite the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to Sweden, where he faces questioning over sex crimes allegations.

The foreign secretary, William Hague, held talks with Ecuador's foreign minister, Ricardo Patino, in New York, where ministers have gathered this week for a United Nations meeting.

Assange has been in Ecuador's London embassy since June as part of his bid to avoid extradition to Sweden. He fears being sent to the United States if he travels to Sweden, to face interrogation over the whistle-blowing website. He has been granted political asylum by Ecuador but faces arrest if he leaves the embassy after breaking his UK bail conditions.

The Foreign Office said: "The foreign secretary said he wanted to see close and productive bilateral relations between the UK and Ecuador, including in the areas of trade and investment, higher education, and counter-narcotics co-operation.

"On the case of Mr Julian Assange, the foreign secretary told Minister Patino that the UK was under an obligation to extradite Mr Assange to Sweden.

**"The concept of 'diplomatic asylum', while well-established in Latin America, did not feature in UK law.**

"The foreign secretary described the extensive human rights safeguards in UK extradition law. He requested the government of Ecuador to study these provisions closely in considering the way ahead.

"Both ministers agreed that they were committed to the search for a diplomatic solution to Mr Assange's case. They were willing to meet again at this level in due course to continue these exchanges."

Patino said: "This morning I met with the foreign secretary, William Hague, where we discussed a number of issues relating to Mr Assange. Those conversations were cordial and constructive.

"As a result of our talks today, myself and Mr Hague have agreed to meet again soon to continue the dialogue that I hope will enable us to find a diplomatic solution that respects international conventions on human rights as well as respecting the integrity of sovereign nations."

Today marks the 100th day since Assange entered the London embassy.

Amnesty International said the Swedish authorities should issue assurances to the UK and to Assange that if he left Ecuador's embassy and agreed to go to Sweden to face sexual assault claims, he would not be extradited to the US in connection with WikiLeaks.

Nicola Duckworth, senior director for research at Amnesty International, said: "If the Swedish authorities are able to confirm publicly that Assange will not eventually find himself on a plane to the USA if he submits himself to the authority of the Swedish courts, then this will hopefully achieve two things.

"First, it will break the current impasse and, second, it will mean the women who have levelled accusations of sexual assault are not denied justice.

"It is vital that states show they are serious about dealing with allegations of sexual violence and that they respect both the rights of the women who made the complaints and the person accused."

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## **What is Slutwalk London doing lining up behind Julian Assange?**

*The group's statement is a self-contradictory trainwreck that co-opts its followers into a cause they never signed up for*

*Sarah Ditum  
The Guardian  
28 September 2012*

Oh dear, Slutwalk London. On Saturday you're marshalling crowds of women in fishnets and bras to chant "my dress is not a yes" and promoting petitions insisting that the Home Office should prosecute rapists. Come Tuesday, you're taking to Twitter to issue statements objecting to the extradition of Julian Assange to face rape allegations

in Sweden. Rapists should be prosecuted, but according to Slutwalk London, the fact that many who are accused of rape ultimately aren't convicted means that this particular accused rapist shouldn't be subject to due process. It's an awkward position to adopt, and the most awkward thing of all is the way it conscripts those who joined the march to a cause that was never part of the prospectus.

I've squinted at the statement, lurched back and forth at my monitor, and made myself boss-eyed in the hope that the statement is the literary equivalent of a Magic Eye picture: looks like a nonsensical smear on first glimpse, eventually resolves into glorious meaning. I'm going to save you some time here. Don't bother with any of that, because the statement really is nothing but a self-contradictory trainwreck. Slutwalk Toronto (the mother of all Slutwalks) has already discreetly expressed its concern about the London branch's statement, again via Twitter.

Now, the legality of Assange's extradition has been done and done and done again, and I've got no desire to rehash here what's been dealt with thoroughly elsewhere – not least because I'm not a lawyer, and I think the world can do without another non-legal opinion on this business. But given that Slutwalk London has no more passed its bar exams than I have, I do wonder why on earth they felt they had to say anything.

What did the person posting that statement think she was going to achieve? It's hard to imagine that anyone was waiting for Slutwalk London to take a stand before they decided for themselves about a matter of international law. There are things I might look to Slutwalk for guidance on: for example, does flashing my thigh mean I deserve to get raped (no) and should the police advise women against flashing their thighs for their own protection (no again), but the Assange case isn't one of them.

And while it can't do any good, it can certainly do plenty of harm. Anyone who's ever had a vague feeling that all-out-with-our-tits-out is flawed as an anti-sexual violence strategy could point to this as evidence of Slutwalk's lack of coherence – and no one who's ill-disposed to a cause is likely to distinguish London's organisers from all the Slutwalks worldwide making a noise for women's right not to be assaulted.

At the same time, Slutwalk London has inadvertently lined itself (and its unwitting supporters) up with an unappealing gaggle of rape apologists and victim blamers. It's all very well for the statement to stress "We are not saying the women lied or that they should not get justice," but lots of people who support Assange have said that women lie. If an anti-rape campaign must intervene on this case at all, surely it should be addressing those grotesque statements, not condoning the position of those who made them.

The revelations of how the victims of the Rochdale child abuse circle were failed show again how prejudices about female sexuality are used to deny women and girls justice. In a BBC interview, one of the abused girls explains that social services told her parents that she was a "prostitute" and had made a "life choice" – even though she was only 15. Apparently, whatever she wore and wherever she went were seen as tokens of her own moral failings, rather than being recognised as the signs of hideous abuse. Attitudes like that are what Slutwalk was founded to counter. Co-opting supporters in defence of an alleged rapist is a betrayal of victims of sexual violence and a manipulative abuse of the backing that women have given to the Slutwalk cause. Oh dear, Slutwalk London, oh dear.

Slutwalk London were asked for a comment but have not yet replied.

## **Ecuador will care for Julian Assange in embassy if WikiLeaks founder falls ill**

*Ecuador prepared to set up operating theatre in London embassy if necessary, says foreign minister*

*Julian Borger  
The Guardian  
28 September 2012*

Ecuador is prepared to set up an operating theatre in its London embassy if Julian Assange needs urgent medical attention and the UK is not prepared to guarantee his safe passage to a hospital and back, according to the Ecuadorean foreign minister.

As the WikiLeaks founder spent his 100th day in the Ecuadorean embassy, where he has sought refuge from extradition to Sweden to face allegations of sexual crimes, the country's foreign minister met his British counterpart, William Hague, to ask about contingency plans should Assange fall ill.

Hague told Ricardo Patino that he would consult officials and lawyers and respond within a few days, but a British official commented: "Maybe the Ecuadoreans should have thought of that before they granted him asylum." The official added that British police were under obligation to arrest Assange as soon as he stepped out of the embassy.

"One thing we have proposed is to have an ambulance parked outside," Patino told the Guardian in an interview in New York. "What we have said, if such a case should happen, we should be ready to install an operating theatre inside the premises, unless Mr Hague responds, as he promised in the next few days, that he [Assange] would be able to go to a hospital."

The Ecuadorean foreign minister said that the Australian government had offered to help organise Assange's healthcare during an indefinite stay in an embassy apartment, given the diplomatic impasse over his fate. Ecuador offered him asylum last month, saying he faced political persecution in the US, but the UK insists it has a legal duty to arrest him and extradite him to Sweden to face questioning. Australian officials have not confirmed Patino's claim that Canberra had offered medical help.

When Assange addressed diplomats at the UN general assembly this week, via a satellite link from the London embassy, he appeared pale, with dark rings under his eyes. His voice was hoarse and he sniffed frequently.

Patino said he was not aware of any immediate health concerns for Assange but added: "We know that anyone who lives in these conditions of confinement may easily suffer from health issues, not only physical but also psychological. Imagine you have to stay in a room for three months. Imagine if you are going to be five years in this confinement."

In November 2010, a Swedish court ordered Assange be detained for questioning after allegations by two women that what had started as consensual sex had turned non-consensual.

This week, Amnesty International called on Sweden to provide a guarantee that if Assange travelled there to answer questions over the sex-crime allegations, he would not be sent on to the US for charges connected to WikiLeaks' publication of thousands of US diplomatic and military cables.

A spokeswoman for the Swedish foreign ministry said the country's legislation did not allow any judicial decision like extradition to be predetermined. The UK, which would also have to permit an extradition to the US, has given the same response but Hague stressed to Patino at their New York meeting that the European Convention on Human Rights sets strict limits on such extraditions, forbidding them, for example, if the charges in question carry the death penalty.

"The foreign secretary described the extensive human-rights safeguards in UK extradition law. He requested the government of Ecuador to study these provisions closely in considering the way ahead," a foreign office spokesman said.

Officials said that the treatment of the alleged source of the WikiLeaks US cables, Bradley Manning — an American soldier whose lawyers say was subject to brutal and humiliating treatment and who has so far spent more than two years in jail without trial — would be taken into account if and when any future extradition decision was made.

**However, Patino said that it was too late for such assurances, since Ecuador's decision to offer asylum was irrevocable. "When we hadn't yet granted asylum, we could talk about guarantees," the foreign minister said. "Now that we have granted asylum we are under the obligation not to surrender Mr Assange."**

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## **AEI Event Aims to Discredit Ecuador and Assange, but Collapses**

*Keane Bhatt*

*North American Congress on Latin America*

*September 24, 2012*

The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) is a formidable, pro-corporate think tank in Washington, D.C., with a net worth of \$150 million. Former Vice President Cheney receives over \$200,000 a year from AEI for working an average of one hour a week as a trustee, according to the organization's tax filings.

Roger Noriega, a registered lobbyist and former assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs under Bush II, coordinates AEI's Latin America program. He's still extremely influential within government. As The New York Times reported in the aftermath of the Honduran coup in 2009:

Congressional aides said that less than 10 days after Mr. Zelaya was ousted, Mr. Noriega organized a meeting for supporters of the *de facto* government with members of the Senate.

Mr. Fisk, [whose political career has included stints on the National Security Council and as a deputy assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs under Mr.

Bush] ... said he was stunned by the turnout. **"I had never seen eight senators in one room to talk about Latin America in my entire career,"** he said.

So when AEI provides opinions about Latin American affairs, powerful people in Washington listen. Remarkably though, after setting up a public event last week on Ecuador's asylum of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, AEI's message imploded.

**On September 18, AEI hosted a panel called, "Assange's asylum in Correa's Ecuador: Last refuge for scoundrels?" Two right-leaning panelists were invited to defend that position, while economist Mark Weisbrot of the left-leaning think tank, Center for Economic and Policy Research, was left to challenge the basic framework for the discussion. And the moderator standing between these two conflicting views? Roger Noriega.**

Despite the medium's obvious slant and imbalance, Weisbrot took the opportunity to roundly debunk numerous right-wing tropes surrounding the issues of press freedoms, the role of WikiLeaks, accusations against Assange, and the costs and benefits to Ecuador in granting asylum to Assange.

Debate video at:

<https://nacla.org/blog/2012/9/24/aei-event-aims-discredit-ecuador-and-assange-collapses>

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## **'It's like living in a space station'**

*Julian Assange speaks out about living in a one-room embassy refuge with a mattress on the floor and a blue lamp to mimic daylight*

*Sarah Oliver  
Daily Mail  
29 September 2012*



The court in exile of Julian Assange — cyber terrorist, or the world's greatest freedom fighter, depending on your world view — is a curiously muted place. The acolytes who pledged to maintain a protective vigil outside the Ecuadorian Embassy, where he has been encamped since June, are long gone. So, too, is the 50-strong squad of officers who policed his first few hours within the red-brick mansion block where the embassy is housed.

There's now a policeman on the steps outside, and one by the lift in the communal foyer in case he makes a run for a rooftop helicopter. Another stands on an exterior stairwell with an unrestricted view of the clumsily made single bed on which Assange snatches sleep.

But 100 days after he sought political asylum here, the thrilling siege-cum-circus surrounding the WikiLeaks editor-in-chief's bid to avoid extradition from the UK to Sweden has gone very quiet indeed.

Inside the small and not very grand embassy, Assange is having lunch with diplomatic staff. They are sharing a traditional South American dish, ceviche (raw fish marinated in citrus juice) to mark someone's departure for Quito — the very journey Assange is now prevented from making by the authorities.

In the flesh he is taller, at 6ft 2in, and more athletic than pictures suggest. His familiar sweep of grey hair trimmed short, he is clean-shaven and wearing a traditional embroidered Ecuadorian shirt, along with bright white sports socks and sky-blue trainers. **Reports of a lack of self-care seem wide of the mark.**

Had Assange not found refuge within these walls, he would have been sent to Sweden to answer allegations of sexual assault. He fears Swedish authorities will send him to America to face charges of espionage after WikiLeaks published a vast tranche of classified documents said to have been passed on by US army private Bradley Manning. Australian-born Assange could face life imprisonment in America.

He ushers me into the modest quarters that have been his home since he entered the embassy. The studio room has space for little more than a mattress on the floor, a rickety shelving unit and a small round table with leatherette chairs. But this is, for the time being at least, a cell of his choosing. So how is he then, living in this small corner of Ecuador with just a shared bathroom and a glossy red kitchen the size of a broom cupboard?

'It's a little bit like being in a space station,' he says. 'I have been in solitary confinement [following his arrest in 2010 on the sexual allegations] and this isn't comparable to the difficulties in prison. I have complete control within a small environment and it enables me to do what is most important, which is to protect my work from the attacks it is under.'

'The first two months in the embassy were quite positive. We had a big political battle, we had momentum, there was the physicality of the training to use emergency equipment and the day-to-day task of building a life in here.'

**'That has stabilised now and the stability is becoming annoying. There is a longer-term danger with all injustices that in continuing they become normalised.'**

Yet there is nothing normal about the unique predicament in which he finds himself. I am not permitted to tell you the precise nature of the safety equipment he keeps close to his bed, nor of the contents of the documents and diagrams pinned to his wall.

But I will say that Assange has relocated his cyber empire, running it with multiple mobile telephones and laptop computers. He meticulously shreds anything that might leave a paper trail. 'The enemy is vicious, it's like trench warfare in a monsoon,' he says.

Rest has become elusive. 'I work a 17-hour day, seven days a week. Sleep is difficult because of the police movements.' (Certainly his room is noisy.)

'There is an absurdly oppressive police presence, which is not a productive way to deal with the situation. I have a blue sky-light frequency lamp which mimics blue sky shining up to the ceiling. I have to have it on a timer or I am like a battery hen, I stay up all night working,' he smiles.

He rarely has the time or appetite to read for pleasure; among the few books on his shelves are a Spanish dictionary and one on Guantanamo. He relaxes by watching films and TV shows on his laptop. He is currently immersed in *The Twilight Zone*, the cult Sixties sci-fi series, and is also enjoying a box set of *The West Wing*.

His film selection is broad and includes *The Ides Of March*, with George Clooney as a corrupt White House hopeful, and a tale of an Aborigine prisoner's civil-rights struggle, *This Is How You'll Make Your Bed In Prison*.

Assange maintains a strict exercise regime, seeing a personal trainer every other day. Being Assange, this is an SAS veteran, who is also a military whistleblower. He has a running machine, which was a gift from film director Ken Loach, and runs between three and five miles each day, and also does boxing and calisthenics.

He makes a point of eating as much fresh food as can be brought into the embassy by friends and staff. On a ledge I spot charcoal capsules, to aid digestion, and Vitamin D pills, which compensate for the lack of sunlight.

He has also invested in a UVB light to make up for not being in the sun. He tried it for the first time two days before he appeared on the balcony to address supporters and the world's media, six weeks ago.

'I put it on so I would look better, not so pale. After half an hour, one of my staff said, "Julian, your face on one side is beetroot, and your neck as well." I looked like a boiled lobster but the balcony was a major political moment and I thought what, what, what am I going to do?

'I decided I would have to do the other side to match. My eyes were burning, I couldn't see, I had blisters all down the left side and then my skin started to fall off.

'A friend's wife came in and experimented with everything in her make-up bag to even me out. It took an hour and a half to ensure I didn't look like a Chernobyl victim,' he laughs.

That balcony appearance, Assange's first in public for two months, was the undoubted highlight of the past 100 days.

'I was heartened to have so much support but also just to see new bricks... I was like, "Wow, new bricks, they're cool!"

'I miss many things, going to the shops or out to eat with friends. I miss an open horizon, putting my toes in the sea, going fishing, climbing a mountain...'

But more than anything he misses his family. For Assange, 41, is a loving son and father. There are hints that he was in a serious relationship before his life became one of legal drama, although he shies away from discussing any details.

He says of his situation: 'Most normal human relationships are made obviously difficult. Anyone who I was in love with I would not be able to see because of security considerations. **It has caused severe difficulties to a relationship that was important to me. Some members of my family, including my children, have had death threats.**

'I took certain risks. If you believe in philosophical or political ideas, you must pay the price and that is OK. But family members, they did not sign up to pay that price, most of all my children.

**'Now right-wing bloggers in the US have called for them to be targeted to force us to stop publishing. They want to use my son as leverage against us. It is a significant ongoing problem.'**

Assange is thought to be a father of two: a boy — the elder — and a girl. He will not reveal details about his children, their ages or countries of residence, for security reasons. He fears what might be done by individuals and states such as Syria which have been held up to scrutiny by WikiLeaks.

**What he will say is this: 'I raised my eldest son as a single father for more than 14 years in Australia. I was a busy father but not an absent one. I have not seen any of my children since before I was under house arrest.' Then he adds tellingly: 'The difficulties in logistics translate into the emotional environment.'**

He does not believe his own life is in danger, despite the occasional outburst from the US far-right opponents he describes as 'crazy patriots'.

'It's more a war of attrition: character attacks, the financial blockade [which began in 2010 and has since cost WikiLeaks an estimated 95 per cent of its income] and 12 major court cases around the world. The US wants to show that people cannot get away with embarrassing them the way we have done. But it can't have me die in a car accident because that is not making an example.'

Asked about British security services, Assange says cryptically: 'We have had surveillance events from time to time, including after my entry into the embassy, but to speak about them now would be counter-productive.'

But even if he doesn't fear being bumped off, the 100 days have taken their toll. 'My health is slowly deteriorating.' Mental or physical? I ask. 'I hope it's just physical,' he

replies. 'I am taking steps to try to stop it but I have a problem with a lung which is causing a racking cough.'

However, his morale is far better than it was under house arrest, when he spent 560 days under stringent bail conditions in Norfolk and Sussex before he entered the embassy.

(The friends who posted his £200,000 bail, including socialite Jemima Khan and publisher Felix Dennis, have lost their money [*not yet --A.B.*], but they remain 'unyielding' in their support.)

**'My time on bail and under house arrest was extremely beleaguering. This less so,' says Assange.**

Yet this modern nomad is more used to moving country every few weeks than being confined to one room. So what belongings did he bring with him to keep up his spirits? He gazes around hopelessly until his eyes alight on an orange felt hat from Kazakhstan, a gift from a friend, and assorted bottles of hard liquor, mostly unopened, also presents. 'They don't look good, do they?' he grins. **'But at least no one can say I have converted to Islam.'**

**He has no doubt that he will go to Ecuador one day. 'I think it is inevitable but I will not be marooned there. From Ecuador, me and my staff could safely travel to and from a number of friendly countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Russia, Brazil, India, Venezuela, Chile and Argentina.**

'We must see the countries of the world as a chess board with light and dark areas in ever shifting arrangements depending on our latest publication.' But how will he get to that first stepping stone of Ecuador, given that Foreign Secretary William Hague has made it clear he will be arrested even if he leaves the embassy handcuffed to a diplomat? Thus far he has been granted asylum by the government in Quito but not diplomatic status.

**'The UK has an obligation to respect diplomatic immunity and the sanctity of diplomatic vehicles. The issue is whether William Hague will instruct UK police to break the law.**

'If the US drops its actions against us then the situation becomes easy. **The risk period for my extradition to the US — though it could come at any moment — is immediately before or immediately after the trial of Bradley Manning, since the accusation is that I was in some kind of conspiracy with him to obtain information from the US government.'** Manning's trial is set to begin in February.

'Unless the UK wants to be embroiled with a US extradition request, it is advisable that the deadlock between the UK and Ecuador is resolved by then.'

**Assange is confident that the allegations of sex crimes committed in Sweden will be dropped. 'It could be three months, it could be sooner,' he judges.**

He won't speak of the precise circumstances surrounding the allegations, saying: **'It does not do for a gentleman to complain.'** He also fears that any attempt to defend himself might suggest a crime had been committed.

It is not in dispute that he slept with two women within days of each other while speaking at a conference in Stockholm. When they discovered his disloyalty they went, together, to the police.

Assange refuses to say if he believes it was a honey trap or if he was simply unlucky in that his actions gave his opponents a weapon to use against him. 'In Sweden I was in a position where I was completely dependent on others for my safety, security and food.

**'Without wanting to go into private details, there are many things I would do differently given perfect hindsight. The facts, as recorded in the police documents, make my innocence clear.**

'The problem is that I have been trapped in the UK by the Swedish extradition claim for the past two years while the US has progressed its investigation into WikiLeaks and me to the point where it is ready to proceed with a prosecution, or almost ready.

'Even if the Swedish case goes away, the US can just phone in an extradition order to the UK. If the US investigation goes away it will be fine, I can travel again.

'If it proceeds to a prosecution then it is a chess game in terms of my movements. I would be well advised to be in a jurisdiction that is not in an alliance with the US, anywhere which allows me to keep on working.'

WikiLeaks and what it stands for is Assange's *raison d'être*; he remains defiant. 'Will we ever stop? No. The preservation of history which matters— and the history which matters the most is what happened last week or last year — is about our common heritage. Its value and importance is beyond one person or institution.

'To destroy such information — and not putting it in the public domain is the same as having it destroyed — is like burning the library in Alexandria.'

Some might see Assange as existing perilously close to lunatic conspiracy theories, for others he reveals dark truths about the world we all share. Does he think the rest of us are sleepwalking?

**'When you see institutions from around the world, not the spin, but the raw documents of titanic institutions like states, large companies and banks, you start to glimpse the common pattern of modern human civilisation and you can see how the world is drifting. We risk moving into a transnational dystopia, the likes of which we have never seen, due to the increasing interconnectedness of states and economies.'**

I take my leave of the embassy almost five hours after I was ushered in. Outside, the police have changed shifts. Based out of a mobile command unit parked over the road for the foreseeable future, they grumble about the lack of a toilet — they've recently been told not to use the facilities in Harrods — and how all the electric sockets have blown.

For them it's just been another rainy day man-marking Julian Assange, enemy of America.

## Swedish Cabinet Can Now Give Assange Anti-Extradition Guarantees. Why Don't They?

Henrik Alexandersson  
falkvinge.net  
2012-09-30

When it comes to the extradition to Sweden of Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, the heels of prestige have dug shoulder-deep trenches. The Brits have agreed to extradite him, in accordance with the European Arrest Warrant. Ecuador has granted him political asylum— and since then, he's stuck on their embassy in London, without being able to leave the building.

Assange fears that Sweden will extradite him onward to the United States if he's sent to Sweden. And he may have good reasons to fear the administration of the United States, after having unveiled quite a lot of things that the Americans would rather have kept secret.

It can be argued that the risk of being sent to the US is just as large in the UK as in Sweden, maybe even larger. But let's focus on Sweden: here, the prosecution of Assange remains a politically infected wound.

The Swedish Administration contends that it neither can nor may give any guarantees against further extradition. The reason for this position is that politicians in the executive branch of government are not allowed to interfere with individual court cases in the judicial branch of government— which is an extraordinarily wise principle.

However, we need to ask ourselves whether this principle is relevant in this particular case. It was recently discovered that the United States Government (or at least the US Military) regards Julian Assange as an “enemy of the state”. And if he can be branded an enemy combatant (even if only armed with his freedom of speech), then it is obvious that he risks torture and maybe even the death penalty if extradited to the United States.

**Since Sweden is under formal obligation to not send anybody to a country where they risk torture or capital punishment, with these new facts in hand, there is a perfectly bureaucratically correct and legally untouchable possibility for Sweden to give Julian Assange unambiguous guarantees against further extradition to the United States.**

So what's preventing it from happening?

One possible reason could be that Sweden actually wants to send Assange to the US. But that doesn't appear very plausible. *[On the contrary. --A.B.]* Besides, Sweden would be violating the international conventions mentioned above. *[It has done so before. --A.B.]* It's also quite certain that the Administration understands what a Shitstorm From Hell they'd unleash if they even considered putting Assange on a CIA Rendition Airlines flight at Stockholm-Bromma Airport. *[Not certain, given the anti-Assange campaign by Swedish media. --A.B.]*

More likely, this is about political prestige. The Swedish Prime Minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt, has had a media war with Assange about the credibility of the Swedish justice system— and Reinfeldt can be one heck of a grumpy old man. To him, Assange is an enemy. Therefore, the problem arguably lies with the mindset of the Cabinet and the Prime Minister.

If Reinfeldt wants to prove himself to be the elder statesman he so intensely desires to appear as, he should let go of the prestige, take the symbolic political losses, and give Assange formal guarantees against extradition to the United States.

But as everybody who has studied Reinfeldt knows, this is hardly something that's going to happen. That doesn't change the fact that the ball (or, in any case, one of the many balls in this mess) lies squarely with the Swedish Cabinet.

• *This article was originally published in Swedish on Nyheter24, titled "Ditch the Prestige, Reinfeldt!". Translated into English by Rick Falkvinge.*

<http://falkvinge.net/2012/09/30/swedish-cabinet-can-now-give-assange-anti-extradition-guarantees-why-dont-they/>

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## **Assange-affären: Kasta prestigen, Reinfeldt!**

Henrik Alexandersson  
Nyheter24.se  
2012/09/30

Låsningen är fortfarande total, vad gäller Wikileaks-grundaren Julian Assanges utlämning till Sverige. Britterna har gått med på att lämna ut honom, i enlighet med den europeiska arresteringsordern. Ecuador har beviljat honom politisk asyl— och sedan dess sitter han på landets ambassad i London, utan att kunna lämna byggnaden.

Assange fruktar att Sverige kommer att utlämna honom vidare till USA om han sänds hit. Och han kan ha goda skäl att frukta USA, efter att ha avslöjat rätt mycket som amerikanarna helst skulle vilja hålla hemligt.

Man kan i och för sig tycka att risken för att bli skickad till USA är minst lika stor i Storbritannien, kanske till och med större. Men låt oss fokusera på Sverige. Här är rättsfallet mot Assange fortfarande ett infekterat sår.

Den svenska regeringen hävdar att den varken kan eller får utfärda några garantier mot vidare utlämning. Skälet är att politiker inte får lägga sig i och styra rättsfall. Vilket är en utomordentligt klok princip.

Frågan är dock om denna princip är relevant i just det här fallet. Uppgifter har nämligen krupit fram om att den amerikanska staten, eller i vart fall USA:s militär, betraktar Julian Assange som "statens fiende". Och om han stämplas som fientlig kombatanter (om än bara med det fria ordet som vapen)— då är det rätt uppenbart att han riskerar att utsättas för tortyr och möjligen även kan hotas med dödsstraff om han utlämnas till USA.

Eftersom Sverige har förbundit sig att inte sända människor till länder där de riskerar tortyr eller dödsstraff— så finns det alltså en helt korrekt juridisk möjlighet för Sverige att utfärda en garanti mot utlämning i detta fall.

Vad är det då som hindrar att det sker?

En möjlighet skulle kunna vara att Sverige faktiskt vill sända Assange till USA. Men det känns inte speciellt troligt. Dessutom skulle den då bryta mot de internationella konventioner som nämns ovan. Man kan dessutom vara rätt säker på att regeringen förstår vilken helvetes cirkus den skulle sätta igång om den ens övervägde att sätta Assange på ett CIA-plan på Bromma.

Betydligt troligare är att det handlar om prestige. Statsminister Reinfeldt har haft ett ordkrig med Assange via media om det svenska rättsväsendets tillförlitlighet. Och Reinfeldt kan vara en riktig tjurskalle. För honom är Assange en fiende. Det lutar alltså åt att problemet ligger i statsministerns och regeringens mindset.

Om Reinfeldt vill visa sig vara den statsman han så intensivt försöker framställa sig själv som— då borde han kasta prestigen, svälja förtreten och utfärda den ovan nämnda garantin mot utlämning till USA.


Men som alla som studerat Fredrik Reinfeldt närmare vet, så kommer det knappast att hända. Det förändrar dock inte det faktum att bollen (eller i vart fall en av denna historias alla bollar) ligger hos regeringen.

• *Henrik Alexandersson är frihetlig bloggare, ordförande för Frihetsfronten och anställd på Piratpartiets kontor i Europaparlamentet. Läs även min privata blogg: [www.henrik-alexandersson.se](http://www.henrik-alexandersson.se)*

<http://nyheter24.se/blogg/hax/2012/09/30/assange-affaren-kasta-prestigen-reinfeldt/>

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2012-10-01

	<b>WikiLeaks</b> @wikileaks Sweden's recalcitrance over Assange has now cost the UK more than £1.1 million in embassy siege costs alone according to mayor Boris Johnson	45m
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## Sweden detains Pirate Bay founder in oppressive conditions without charges

*The case underscores the prime fear long expressed by Assange supporters about the Swedish justice system*

Glenn Greenwald  
*The Guardian*  
1 October 2012

My very first week writing regularly at the Guardian generated intense conflict with numerous members of the British media because that happened to be the week when Ecuador granted asylum to Julian Assange (a decision I defended), and — for reasons that warrant sustained study by several academic fields of discipline — very few people generate intense contempt among the British commentariat like Assange does. One of the prime arguments I have always made about the Assange asylum case is that his particular fear of being extradited to Sweden is grounded in that country's very unusual and quite oppressive pre-trial detention powers: ones that permit the state to act with an extreme degree of secrecy and which can even prohibit the accused from any communication with the outside world.

**That is what has always led Assange to fear going to Sweden: that those detention procedures could be used to transfer him to the US without any public scrutiny** (only the most willfully irrational, given evidence like this, would deny that this is a real threat). And that is the argument on behalf of Assange that has produced the greatest amount of anger: in part because some self-loving westerners find the suggestion inconceivable and offensive that a nice western nation (as opposed to some Muslim or Latin American country) could possibly be oppressive in any real way.

But now we have a case that confirms exactly those claims about Sweden's justice system, and since it has nothing to do with the WikiLeaks founder, one hopes these issues can be viewed more rationally. Gottfrid Svartholm is the founder of the file-sharing Pirate Bay website who has been prosecuted by the Swedish government for enabling copyright infringements. At the behest of Sweden, he was recently arrested in Cambodia and then deported to Stockholm, where he has now also been accused (though not charged) with participating in the hacking of a Swedish company.

Svartholm is now being held under exactly the pretrial conditions that I've long argued (based on condemnations from human rights groups) prevail in Sweden:

"Gottfrid Svartholm will be kept in detention for at least two more weeks on suspicion of hacking into a Swedish IT company connected to the country's tax authorities. According to Prosecutor Henry Olin the extended detention is needed 'to prevent him from having contact with other people.' The Pirate Bay co-founder is **not allowed to have visitors and is even being denied access to newspapers and television. . . .**

"Since he hasn't been charged officially in the Logica case the Pirate Bay co-founder could only be detained for a few days.

"But, after a request from Prosecutor Henry Olin this term was extended for another two weeks mid-September, and last Friday the District Court decided that Gottfrid could be detained for another two weeks.

"To prevent Gottfrid from interfering with the investigation the Prosecutor believes it's justified to detain him for more than a month without being charged. The Pirate Bay co-founder is not allowed to have visitors and is being refused access to newspapers and television. . . . The Prosecutor hasn't ruled out a request for another extension of Gottfrid's detainment in two weeks, if the investigation is still ongoing."

**The claim that produced the most vitriol was that Sweden vests remarkable power in prosecutors and courts to keep accused suspects completely hidden from public view, with no communication or other contact with the outside world, and that this power is exercised with some frequency. Now we have confirmation of that claim from, of all people, the Swedish prosecutor in this case, Henrik Olin, who said in an interview outside the courtroom:**

"According to the Swedish system, when the preliminary investigation is finished, I as prosecutor will decide whether to prosecute him. . . . In the Swedish system it is quite usual for people to be detained on this legal ground, and it gives me the possibility to prevent him from having contact with other people."

Unlike in the British system, in which all proceedings, including extradition proceedings, relating to Assange would be publicly scrutinized and almost certainly conducted in open court, the unusual secrecy of Sweden's pre-trial judicial process, particularly the ability to hold the accused incommunicado, **poses a real danger that whatever happened to Assange could be effectuated without any public notice.** That has always been, and remains, the prime fear for his being extradited to Sweden: a fear that could be, and should be, redressed by negotiations between Ecuador, Sweden and the UK to assure that he can go to Sweden while having his rights protected.

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## **George Galloway sues NUS over 'rape denier' comments**

*BBC*

*1 October 2012*

Respect MP George Galloway is suing the National Union of Students for libel after it labelled him a "rape denier".

Campaigners had earlier criticised his remarks on Julian Assange, who denies sexual assault claims.

He was quoted as saying the Wikileaks founder was accused of nothing more than "bad sexual etiquette".

A spokesman said the NUS comments were "defamatory" and "offensive" and the MP was "absolutely clear that no means no" and "non consensual sex is rape".

The action has been prompted by the NUS description of Mr Galloway and its ban on him from speaking at events affiliated to the union.

A spokesman for Bradford West MP Mr Galloway said: "The NUS can ban whoever they want, but George is categorically not a rape denier."

Mr Assange, 40, is wanted in Sweden for questioning on sexual assault allegations made by two women.

In August, Mr Galloway, who had also said the women's claims were "totally unproven" and the Wikileaks founder had been "set up", was criticised by anti-rape campaigners.

Any damages recovered from his legal action "will be donated to the defence fund for Julian Assange and Bradley Manning".

US army soldier Private Manning is the alleged source of Wikileaks' revelations.

A spokesman for the NUS said it was yet to receive a letter from Mr Galloway's lawyers, and would not comment until it had.

Mr Galloway himself was unavailable for comment because he is in Venezuela ahead of the country's presidential elections.

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SvD: 1 oktober 2012

## **Assangeaffären bakom nätattacker**

Flera banker, SJ, försvaret och nyhetsbyrån TT fanns bland dem som i dag utsattes för så kallade ddos-attacker. Enligt polisen finns en uppenbar koppling till affären kring Julian Assange.

Angreppet överbelastade servrar och ställde till med stora tekniska problem. TT:s serverloggar visar att attacken kom från mängder av kapade datorer runt om i världen som kopplats ihop i så kallade botnets.

Enligt Anders Ahlqvist, IT-expert vid Rikspolisstyrelsen, har dagens nätattacker en uppenbar koppling till Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange och den pågående tvisten om hans utlämning.

-- Så länge den pågår får vi nog se en hel del sådant här, säger han till TT.

Även Swedbank, SEB och nätmäklaren Nordnet drabbades under dagen.

-- Man lyckades stänga ner oss en stund, men nu börjar det komma i gång igen, sade Anna Sundbland, pressinformatör på Swedbank, vid lunchtid till [aftonbladet.se](http://aftonbladet.se).

På SEB hade man stora störningar på sajten mitt på dagen.

Dagens fortsatta nätattacker följer det mönster som polisen sett de senaste veckorna.

- Vårt intryck är att man testar säkerheten och samlar information om hur motståndskraftiga systemen är och hur snabbt man får upp dem igen om attackerna lyckas ta ner dem, säger Anders Ahlqvist.

Enligt Ahlqvist är känslan att svenska mål utsätts i stor skala nu för tiden, och han får medhåll:

-- Det blir vanligare och vanligare och det är svårt att skydda sig emot, säger Anders Hanson, chef för CERT-SE på Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap (MSB).

Men med några snabba åtgärder går det ganska fort att komma tillbaka.

Även CERT-SE blev attackerad under morgonen, enligt Hansson. Han berättar att det än så länge är relativt ovanligt att så många företag blir utsatta samtidigt. MSB försöker nu skaffa sig en bild över varifrån attacken kommer. Oftast är det svårt att få reda på vem som ligger bakom eller varför den genomförs.

Även SJ var på förmiddagen troligen utsatt för en ddos-attack. Störningarna började klockan 10.30 och först 11.50 fungerade bokningen via nätet igen.

Försvarsmakten drabbades också, säger Niklas Englund, chef för gruppen digitala medier. Även sedan attacken avväjts kunde det vara svårt ett tag att komma in på försvarets sajt eftersom man valde att blockera trafik från olika håll.

-- Vi aktiverar vissa förändringar som antagligen gör att man inte kommer in, säger Englund.

Försvaret drabbades tillsammans med flera andra myndigheter för nästan en månad sedan i den dittills mest spridda attacken mot svenska mål. Försvarsmakten polisanmälde den attacken, som också misstänks ha utförts av personer som sympatiserar med den våldtäktsefterlyste Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange.

När medier utsätts kan man misstänka att attacken beror på något som publicerats, men enligt Anders Ahlqvist är det inte alls säkert.

-- Om man ser på spridningen är det inte så himla rationellt. De testar var det fungerar, vilka som har bra motmedel och vilka som har svårt att komma upp igen.

Vilka som kontrollerar bakom de botnets som ligger bakom attacken är närmast omöjligt att säga, om de inte själva väljer att träda fram. *[Men dessa "experter" tydligen vet, ändå. ---A.B.]*

-- Det är tekniskt begåvade människor som gör det här. Allt i från enskilda individer till löst sammansatta organisationer och ända upp på statsnivå, säger Anders Ahlqvist.

TT: Vad gör polisen i dag?

-- Vi tar emot information från de drabbade, sammanställer den och följer naturligtvis de spår som finns. Rent tekniskt är det inget som lätt går att spåra tillbaka till huvudgärningsmannen eftersom man använder smittade datorer över hela världen.

TT: Kommer det här att fortsätta eller klinga av?

-- Så länge Julian Assange-affären rullar på, kommer vi att se detta mot svenska mål. Det är jag helt övertygad om.

TT

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## **Police stakeout bill for Assange tops £1m**

*Costs £11,000 a DAY to ensure he doesn't flee Ecuadorian Embassy*

*Chris Greenwood  
Mail Online  
2 October 2012*

The police bill for staking out the embassy where WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is evading justice has already reached more than £1million. Scotland Yard confirmed it is costing £11,000 every day to ensure the Australian does not flee his bolthole at the Ecuadorean Embassy.

The final bill could be much more as the 41-year-old continues to defy extradition to Sweden where he is suspected of sexually assaulting two women.

Officers have been watching the property in Knightsbridge, west London, since Mr Assange breached his bail and claimed asylum in June. They have been told to arrest him if he puts 'one toe' outside.

Ecuadorean foreign minister Ricardo Pinto has warned Mr Assange he could be in the embassy for a decade if he is not allowed to leave Britain.

Critics have called on the Metropolitan Police to end the costly stakeout. Last week, Foreign Secretary William Hague admitted there is 'no sign of any breakthrough' after meeting Mr Pinto at the United Nations in New York.

The comments came after the hacking activist [???] accused the U.S. of persecuting WikiLeaks and torturing Bradley Manning, the soldier accused of leaking classified documents.

At least four Met officers guard the embassy, on the second floor of a block of flats behind Harrods in Knightsbridge, West London, around the clock. They have set up a £250,000 mobile command station on the doorstep of the building and occupy positions outside and in surrounding properties.

Officers from every London borough, specialist police units and undercover squads have been brought in to join the open-ended stake out. One colleague said: 'The officers are being moved around every three or four days to stop the boredom setting in. There are certainly plenty of other things these officers could be doing than standing there around the clock.'

London Mayor Boris Johnson confirmed the policing bill between June 20 and September 10 was £905,000. If the costs continued at the average of £11,000 a day the total would now be over £1.1million.

Critics called on the Met to end the stand-off but sources said the force cannot step back from its responsibilities to arrest Mr Assange for breaching his bail.

Jenny Jones, a Green politician in the capital who sits on a committee that oversees the Met's work, called for the officers to go back on the beat. She said: 'It is ridiculous at a time when the Met is stretched as never before that so many officers are waiting around the Ecuadorian Embassy for Assange to attempt an escape.'

Lib Dem Caroline Pidgeon, who also sits on the London Assembly, added: 'For 100 days Assange has been evading an arrest warrant for the alleged offence of rape and trying to escape the fair judicial process of Sweden. At a time when police counters are closing across London his actions are a gross waste of valuable resources.'

[www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2211530/Police-stakeout-Assange-tops-1m-costs-11-000-DAY-ensure-doesnt-flee-Ecuadorian-Embassy.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2211530/Police-stakeout-Assange-tops-1m-costs-11-000-DAY-ensure-doesnt-flee-Ecuadorian-Embassy.html)

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## **Why the warmongers fear WikiLeaks**

*Linda Pearson  
Green Left Weekly  
October 4, 2012*

In the past 11 years of the so-called war on terror, Australian troops have been sent to two US-led wars. The West has killed more than a million Iraqis and tens of thousands of Afghans, and displaced millions more. Our government backed the NATO intervention in Libya and is currently supporting everything short of military intervention in Syria.

These wars are only possible through lies. We're lied to about the reasons for going to war, and the reality of the carnage we cause is concealed from us. We're told by our governments that a country must be invaded and occupied, either for our security or to "help" the people we're bombing. But the truth is that wars only serve the interests of power and profits.

The corporate media amplifies the lies of the 1%. It perpetuates a cartoonish view of the world: us and them, good guys and bad guys. This provides cover for Western corporations to profit enormously from "reconstruction" contracts in the countries we've destroyed, and from the exploitation of their natural resources.

But as Julian Assange has said, "if wars can be started by lies, peace can be started by truth". Imagine if our media showed us the ever-day realities of war, as much as it subjects us to the every-day banality of celebrity lives. Could we still be persuaded that what we're engaged in is a "humanitarian intervention"?

WikiLeaks' Collateral Murder video is shocking, not because the wanton killing of civilians is rare in our wars, but because we in the West rarely witness it. "Embedded" journalists ensure we only see a sanitised version of events, not video footage of human beings blown to pieces by our 30-mm cannon rounds.

And what if our media, instead of demonising the official enemy of the day, reported on the West's history of funding dictators and fundamentalists to further its own agenda? Would any of us still believe that our security is our governments' number one motivation?

WikiLeaks' pioneering work can help us break this cycle of lies and perpetual war. After British authorities threatened to storm the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, protesters gathered outside. One of them, UK Veterans for Peace activist, Ben Griffin, was asked why he was there supporting Julian Assange.

Griffin told Democracy Now that he started to speak out about the true nature of that war when he came back from Iraq, but: "People always said to me, 'Where's your evidence?' People say to other veterans in my organization, 'Oh well, what do you know? You're just a soldier.'"

**"And Julian provided us with all the evidence we need:** the 'Collateral Murder' video ... the Afghan War Logs ... which describe torture and death on a daily basis; the Iraq War [Diary], which again highlight the real numbers of those killed in Iraq ... So this guy, for me, has done a great service to the world in showing us the true nature of the wars that our governments ask us to fight in."

This is why the warmongers are so afraid of WikiLeaks. A 2010 Australian Department of Defence report of an inquiry into the Afghan War Logs, shows **the government feared the release would undermine public support for the war.**

**It was particularly worried that revelations about Australia's relationship with Matiollah Khan,** a corrupt warlord accused of torture, mass murder, rape and abduction, would discredit our "mission" in Afghanistan. Dutch forces refused to work with him, but Khan is a highly valued Australian ally.

The Afghan War Logs contain evidence of Khan's involvement in protection rackets and the drug trade, as well as an incident "where his brother was given what appears to be special treatment by US troops".

Khan has earned more than \$45 million from NATO and Australian contracts, and he's just one of the warlords empowered by the US-led occupation of Afghanistan. The Australian government cannot afford for us to look too closely at these sorts of facts, lest we question its claim that "our mission" is to bring democracy and good governance to Afghanistan.

US diplomatic cables published by WikiLeaks show ALP and Coalition politicians, falling over themselves to curry favour with Washington. In 2006, then Labor opposition leader, and now Ambassador to the US, Kim Beazley, promised that Australian involvement in the war in Afghanistan would continue "until hell freezes over".



Rudd government officials repeatedly assured US diplomats that Australia would be in Afghanistan for the “long haul”. A cable from 2007 quotes then deputy PM, Julia Gillard, describing the recent deaths of three Australian soldiers as “bad luck” and assuring the US that Australia was “resolved” to continue its mission. Since then, 34 more Australians have died and Australia’s “mission” remains the same: supporting the US alliance at any cost.

WikiLeaks cables also show how Australia has consistently worked with the US to target Iran, which has become the focus of renewed warmongering since war in Iraq officially ended. Contrary to the current US-Israeli narrative, Iran does not have a nuclear weapons program. Israel and the US, on the other hand, have a combined nuclear arsenal estimated to be greater than that of any other state.

**But at the behest of the US, the UN has imposed sanctions on Iran that threaten to have similar devastating effects as the sanctions which killed more than half a million children in Iraq. As well as supporting the UN sanctions, Australia began introducing autonomous bilateral sanctions against Iran in October 2008.**

A cable from 2009 quotes a Rudd government official as saying that “Australia wants the most robust, intrusive and debilitating sanctions possible”. When the US sought to ramp up UN sanctions against Iran a few months later, US Ambassador Bleich confidently reported in a cable: “Australia can be counted as a strong supporter of whatever course the United States chooses to pursue.”

These are just a few examples of the machinations and motivations of warmongers upon which WikiLeaks has shone a light. Please read WikiLeaks’ releases for yourselves— not through the filter of the mainstream media. It’s up to us to use the



remarkable trove of information, which WikiLeaks has given us to challenge the lies and spin of those who start wars and murder millions in our name.

We've already seen what a difference WikiLeaks can make towards ending conflict. In Iraq in early 2011, the US government was set to keep US troops in the country beyond the deadline set for withdrawal. Iraqi President Al-Maliki agreed that US troops would not be subject to Iraqi law and so could effectively stay there with impunity.

But in May 2011 WikiLeaks released a cable containing evidence that US troops had executed at least 10 Iraqi civilians, including a woman in her 70s and a 5-month-old infant, then called in an airstrike to destroy the evidence. After that, it was impossible, even for US puppet Maliki, to allow them to stay with immunity, and those US troops were withdrawn.

We owe a great debt to courageous individuals like Assange and alleged WikiLeaks source, Bradley Manning. They've put their life and liberty on the line to give us the truth.

As Afghan anti-war activist Malalai Joya has said "The silence of good people is worse than the actions of bad people." Our silence will let our governments off the hook. It will give them a green light to repress anyone who stands up to the military industrial war machine. We must continue to raise our collective voice in support of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks, and to demand an end to the occupation of Afghanistan.

• *Linda Pearson is a member of the Support Assange and WikiLeaks Coalition and the Sydney Stop the War Coalition.*

<http://www.greenleft.org.au/node/52414>

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## **Envoy reacts to Ecuador ridicule in Sweden**

*The Local*  
4 Oct 2012

Ecuador's ambassador to Sweden Thursday defended his homeland against criticism over press freedom following its granting of asylum to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, who is wanted by authorities in Stockholm.

In nearly a full-page article in the Swedish tabloid Expressen, Mario Guerrero Murgueytio also explained why some media in Ecuador have been banned.

The ambassador was reacting to the way Ecuador has been portrayed in the Swedish press since August 16, when it granted asylum to Assange, who had sought refuge in its London embassy to avoid being extradited to Sweden for questioning on sexual assault allegations.

Over the past few months Expressen had "published articles concerning the Julian Assange affair but has also expressed certain points of view on freedom of the press in Ecuador," he wrote.

Much of the Swedish press has called it paradoxical that Assange was given asylum, ostensibly in defence of press freedom, in a country that suppresses local media according to several human rights group.

The Ecuadoran ambassador in his article countered that between October 2009 and August 2012, 99 media outlets lost their licences, most of them for failing to pay taxes. At the same time 240 media were given permission to publish.

Assange denies the sex crime allegations and fears Sweden would extradite him to the United States, where his supporters claim he could receive harsh treatment and possibly even the death penalty....

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## **No longer true, just red, white and blue**

*JULIAN ASSANGE*

*News Limited Network (Australia)*

*October 5, 2011*

For over a decade now, governments around the world having been doing all they can to reduce scrutiny over the exercise of their power. Countries like China and Iran are rightly criticised for their attempts to suppress dissenting voices online. But the US, supposedly the land of the free, has a similarly poor track record.

President Obama has been waging a war on whistleblowers from the Oval Office, the most obvious example being the mistreatment of Bradley Manning. The Obama-Biden campaign brags about prosecuting twice as many "national security" disclosures as all previous administrations combined. There have also been sustained attacks on my organisation, WikiLeaks, via a financial blockade of donations enforced with the support of the US government.

Most disturbingly, WikiLeaks has been warned by the Pentagon not to solicit service members to leak classified information. **Military personnel who make contact with WikiLeaks or our supporters could be charged with "communicating with the enemy," a crime that carries a possible death sentence. The Pentagon has also stated this month that it considers the continued publication by WikiLeaks of classified information belonging to the US government to be an ongoing violation of the law.**

This sets a precedent: contact by military whistleblowers to any media organization may soon be treated with similar hostility.

But these attacks are not just directed at whistleblowers and those that publish their information for the public to see. Governments in the UK, the US and Australia are seeking to extend already extreme powers of surveillance so they can gather intelligence on their citizens.

Under proposed changes to national security laws, the Australian government will force Internet service providers to retain the internet and phone records of all Australians for two years. Some agencies are demanding even more extreme powers to keep a full record of citizens activities indefinitely. Such extremism will in effect be the

reality: the proposed laws require the creation of a nation-wide infrastructure that is capable of intercepting all communications.

Every email, every Facebook post, every tweet, every google search will pass through this database and portions will be stored and could be used against you at some point down the track.

A nationwide mass interception infrastructure is a national security disaster waiting to happen. **Of course, the changes to the law promised at the last election to protect whistleblowers have fallen off the legislative agenda.**

These are significant expansions of government power without justification and without any checks and balances to ensure that the rights of everyday people are respected. There is no way of knowing how this or future governments will use such power. Australians deserve to know what is being done in their name.

Technology offers us incredible opportunities to share information, spread ideas and collaborate across geographical divides. It has the potential to shine a light on wrongdoing, correct injustice and empower those without a voice. The freedom to use such platforms must be safely defended, lest it become simply a place for the government to spy on its population.

The power given to governments to govern, after all, derives from the mandate given by the people. Technology should be about empowering citizens and giving expression to the inner core of our public and private political lives. This is a prospect that makes the powers that be very uncomfortable.

When an organisation like WikiLeaks shows the emperor with no clothes on, predictably every attempt is made to undermine us. The Prime Minister has never retracted the comment she made about WikiLeaks being based on an illegal act. By her own Government's admission, such an accusation is unsustainable. It is untrue and should be retracted.

The Australian Government has turned its back on one of its citizens, in order to avoid offending the US, and has repeatedly lied about its support for me. Ecuador, after careful and lengthy consideration of the evidence, concluded that I had a well-founded fear of persecution and that I could not rely on my own government to protect me.

It is bitterly disappointing that the country that I love has abandoned my organisation. WikiLeaks is an Australian organisation and an Australian success story and yet the Australian Government has done nothing to defend us. Quite the contrary. It has slandered us in public during a time when we face significant risks.

For me personally, it is difficult and in some cases impossible to see my family and friends. I have been unable to be with them in recent moments of family grief.

I want nothing more than to do my work in peace. I began my career as someone who understood the importance of exposing corruption and wrong doing. I am now a publisher who faces persecution for doing my job. It is the duty of publishers to fearlessly publish the truth and the duty of all good citizens to defend their right to do so.

It is time for Australia to embrace a different path: to reject campaigns of harassment and intimidation against publishers, journalists and whistleblowers. We must demand that our government abandon efforts to impose a surveillance state on its citizens. We deserve a government that protects its citizens no matter whom they have offended or embarrassed. We have the opportunity to build a democracy that welcomes transparency and the more just, humane and responsive government that it brings.

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/opinion/no-longer-true-just-red-white-and-blue/story-e6freabc-1226489463728>

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Former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser stated that he "fears [the] worst" for Julian Assange based on the lack of the Australian Government's assistance and abnormal and suspicious behavior from the UK and Sweden.

*This Day in WikiLeaks*  
2012-10-05

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## **Vote WikiLeaks: WikiLeaks enters U.S. election campaign**

*WikiLeaks has decided to intervene in the U.S. election campaign.*

*Julian Assange*  
October 6, 2012

Last Friday, on 28 September, the Pentagon again threatened WikiLeaks. Pentagon spokesman George Little demanded WikiLeaks destroy its publications, including the Iraq War logs which revealed the killings of more than 100,000 civilians. Little said: "continued possession by WikiLeaks of classified information belonging to the United States government represents a continuing violation of law". The Pentagon also again "warned Mr Assange and WikiLeaks" against "soliciting" material from U.S. military whistleblowers.

In response, WikiLeaks has decided to intervene in the U.S. election campaign.

The United States government claims Mr Assange and the WikiLeaks organization are within its jurisdiction. In reply, we place the Obama administration within our jurisdiction. All American school children are taught that being subject to laws without representation is an injustice. This is the backbone of the American Revolution. We claim our representation and now initiate a campaign to transform Democratic and Republican votes into economic and political support for WikiLeaks and its First Amendment values. **This election day, do not vote for the Republican or Democratic parties. Instead, cast the only vote that matters. Vote with your wallet— vote for WikiLeaks.**

**The Democratic Party promised to open government. But instead it is building a state within a state, placing nearly five million Americans under the national**

**security clearance system. It has classified more documents than any previous administration, classifying even the process used to decide who will live and who will be killed. The U.S. administration hurtles towards dystopia:** secret laws, secret processes, secret budgets, secret bailouts, secret killings, secret mass spying, secret drones and secret detention without charge. The collapse of the Soviet Union could have led to the withdrawal of the U.S. security state, but without moral competition from another system it has grown unchecked to influence almost every American policy. Four more years in the same direction cannot be tolerated.

The Obama administration continues to conduct a “whole of government” investigation of “unprecedented scale and nature” into WikiLeaks and its people. It has fuelled the extrajudicial banking blockade against the organization and has held an alleged WikiLeaks source, Bradley Manning, in conditions that the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture, Juan Mendez, found had amounted to torture. Mr Assange has been formally found to be a political refugee, but U.S. ambassadors warned countries such as Switzerland not to offer him asylum. President Obama has called Bradley Manning guilty before trial and Vice-President Biden has labelled Julian Assange a “hi-tech terrorist”. The Obama-Biden campaign brags of having prosecuted twice as many national security whistleblowers as “all previous administrations combined”. This is not acceptable.

Politicians always say your decision, come election-time, will determine the future. But, as has been seen with the Obama administration, deciding on who gets into formal office is not a meaningful choice, because when you vote your party into government you also vote the government, including all its agencies and friends, into your party. Thus, parties taking office are eliminated as the restraining voice of opposition.

But there is another option.

Government agencies and corporations know that knowledge is power. That is why they spend literally billions to keep their plans and actions secret from all of us. They know that together we can force them to act differently.

It was WikiLeaks’ revelations— not the actions of President Obama— that forced the U.S. administration out of the Iraq War. By exposing the killing of Iraqi children, WikiLeaks directly motivated the Iraqi government to strip the U.S. military of legal immunity, which in turn forced the U.S. withdrawal.  
<http://salon.com/2011/10/23/wikilea...>

It was WikiLeaks’ revelations and pan-Arab activists, not the Obama administration, that helped to trigger the Arab Spring. **While WikiLeaks was exposing dictators from Yemen to Cairo, Vice-President Joseph Biden was calling Hosni Mubarak a democrat, Hillary Clinton was calling his government “stable” and the U.S. administration was colluding with Yemeni dictator Saleh to bomb his own people.**  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/10/23/wikileaks-arab-spring> <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/...>

And it was WikiLeaks’ revelations, not the White House, that led to the reform of the largest children’s hospital network in the United States.  
[http://wikileaks.org/wiki/Report\\_on...](http://wikileaks.org/wiki/Report_on...)

Last year, the Pentagon got \$662 billion for its 2012 war chest. For WikiLeaks to continue its work to bring transparency to powerful institutions through the mass

publication of leaks with the greatest potential to lead to more just forms of governance, we need to build a bigger 'war chest' too.

In early December 2010, WikiLeaks was receiving \$120,000 per day in donations from the general public. In response to pressure from Washington, and entirely outside the law, financial institutions including Visa, MasterCard, PayPal, Bank of America and Western Union, erected a banking blockade against WikiLeaks, stripping the organization of 95% of its funding. Although WikiLeaks has won every court case to date against the blockade, these Washington-linked institutions continue to appeal.

So, for the next 34 days, beginning on 3 October 2012, we are launching a new fundraising campaign running up to Election Day, 6 November.

You can still donate to WikiLeaks using a variety of easy methods, including work-arounds for Visa, MasterCard and PayPal. These donations go to fund WikiLeaks' publishing and infrastructure costs and our legal costs to fight the financial blockade. We are expecting an answer shortly on Visa's appeal against the Icelandic court's ruling that declared their blockade illegal, and decision-makers are expected to meet soon on our European anti-trust banking case.

If you wish to contribute to Julian Assange's legal defence costs, you can still use your credit card but you will need to make a separate donation to the Julian Assange and WikiLeaks Staff Defence Fund, administered and audited by Derek Rothera & Co. Full details are on our donate page. You can also donate to the Bradley Manning Defense Fund from our site.

*"The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting."*  
— Milan Kundera.

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## **Julian Assange backers told to pay £93,500**

*Alan Jones*  
*The Independent*  
8 October 2012

Backers who stood as sureties for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange before he took refuge in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London have been ordered to pay thousands of pounds. Chief Magistrate Howard Riddle said the nine had to pay £93,500 by 6 November....

Vaughan Smith, a friend who put Assange up at his country mansion for more than a year, addressed Westminster Magistrates Court last week on behalf of the nine, who put up £140,000 between them. He said all those who offered sureties, of varying amounts, are "convinced that they have done and are doing the right thing".

In his ruling today, the Chief Magistrate said he accepted that the nine had all acted in good faith. "I accept that they trusted Mr Assange to surrender himself as required. I accept that they followed the proceedings and made necessary arrangements to remain

in contact with him. However, they failed in their basic duty, to ensure his surrender. They must have understood the risk and the concerns of the courts.

"Both this court and the High Court assessed that there were substantial grounds to believe the defendant would abscond, and that the risk could only be met by stringent conditions including the sureties," he said.

Exercising power under section 120 (3) of the 1980 Magistrates Court Act, the Chief Magistrate said he **adjudged each of the sureties had to pay part of the sum originally pledged, as follows:** Tricia David £10,000, Caroline Evans £15,000, Joseph Farrell £3,500, Sarah Harrison £3,500, Phillip Knightley £15,000, Sarah Saunders £12,000, Vaughan Smith £12,000, John Sulston £15,000 and Tracy Worcester £7,500.

He continued: "I say immediately that I have real respect for the way that the sureties have conducted themselves in difficult circumstances. I am satisfied that what they have said and written accurately reflects their genuine views.

**"In declining to publicly (or as far as I know privately) urge Mr Assange to surrender himself they have acted against self-interest. They have acted on their beliefs and principles throughout. In what is sometimes considered to be a selfish age, that is admirable.**

"A surety undertakes to forfeit a sum of money if the defendant fails to surrender as required. Considerable care is taken to explain that obligation and the consequences before a surety is taken.

"This system, in one form or another, has great antiquity. It is immensely valuable. A court concerned that a defendant will fail to surrender will not normally know that defendant personally, nor indeed much about him.

"When members of the community who do know the defendant say they trust him to surrender and are prepared to stake their own money on that trust, that can have a powerful influence on the decision of the court as to whether or not to grant bail."

The UK Government stressed to Ecuador last month that it was under an obligation to extradite Mr Assange to Sweden, where he faces questioning over sex crimes claims. Foreign Secretary William Hague held talks with Ecuadorian foreign minister Ricardo Patino in New York during a United Nations meeting.

The Chief Magistrate said heavy reliance had been placed on Assange's "strongly held fears" of being removed to the United States. He said: "That fear was held, and publicly expressed, right from the very beginning. Indeed, in the early days there was a widely expressed view that extradition to Sweden was a masquerade for the real intention of the Swedish authorities to forward Mr Assange to the United States and even Guantanamo Bay.

"What is undoubtedly unique is that the defendant sought, and has apparently been granted, asylum by Ecuador. It was suggested that the defendant is simply seeking an alternative legal process.

"However, in principle I see no difference between seeking refuge in the Ecuadorian embassy, and taking flight to that country. In extradition cases in particular there is not

infrequently a possibility that a defendant might seek refuge in a state friendly to him. I am simply unimpressed by the parallel legal process argument.

"Mr Assange has an obligation to comply with the legal requirements of this country to surrender to the bail granted on terms originally set by the High Court."

The Chief Magistrate said he had taken account of the means of the nine, adding: "Professor David is a pensioner and the sum of £20,000 comprises a substantial portion of her savings jointly with her husband.

"Sarah Saunders has also provided details of her financial position and I am satisfied that she is of comparatively limited means. Mr Vaughan Smith tells me that if he forfeits the £20,000 surety it will have a significant impact on the welfare of his family and his employees. Having seen and heard from the sureties, I cannot avoid taking some account of their integrity.

"I approach this decision on the basis that I should forfeit no more than is necessary, in public policy, to maintain the integrity and confidence of the system of taking sureties so that a person may be released on bail."

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This Day in WikiLeaks  
2012-10-07

The program "Assange: A TEN News Story" which aired before the film is available on YouTube. WikiLeaks described the program as an "attack" and gave insight into some of the people interviewed (see below).

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## **Australia: Ten's forthcoming Sunday Assange attack by @hamishNews.**

Hamish McDonald's sources. It pays to know who you are interviewing.

### **Karin Olsson**

Karin Olsson is a Assange/WikiLeaks opponent at 'Expressen' who has been writing anti-Assange diatribes for over two years. Expressen is an anti-WikiLeaks conservative Swedish tabloid owned by the Bonnier family. The Bonnier family is a conservative, US-aligned Swedish family who control some 60% of Swedish media and hundreds of publications and television stations around the world. Expressen and its editor, Thomas Mattsson has been 'at war' with WikiLeaks and Assange ever since Expressen's direct rival, Aftonbladet, signed a deal with Assange in early August 2010. It was Expressen that, through its contacts in the Swedish government, proclaimed to the world, falsely, in Swedish and, unusually, in English, that Assange was being "hunted" for a 'violent' double 'rape'. This is in violation of Swedish press standards/laws which are to



keep identities secret in an investigation/prosecution until sentence—even for the most severe crimes.

It was Expressen which earlier this year produced two front page fabricated stories claiming WikiLeaks was engaged in "diabolical measures" against Sweden. Expressen falsely claimed to have a 'WikiLeaks memo' that purportedly revealed how WikiLeaks had a secret plan to 'smear' all of Sweden, had been 'spying' on the homes of Swedish journalists, including the head of the influential Swedish publishers' association, had 'stolen' classified information on Swedish journalists from the Swedish government, 'stolen' their tax records, was planning to surround Swedish embassies with human chains and intended to smear the Swedish Foreign Minister as a 'spy'. This led to wide spread attacks on Assange & WikiLeaks throughout the Swedish media, by the Swedish Foreign Minister, Carl Bildt and by the Swedish ministry of defence (for "blackmailing" the "entire nation of Sweden" to prevent Assange's "extradition to the US").

Expressen's editor Thomas Mattsson was challenged to publish the document—he refused. Mattsson was challenged to debate the merits of the story—he refused. He was challenged to print a right of reply—and refused again. Mattsson's Expressen has produced a great many other false stories or biased stories on Assange and WikiLeaks.

### **Hanne Kjöllér**

HK is an opinion writer for DN, a center-right broadsheet in tabloid format owned by the Bonnier family. She has been penning anti-Assange articles since at least early 2011.

### **James Ball**

Ball is a protégé, immediately former subordinate and former student of David Leigh of the Guardian. David Leigh is Assange's principal media "enemy" in the United Kingdom. **Leigh conducted a secret plot to try and cut WikiLeaks out of its own 'Cablegate' publication. In addition to this being in breach of contract, it placed WikiLeaks related persons in the United States and elsewhere at severe risk of arrest and imprisonment.** This is documented, in part, in the Der Spiegel book about WikiLeaks. Der Spiegel refused to take part in the plot.

When WikiLeaks discovered the Leigh plot to breach the terms of the Guardian's Cablegate contract, the Guardian and WikiLeaks entered into legal conflict. On Nov 1 2010, Assange "raided" the Guardian offices with two lawyers and stated his intention to sue the editor Alan Rusbridger who had signed the contract if the plot was not aborted. Within the Guardian this is known as the "WikiLeaks ambush". The Guardian returned to limited contractual compliance; however it subsequently broke important security clauses in the contract.

Leigh is the brother-in-law of the Guardian's editor Alan Rusbridger and historically an influential figure in Guardian management. The conflict poisoned the relationship between WikiLeaks and the Guardian as a whole. In November 2011 **Ball interned at WikiLeaks for two months. Leigh offered Ball a job at the Guardian within a few days of the commencement of his internship with WikiLeaks. In exchange Ball secretly gave Leigh intelligence on the dispute and internal WikiLeaks documents which he copied while Assange was in solitary confinement at Wandsworth prison.**

Once at the Guardian and working for Leigh, Ball became Leigh's point man in the dispute. Reputations were at stake. Who was perceived to have the most credibility in the media industry and more broadly was vital to which organization and which person's reputation would survive. **Guardian management, Leigh and Ball were motivated to discredit WikiLeaks and Assange in order to protect themselves legally and reputationally.**

**Once working for Leigh, Ball produced a large number of false or biased articles about WikiLeaks for the Guardian. Guardian readers in literally tens of thousands of comments, objected to the bias taken against WikiLeaks and Assange by the Guardian. Perhaps to cover the perception of an anti-WikiLeaks campaign at the Guardian, Leigh and Ball concurrently "laundered" attacks into other publications.** Ball secretly "laundered" attacks to Mark Hosenball, a WikiLeaks opponent at Reuters (Hosenball had previously libeled WikiLeaks when he worked for Newsweek. This contributed to his retrenchment from Newsweek, which did not improve his attitude to WikiLeaks once at Reuters). Ball also wrote hostile articles on Assange for the New Statesman while at the Guardian.

In a mere three weeks Leigh penned the Guardian's WikiLeaks book after finding out about the imminent publication of a WikiLeaks book by Der Spiegel documenting the November 1st 'confrontation'. Leigh originally titled the book as "The rise and fall of WikiLeaks" until other Guardian management intervened. **The book disclosed the 'Cablegate' password and other information used to protect WikiLeaks operations.**

Leigh also engaged in a secret deal to craft a hostile film, "WikiLeaks: Secrets & lies", known in documentary circles as "The Guardian documentary". Leigh's involvement was formally admitted to in a subsequent ethics investigation.

**In 2012 Ball moved to Washington and started a year long internship for the Washington Post.** Washington Post opinion writers have previously called for the assassination of Assange and the kidnapping of WikiLeaks government by the United States. The Washington Post editorial board recently called for sanctions against Ecuador for granting Assange asylum.

Leigh and Ball together conducted dozens of tawdry plots within London's liberal left media social clique that interconnects the Guardian, New Statesman, the Index on Censorship, Private Eye and some parts of the BBC. This appears to have been a sustained attempt to undermine WikiLeaks and Assange's standing before there could be effective legal or reputational redress.

Last year, while both were at the Guardian, Karin Olsson, from the conservative Swedish tabloid 'Expressen' (see top), was commissioned to write an attack piece on Assange 'From Hero to Zero'.

Hamish's three "independent" critics are all directly connected and have agendas.

<http://www.twitlonger.com/show/jhi9ls>

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DN: 2012-10-11

## Anklagelserna mot Julian Assange

Tillsammans med en handfull andra har jag förärats en plats på Wikileaks offentliga fiendelista [*d.v.s. att WikiLeaks har informerat om Kjollers fiendlighet mot Julian Assange -- A.B.*]. Med tanke på vilka vänner Assange har är det bara att vara tacksam över att man inte hamnat på kompislistan.

För ett par veckor sedan blev jag intervjuad av den australiske journalisten Hamish MacDonald. Han var i Sverige, och en rad andra länder, för att sätta ihop en tevedokumentär om Wikileaks grundare Julian Assange.

Vi träffades av en slump en fredagskväll. När jag berättade om hur Assanges svenska advokat Björn Hurtig medvetet [*omedvetet enligt Hurtig --A.B.*] vilselett den brittiska domstolen och hur det renderat en varning i Advokatsamfundets disciplinnämnd höjde Hamish MacDonald på ögonbrynen.

Australiska medier hade inte med ett ord berört det faktum att det var Björn Hurtig som hade hållit Assange undan åklagarens tre förfrågningar om förhör medan Wikileaksgrundaren ännu var kvar i Sverige och inte -- som Björn Hurtig hävdat-- advokaten som jagat åklagaren (DN 3/7-11). [*Det gjorde han också. --A.B.*]

Denna faktauppgift renderade en rask spontanintervju på lördagen dagen efter. På söndagen åkte Hamish MacDonald tillbaka till Australien, via London, Ecuadors ambassad och ett halvt löfte om intervju med huvudpersonen själv. Men den australiska journalisten fick återvända hem i oförrättat ärende.

Exakt två veckor efter intervjun med mig blir jag kontaktad av den australiska tevekanalen. Filmen hade ännu inte visats, sista speakerrösten inte lagts på, men av någon outgrundlig anledning finns mitt namn med bland en handfull andra på en lista publicerad av Wikileaks. Det sker i en så kallad longtweet och når 1,6 miljoner följare.

Listan är ett slags kartläggning av fiendesidan. Om mig sägs att jag skrivit "Anti-Assange-artiklar" [*betyder citattecken att artiklarna var vänligt inställda? --A.B.*] sedan åtminstone tidiga 2011. Och så berättas var jag arbetar och att tidningen är ägd av familjen Bonnier.

Expressens kulturchef Karin Olsson föräras en avsevärt digrare meritförteckning. Men också i den stora textmassan tycker Wikileaks att det är viktigt att lyfta fram Bonnierfamiljen. Detta är intressant.

**För upplägget är nästan exakt detsamma som används av det antisemitiska Radio Islam,** vars grundare Ahmed Rami är dömd för hets mot folkgrupp. Där finns samma namnlistor över "fiender". Samma fixering vid familjen Bonnier.

Något direkt hot uttalas aldrig. Men det behövs inte heller. I en grupp där allt handlar om blind lydnad blir det ändå som **ett slags ideologisk fatwa** över dem som haft mage att uttrycka en egen åsikt.

**Och blind lydnad är vad Wikileaks numera tycks handla om.** I dokumentären berättar den tidigare medarbetaren James Ball hur han, i likhet med alla andra, ombads skriva på ett tystnadslofte daterat ett halvår tidigare. I kontraktet förbinder sig den anställde att inte säga någonting, någonstans om Wikileaks under tio år som inte skriftligen godkänts av Julian Assange personligen. För den som till äventyrs bryter mot kontrakten hotar ett skadestånd på 12 miljoner pund.

En organisation för whistleblowers där alla med insyn förbjuds att vissla. Julian Assange, en yttrandefrihetens apostel, som är så rädd för det fria ordet att han måste upprätta listor över människor **som inte till 100 procent håller med honom.**

I Wikileaks begynnelse, när många ännu såg Julian Assange i ett friskt ljus, fanns ändå en del mörka moln. Som kopplingen till den ökände antisemiten och förintelseförnekaren Israel Shamir och hans svans. 2010 utsågs Shamir till Wikileaks kontaktperson i Ryssland. [*"Guilt by association" à la Bonniers? Se ovan. --A.B.*]

**Cirkeln håller på att slutas. Antisemiterna på Radio Islam står inte på den ena sidan och yttrandefrihetsivrarna på Wikileaks på den andra. Extremerna närmar sig varandra. De står tillsammans i geggan av USA-hat, feministförakt, judefixering, konspirationer och förföljelseidéer.**

Och eftersom Julian Assange personligen och skriftligen måste godkänna allt som sägs i Wikileaks namn [*Det gör han bevisligen inte. --A.B.*] är han personligen ansvarig för hur Karin Olsson, James Ball och jag hamnat på **en lista som till sin utformning och sitt innehåll är intill förväxling lik sådant som hittas på Radio Islam.**

I dokumentären hävdar Julian Assanges pappa, John Shipton, att sonen ämnar starta ett politiskt parti och kandidera till det australiska parlamentet. En praktisk fråga är förstås hur Julian Assange ska kunna ta sig till Australien. En mer politisk är vad han ska där att göra.

**Utifrån hans syn på demokrati, frihet och mänskliga rättigheter vore det kanske smartare att satsa på Zimbabwes inre kabinett.**

Visst ja. Där finns ju redan en Mugabe.

- Hanne Kjoller

[*Därför hamnade Kjoller mycket riktigt på WikiLeaks varningslista. --A.B.*]



## Lady Gaga and Julian Assange – caption competition

*Tell us what you think the pop star and WikiLeaks founder managed to talk about for five hours*

*The Guardian*  
2012-10-11

It's a celebrity pairing too peculiar to have been invented: on Monday evening, Lady Gaga, fresh from a public appearance over the road at Harrods, dropped by the Ecuadorian embassy to see Julian Assange, who has been holed up there, claiming asylum, since June.

It was, by all accounts, no flying visit — Gaga stayed for five hours. She came, apparently, at the behest of rapper MIA, but it's unclear if the latter actually turned up herself. Assuming it was just the two of them, what did Gaga and Julian talk about for five hours? Answers, please....

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WikiLeaks posted a video which shows U.S. officials and other political figures calling for the destruction of the WikiLeaks and the assassination of Julian Assange.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-DIZvcK6Rc&feature=youtu.be>

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## Of sureties and Assange

*Phillip Knightley*  
*Khaleej Times (U.A.E.)*  
*16 October 2012*

The saga of Julian Assange, WikiLeaks, the Swedish sex allegations, the Ecuadorian embassy asylum, court cases about his bail money and media interest in his whereabouts drag on and on. It emerged this week that the police presence outside the Ecuadorian embassy, 24 hours a day, seven days a week in case Assange emerges and the London police can grab him, has so far cost about £1 million.

It didn't cost his supporters anything like that amount but they were hit with bills from Westminster Magistrates Court and nine of them were ordered to pay into court amounts ranging from £3500 to £15,000. At this point I am ethically bound to declare an interest — I was one of those ordered to pay £15,000. How this came about is both interesting and an illumination of the workings of the British criminal justice system normally kept in the dark.

In December 2010 Assange surrendered to the British police on a European arrest warrant issued in November of that year by the Swedish Prosecuting Authority, which said that they wanted to question him about allegations of sexual offences by two Swedish women. The British court granted Assange bail amounting to several hundred thousand pounds. Some of it was in cash and some in sureties. These sureties obliged the people who pledged the money to hand over the cash if Assange failed to turn up in court when ordered to do so.

This is where I entered the scene. Assange's lawyers rang me at home in 2010 and said that they were short £20,000 of the sum demanded by the court and was I willing to act as a surety for this amount. No cash was needed. Just my signature. I agreed because I admired Assange's work on WikiLeaks, Assange had not been actually charged with any offence, I felt that he was entitled to a presumption of innocence, he posed no threat to anyone, I did not consider him to be a flight risk and I wanted to show solidarity with a fellow journalist.

Over the next year I was several times asked to approve variations to Assange bail conditions to allow him to attend court and fight off extradition. I agreed and Assange kept strictly to the conditions the court had imposed, including wearing an electronic tag and reporting to the police daily. He finally lost the extradition case faced removal to Sweden in a matter of days.

On June 19, this year, the police received notification that Assange had presented himself to the Ecuadorian embassy in London where he was claiming political asylum. The Ecuadorian authorities have since granted him asylum and he has remained in the embassy building in London ever since.

The British authorities are reluctant to enter the embassy premises to arrest Assange for fear of creating a diplomatic incident. But Assange cannot set foot outside the embassy, even to drive to the airport en route to Ecuador.

After a slow start, the British authorities moved to seize the money that the nine surety providers had guaranteed to pay and a hearing in Westminster Magistrates Court began to allow them to show cause why this should not happen. Our lawyers argued that Assange's night-time flit to the Ecuadorian embassy had caught everyone by surprise — I heard of it myself on the morning news.

**It turns out that the reason for his secrecy was that if he had told anyone of the surety providers, they would have been placed under an immediate legal obligation to have informed the police about his plans. Failure to do so is a criminal offence. In fact, there are many things about the surety procedure that involve possible criminal offences. For instance, the accused cannot reimburse or guarantee to reimburse the surety provider for any money he might lose by the accused's actions.**

The nine of us tried to argue that we would have done our best to persuade Assange to fulfill the conditions of his bail if we had had the chance to do so. This carried no weight because the judge ruled that even if a surety does his best to do this he remains liable for the full amount he pledged. He accepted that all the sureties acted in good faith "but they failed in their basic duty to ensure Assange's surrender".

After that we had to be grateful for the judge's decision to cut the sureties by about a quarter, leaving Assange still marooned in the embassy, the cost of the police presence outside the embassy still mounting, no diplomatic resolution in sight and we nine worse off financially.

[http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/opinion/2012/October/opinion\\_October37.xml&section=opinion](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/opinion/2012/October/opinion_October37.xml&section=opinion)

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## **US disappointed by 'laughable' decision on Gary McKinnon**

*State Department officials will study ruling and could ask Interpol to issue red notice*

*Nikhil Kumar  
The Independent  
17 October 2012*

The American government expressed its disappointment last night after the Home Secretary halted Gary McKinnon's extradition to the US. The State Department said it was examining the ruling by Theresa May yesterday to block the extradition of the 46-year-old computer hacker with Asperger's syndrome and severe depression as it would be "incompatible with human rights".

Victoria Nuland, a spokeswoman for the department, said the US "was disappointed by the decision" to deny Mr McKinnon's transfer across the Atlantic to face what she called "long overdue justice in the United States".

**For 10 years, American prosecutors have been seeking to bring Mr McKinnon to the US to face trial for hacking into military computers. It is claimed that Mr McKinnon damaged scores of machines as a result. He denies any malicious intent, saying instead that he was looking for files related to UFOs.**

Earlier this year, the Prime Minister David Cameron raised the case with Barack Obama. On a visit to Washington, Mr Cameron acknowledged that Mr McKinnon was accused of a "very important and significant crime" but that he was hoping that "a way through can be found".

The US Department of Justice said that it was also disappointed at the Home Secretary's decision, "particularly given the past decisions of the UK courts and prior Home Secretaries that he should face trial in the United States". It did not, however, view the ruling as a precedent for other cases.

"The Home Secretary has described this case as exceptional and, thus, this decision does not set a precedent for future cases," said Rebekah Carmichael, a spokeswoman for the department. "The Home Secretary has acknowledged that Mr. McKinnon is accused of serious crimes". She added that, despite this ruling, the US-UK extradition relationship "remains strong, as is demonstrated by the extradition of five alleged terrorists" to the US earlier in October. "Our extradition treaty serves the interests of both our nations," said Ms Carmichael.

Douglas McNabb, a Washington-based expert on US federal law, said that US authorities may yet decide to pursue Mr McKinnon via Interpol, the international policing body. "Now that the Home Secretary has made this decision that, of course, bars the US from seeking his extradition, **I think the next step is that they may well ask Interpol to issue a red notice... so that if Mr McKinnon were to travel outside the UK, the red notice would pop up and he would be arrested,**" he said. This, he explained, would open the door to the possibility of renewed extradition proceedings in the country of his arrest.

Another US lawyer, David Rivkin, who worked for the Reagan and Bush administrations, criticised Ms May's decision, saying that to deny the extradition on health grounds was "laughable". "Under that logic, anybody who claims some kind of physical or mental problem can commit crimes with impunity and get away with it," he told the BBC.

The US said the extradition relationship remained strong, as shown by the Hamza case

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## **Parallels between Gary McKinnon and Julian Assange**

*ITV*

*16 Oct. 2012*

A spokesman for the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, where WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is staying, has said that parallels can be drawn between Assange and Gary McKinnon.

He said: "There are obvious parallels here with the fears expressed by Julian Assange. The UK government ought to now publicly state that they will not, under any circumstances, allow the onward extradition of Julian Assange to the US where he would be subject to the undermining of his human rights just as Gary McKinnon would have been."



Mr Assange has been staying at the Embassy since June seeking to avoid extradition to Sweden.

<http://www.itv.com/news/update/2012-10-16/ecuadoran-embassy-parallels-between-gary-mckinnon-and-julian-assange>

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## UK's Gary McKinnon extradition call reflects scepticism about US justice

*The US-UK extradition treaty is a Bush-era 'war on terror' relic. And America's mass incarceration is a real human rights issue*

Scott Lemieux  
The Guardian  
17 October 2012

On Tuesday, the British government announced that it was refusing to extradite computer hacker Gary McKinnon to the United States. McKinnon, who suffers from Asperger's syndrome, had been sought for extradition by the United States because he repeatedly hacked into government computer systems. Theresa May, the Cameron government's Home secretary, declared that:

"Mr McKinnon's extradition would give rise to such a high risk of him ending his life that the decision to extradite would be incompatible with his human rights."

Because of his illness, McKinnon's case is somewhat unique. But it's hard to avoid the conclusion that the decision by a conservative government of one of America's staunchest allies not to extradite him reflects increasing international skepticism about US criminal justice process.

On its face, May's announcement may seem surprising. The charges against McKinnon— that he deliberately impaired government computers, causing more than \$500,000-worth of damage— are not trivial. McKinnon has not denied the hacking, although he has said that he was merely looking for hidden government evidence of UFOs and other conspiracies. It's not unreasonable for a government to protect the security of its computer systems. Given the close ties between the US and UK, it might be expected that the question of what extent McKinnon's Asperger's syndrome mitigates the offenses with which he is charged would be determined by an American court.

In a broader context, though, the extradition order becomes more troubling and British skepticism understandable. This starts with the law governing the extradition process. **A relic of the Blair government's complete capitulation to the Bush administration over the "war on terror", the treaty under which the US sought McKinnon's extradition is notably lacking in due process protections** — even for British citizens accused of crimes while on British soil.

Not surprisingly, while sold as essential to combating terrorism, the broad latitude afforded by the treaty has been used to request the extradition of suspects who (like

McKinnon) are not terrorist suspects. May's determination that the extradition order would violate the Human Rights Act of 1998 likely reflects a retrospective determination that the 2003 treaty did not adequately protect the interests of British citizens.

There are two additional reasons to be skeptical about the American government's request. First, it's **hard to ignore the egregious double standards the US government has applied in cases broadly related to the "war on terror"**. The Obama administration has refused to prosecute any of the Bush administration's human rights abuses, while, on the other hand, it has very aggressively prosecuted whistleblowers. It's hard to avoid the conclusion that this will have made even allies less likely to take at face value criminal charges laid by the US government.

**Even more problematic, and likely to be an increasing difficulty with regard to American requests for extradition, is the extraordinarily punitive American criminal justice system.** The scale of incarceration in the US makes it a massive outlier among liberal democracies, and this scandalous state of affairs has to affect every extradition decision. The British government cannot, in fact, reasonably be confident that the charges against McKinnon would be balanced against a fair consideration of his illness. **McKinnon would have faced up to 60 years in prison if convicted, and it would never be wise to assume that the American criminal justice system won't issue a disproportionately harsh sentence.**

The Cameron government's refusal to extradite McKinnon certainly reflects the idiosyncratic facts of his individual case. But it almost definitely also reflects the damage done to the reputation of the United States by a completely broken criminal justice system. It's impossible for even the staunchest of US allies to look the other way when faced with the misplaced priorities and brutal mass incarceration that characterize the American practice of criminal law.

The realities of domestic politics make meaningful reform of these injustices enormously difficult, so the international reputation of the US will continue to suffer. And there will be increasing numbers of cases in which countries refuse to extradite people to face charges in American courts.

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## **Revealed: Canberra shared intel on Assange with Washington**

*Philip Dorling  
Sydney Morning Herald  
October 18, 2012*

WikiLeaks and Julian Assange have been the subject of intelligence exchanges between Australia and the United States **for more than two years**, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has revealed.

**The WikiLeaks publisher was also the subject of Australian intelligence reporting from Washington shortly before he sought political asylum in Ecuador's London embassy.**

In a freedom of information decision yesterday, Foreign Affairs confirmed to Fairfax Media the existence of an intelligence report concerning WikiLeaks and Mr Assange cabled to Canberra from Australia's Washington embassy on June 1.

Mr Assange, who had been unsuccessful in his legal fight to avoid extradition from the United Kingdom to Sweden to face questioning about sexual assault allegations, sought political asylum in Ecuador's London embassy 18 days later.

Foreign Affairs has also confirmed that US-Australia intelligence exchanges on WikiLeaks date back more than two years by revealing the existence of two intelligence reports sent from Washington to Canberra on August 4 and 25, 2010, in the immediate aftermath of the transparency website's publication of secret US military reports on the war in Afghanistan.

The secret Washington embassy cables have been withheld from release because they are "intelligence agency documents" that are exempt from disclosure under freedom of information law.

All of Australia's intelligence agencies are represented in the Washington embassy and liaise closely with their US counterparts

One newly released Australian diplomatic cable also shows that the Washington embassy did receive confidential information concerning the involvement of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation in investigations targeting WikiLeaks as early as 29 or 30 July 2010.

However the details of this exchange have been redacted by Foreign Affairs on the grounds that disclosure of "assessments or comments by foreign officials" would damage Australia's international relations.

Other Australian diplomatic cables previously released to Fairfax Media reveal that in December 2010 the embassy 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". US officials told the embassy "the WikiLeaks case was unprecedented both in its scale and nature".

In another document released by Foreign Affairs, former Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd wrote on November 15, 2011, to seek former Attorney-General Robert McClelland's view on reports that "the most likely route to a successful prosecution would be to show that Mr Assange had acted as a co-conspirator — soliciting, encouraging or assisting [US Army private] Bradley Manning, to obtain and provide the documents".

Foreign Minister Bob Carr has repeatedly denied any knowledge of any intention by Washington to prosecute Mr Assange, saying in June: "I've received no hint that they've got a plan to extradite him to the US ... I would expect that the US would not want to touch this."

The latest freedom of information release to Fairfax Media shows Australian diplomats have continued to attend and report in detail on the pre-trial proceedings for Private Manning who faces 22 charges relating to alleged leaking of classified information to WikiLeaks and, though such disclosures, "aiding the enemy", a charge that could bring a life sentence.

On June 20, the Washington embassy reported the failure of Private Manning's defence team to obtain access to records of the US federal grand jury reported to be engaged

with the Justice Department's investigation of espionage and related offences relating to WikiLeaks' obtaining classified documents.

However related "sensitive" information in the embassy's report has been redacted, on the grounds once more that release could damage Australia's relations with the United States.

Ecuador 's president Rafael Correa granted Mr Assange political asylum on August 16, saying that if Mr Assange was extradited to Sweden he would be at risk of further extradition to the US to face espionage or conspiracy charges.

Discussions between British Foreign Secretary William Haig and his Ecuadorean counterpart Ricardo Patino, in New York on September 27, failed to break the diplomatic and legal impasse over Mr Assange's status.

The British Government says it is legally obliged to extradite Assange to Sweden, and that it will not allow him to leave Ecuador's embassy and travel to the South American country.

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/revealed-canberra-shared-intel-on-assange-with-washington-20121017-27qo6.html>

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## **Pirate Bay Founder Held In Solitary Confinement**

*TorrentFreak*  
*October 20, 2012*

In late August Pirate Bay founder Gottfrid Svartholm was arrested in Cambodia. After being held by authorities there he was swiftly deported to Sweden. Once in his homeland he was hit with charges connected to an alleged hacking offense but since then the news trail has gone largely cold. Speaking with Gottfrid's mother Kristina, TorrentFreak has learned that her son is being kept in solitary confinement, locked up for 23 hours a day. But he is allowed to read and hopefully, very soon, that will include your letters.

During the dying days of **August**, Pirate Bay founder Gottfrid Svartholm was arrested by Cambodian police in Phnom Penh, the city he made his home several years ago. From his comfortable apartment above the Cadillac Bar on the riverfront, Gottfrid was taken into custody.

The immediately recognizable Swede is best known for his connections to a rather infamous BitTorrent site and it was initially presumed he was going back to Sweden to face a pending jail sentence for copyright infringement offenses. That turned out to be only part of the jigsaw.

After landing at Stockholm's Arlanda Airport, Gottfrid was hit with new charges relating to the hacking of an IT company closely connected with Sweden's tax authorities.

Gottfrid has been detained ever since, with little to zero information coming out of the Swedish system as to his health or whereabouts. But one person, his mother Kristina Svartholm, knows exactly where he is.

“He’s being held in a newly built custody house 15 minutes by commute north of the city, Häktet i Sollentuna,” Kristina told TorrentFreak. “Very large, very impersonal, very frightening for visitors who don’t like surveillance cameras, lifts that move automatically, security checks...”

Of course, the most important questions concern Gottfrid’s well-being, but first let’s hear a little bit more from Kristina on her son’s circumstances to better understand his position.

“He is in custody suspected of hacking. It is called the ‘Logica case’ for which two other persons were arrested earlier this year. They are still under suspicion but free, waiting for the trial— if it comes to one,” says Kristina.

“This is not a proper case yet, no prosecution so far. The crime is said to have been going on from early 2010 to summer 2012 according to the prosecutor. **The reason why Gottfrid is being kept in custody is that he ‘might destroy evidence and disturb the investigation’.**”

Three weeks ago the authorities gave another reason why Gottfrid should continue to be locked up, unlike his co-accused who remain free. If he remained at large, the prosecutor argued, he would “continue with criminal activities.”

“Maybe the court realized that this latter claim was a bit stupid because he in fact should be in jail now anyway— if the Swedish police who picked him up in Cambodia were telling the truth,” notes Kristina. “His old Pirate Bay sentence, one year in jail, was what the international spokesman for the Swedish police, as well as people at the Swedish embassy, gave as the reason for bringing him here.”

Whatever the reasons, the end result is that Gottfrid is now in custody, **locked up for 23 hours a day in solitary confinement.**

“He is kept under restrictions as decided by the prosecutor. TV in his cell. He can buy cigarettes and sweets from a kiosk that comes Monday and Wednesdays,” Kristina explains.

“He is offered one hour ‘outdoors’ each day in some kind of exercise yard with high concrete walls. That is all he is allowed to leave his cell for. No gym, no opportunities to meet other people except for the guards.

“I have got permission so far from the prosecutor to meet him once a week for an hour each time, together with two policemen who listen to our conversations and stop us if we get close to the ‘case’, which we happened to do in the beginning. It has been a process of amazing bureaucracy (Freudian spelling!) every time before getting there, I assure you.”

Being locked in a cell for 23 hours every day must be a mind-numbing experience, especially for someone as intelligent as Gottfrid. But Kristina says that her son is filling

his time watching television and reading books, since the one newspaper he's given access to is a tabloid that he refuses to buy. "It's not exactly his favorite," Kristina says. Overall though, Gottfrid appears to be coping well.

"He is perfectly fine!" says Kristina. "I haven't noticed any health problems whatsoever since his arrival. He is very thin, yes— but he is strong, amazingly strong, both physically and mentally, I assure you. When we meet we have fun together, he jokes and tells stories and makes me laugh."

While Gottfrid's stories are keeping Kristina entertained, it's other people's stories that are keeping the Pirate Bay co-founder entertained once his cell door closes. This is where every TorrentFreak reader can play their part.

Gottfrid is allowed to read books but what he also has access to are letters. To that end Kristina has set up an email address (see the end of this article) through which his supporters can write to him with words of encouragement.

Of course, there are some ground rules and a couple of things people should know.

If letters are to get through there can be no discussion of specifics on the case, that much should be obvious. Also, anyone writing should be aware that although their email addresses will be stripped away by Kristina before she prints out letters for physical mailing, the Swedish authorities will read all emails before allowing Gottfrid access to them.

Hopefully a steady flow of letters will keep Gottfrid busy, encouraged and entertained before the next notable points in his detainment are reached. Some of those are due in the short-term, others in a more extended timeframe.

"Every second Friday there is a court decision about another two weeks in custody or not, as suggested by the prosecutor. Next time will be Oct 26. **This will probably go on for another 1.5 to 2 months or so**, it's just a matter of wait and see," Kristina explains.

"Then I would guess he will be taken to prison, whichever it will be. There will of course be restrictions for him there as well— including getting access to Internet and so on— but there will be more people around and hopefully it will be a bit easier for him as to receive visitors etc."

With good behavior it's expected that Gottfrid could be released in May 2013 but as for developments with the Logica case, the state of play is somewhat of a mystery.

"I know nothing," Kristina concludes. "Absolutely nothing is known to me except for what has been reported in the media."

To write to Anakata (in Swedish or English) use the following address:  
gottfrids[at]yahoo.se

<https://torrentfreak.com/pirate-bay-founder-held-in-solitary-confinement-write-him-a-letter-today-121020/>

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WikiLeaks questioned why defence lawyer Claes Borgström was not mentioned in The Guardian's article about Thomas Quick, as he was defence council for Mr Quick, and now represents the complainants in the sexual misconduct case against Julian Assange. **The author of the article, Elizabeth Day, said he was not mentioned for legal reasons,** to which WikiLeaks responded asking if there had been threats or a super-injunction.

Journalist Holger Stark sent out a few tweets about a new article on Julian Assange in the latest edition of SPIEGEL. The article says that Mr Assange deserves protection against U.S. extradition and is not any more guilty than SPIEGEL or The New York Times. Mr Assange feels the situation in the Embassy is better, and he is "happy to be back on the field of politics". The article is only available in the pay version of SPIEGEL.

<http://www.thisdayinwikileaks.org/>  
October 21, 2012

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## **Ecuador concerned for health of Julian Assange**

*WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange's hosts in London ask Britain to guarantee him safe passage if he needs hospitalisation*

Reuters  
The Guardian  
24 October 2012

Ecuador is worried about the health of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange and has asked Britain to guarantee him safe passage from its London embassy to hospital if he needs medical treatment, a senior Ecuadorean diplomat said in Moscow.

Assange, an Australian, has been holed up inside Ecuador's embassy in central London since June to avoid extradition to Sweden to face rape and sexual assault allegations.

British authorities say Assange will be arrested if he sets foot outside the embassy. The apartment building, located just behind London's famed Harrods department store, is under constant police surveillance.

"Assange has grown noticeably thinner, and we are very concerned about his health," Voice of Russia radio quoted vice foreign minister Marco Albuja Martinez as saying in comments confirmed by the Ecuadorean embassy in Moscow.

"If he falls ill, we will have to choose between two alternatives: to treat Assange in the embassy or hospitalise him," Albuja Martinez said. "This is a very serious situation and it can affect Assange's human rights."

Ecuador has asked the British Foreign Office for a document that would enable Assange to enter hospital safely if necessary and return to the embassy with refugee status, the Voice of Russia quoted Albuja Martinez as saying.

The Foreign Office said it was unaware of Assange's health problems. "Ecuador have not told us that Mr Assange is ill. However, were they to do so, we would consider the matter," said a Foreign Office spokesman.

Ecuador granted Assange asylum in August and said it shared his fears that he could face charges in the US over the publication by WikiLeaks in 2010 of thousands of secret US diplomatic cables.

When he appeared on a balcony of the building to address supporters in August, Assange appeared tanned and in good health. But a BBC reporter who saw him recently described him as "a very pale man" in a story broadcast on Sunday.

Assange broke the conditions of his bail when he entered the embassy after running out of legal options to avoid being sent to Sweden.

Speaking about the safe passage request he said Ecuador had lodged with the Foreign Office, Albuja Martinez said his country was pleased that Britain "did not reject it outright".

"We will not put pressure on them and will patiently await an answer, so that Assange can receive medical treatment if necessary," he was quoted as saying in Moscow.

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## **Julian Assange: I may leave embassy if US government ends standoff**

*WikiLeaks founder tells CNN he could leave Ecuadorean compound in London if 'immoral investigation' is dropped*

*David Batty  
The Guardian  
26 October 2012*

Julian Assange has said he will not consider leaving the Ecuadorean embassy in London unless the US government drops its "immoral" investigation into WikiLeaks.

Assange has been sheltering in the embassy since June as part of his attempt to avoid extradition to Sweden to face rape allegations. He fears he will ultimately be sent to the United States to face interrogation over the whistleblowing website, which he founded.

In a CNN interview in the embassy, Assange said the standoff could end if the US government drops its investigation. "It's an immoral investigation," he said. "It breaches the first amendment, it breaches all the principles that the US government says it stands for and it absolutely breaches the principles the founding fathers stood for and which most of the US people believe in."

Assange broke his bail conditions in June when he took refuge in the embassy in Knightsbridge after he lost a supreme court challenge to the validity of the European arrest warrant that demanded his return to Sweden for questioning. He was due to be sent within days when he took up residence in the diplomatic mission having been granted political asylum.

His lawyers and the Ecuadorean government contend that travelling to Sweden could lead to his extradition to the US, where he could face charges over WikiLeaks' publication of thousands of US diplomatic cables.



US soldier Bradley Manning is two years into his military solitary confinement for allegedly leaking hundreds of thousands of US state secrets, many of which ended up on the WikiLeaks website. He is currently awaiting trial and could be sentenced to life in prison if found guilty.

"There's an attempt to extradite me without charge and without evidence, allegedly for the purpose of questioning," said Assange. "Meanwhile, the FBI has been engaged in building this tremendous case, now up to 41,235 pages."

In the interview, Assange compared life in the embassy to "living on a space station". "There's no natural light," he said. "You have got to make all your own stuff. You can't go out to the shops. But I've been in solitary confinement. I know what life is like for prisoners-- [this is] a lot better than it is for prisoners."

His interview came after WikiLeaks released more than 100 US defence department files on Thursday disclosing the military's detention policies in Guantanamo Bay and Iraq, dating from the September 11 attacks until 2004.

Assange said the documents showed that "policies of unaccountability" had allowed prisoners to be abused with impunity. The destruction of video interviews or the failure to record them, as revealed in the files, had led to a situation "where abuse can occur and it can't be discovered".

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## **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](http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case1.pdf)

**Part 2: 17 December 2011 – 17 February 2011**

[www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case2.pdf](http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case2.pdf)

**Part 3: 20 February 2011 – 17 July 2011**

[www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf](http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf)

**Part 4: 8 August 2011 – 30 June 2012**

[www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf](http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf)

**For more and better-organized information:**

[www.nnn.se/nordic/assange.htm](http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange.htm)

## **Other resources**

<http://www.thisdayinwikileaks.org>

<http://justice4assange.com>

<http://dissenter.firedoglake.com>

<https://www.flashback.org/sok/assange>

<http://rixstep.com/1>