

Assange & Sweden

Miscellaneous Information: Part 7

1 July 2013 – 20 June 2014

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

– Al Burke
Nordic News Network

Links to other parts of the series

Documents in PDF format

Part 1: 14 August 2010 – 16 December 2010
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case1.pdf

Part 2: 17 December 2011 – 17 February 2011
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case2.pdf

Part 3: 20 February 2011 – 17 July 2011
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf

Part 4: 8 August 2011 – 30 June 2012
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case4.pdf

Part 5: 1 July 2012 – 27 October 2012
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case5.pdf

Part 6: 28 October 2012 – 30 June 2013
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case6.pdf

For more and better-organized information:
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange.htm

[The following excerpts relate to Robert Manne's review of Alex Gibney's documentary film on Julian Assange and Bradley Manning; that review is reproduced in Part 6 of this series.]

We Steal Secrets: A response from Alex Gibney

*Robert Manne
The Monthly (Australia)
1 July 2013*

Dear Robert:

Here are my reactions to your review. They appear as comments in your text. While I disagree with most of your views, I thank you for expressing them in a dispassionate way.

Best,
Alex

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Manne's review: In Virginia a grand jury was empanelled. According to a leaked secret email from a former deputy chief of counterterrorism inside the State Department's security service, in February 2011 a sealed indictment against Assange was issued. Two years later, on 26 March 2013, the US Attorney's office for the eastern district of Virginia confirmed that the grand jury investigation "remains ongoing".

Gibney: I don't dispute this. Neither does the film. However, I have done two other films about people who were the subjects of Grand Jury investigations. Neither sought asylum in the Ecuadorean Embassy. In both cases, the government decided not to pursue a case. The existence of a Grand Jury investigation is not evidence of an indictment. It may, in fact, be a political way of protecting Obama's "right flank."

I have been told (and Smari McCarthy and others have confirmed) that the GJ investigation was losing steam. Part of the reason, I suspect, is that the DOJ cannot figure out how to distinguish WikiLeaks from the NY Times. Recent actions by WikiLeaks in regard to Snowden (taken after the film was complete) may have given the DOJ ammunition to try new legal theories. I hope not. I believe that if Assange acts as a publisher, he must be treated as one under US law.

Manne's response: Although you say that the film does not dispute that there has been an ongoing grand jury investigation of Julian Assange for the past two-and-a-half years, by not referring to it the film certainly does not make the nature and seriousness of the grand jury investigation clear. At one point you say: "Over two years after the first leak, no charges had been filed by the US. Assange claimed that the US was biding its time, waiting for him to go to Sweden, but there was no proof." At another point you say: "Despite the lack of evidence of any secret plot, Ecuador granted him asylum." And without explanation, you dismiss the leaked Stratfor email concerning the existence of a sealed indictment as a "rumour". (I agree that the Stratfor email does not provide proof that a sealed indictment exists but I believe that it constitutes something much more solid and worrisome than mere rumour.)

In my opinion these statements, in combination, must leave the viewers of your film with the thought that Assange has at best greatly exaggerated the fears of extradition to the US and indictment on a serious criminal charge and at worst is altogether fanciful, even paranoid, in what he most fears. Neither Assange nor you nor I nor anyone else knows whether the US administration intends to try to extradite Assange. This does not seem to me the point. The question is whether Assange has solid grounds for fearing that it is a possibility. If I had been under investigation for two-and-a-half years by a grand jury, as part of a criminal investigation serious enough to have engaged the attention of the US Attorney-General, I would not find solace in the kinds of speculative possibilities you raise in your comment that Obama might be protecting himself from the right by continuing the investigation despite no intention to prosecute or in Smari McCarthy's impression that the investigation is losing steam.

The issue is not, in my view, whether Assange has proof of US intentions. The issue, or so it seems to me, is whether he has legitimate grounds for his fear. As you will be aware, a recent New York Times investigation published after the completion of your film has given even greater credence to Assange's fears about the continuing criminal investigation. "Interviews with government agents, prosecutors and others familiar with the WikiLeaks investigation, as well as an investigation of court documents, suggest that Mr Assange and WikiLeaks are being investigated by several government agencies, along with a grand jury that has subpoenaed witnesses. Tens of thousands of pages of evidence have been gathered. And at least four other former members of WikiLeaks have had contact with the United States authorities seeking information on Mr. Assange, the former members said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss a matter they were informed was confidential." (David Carr and Ravi Somaiya, "Assange, Back in News, Never Left US Radar", *The New York Times*, June 24 2013.)

Gibney: You and I will have to agree to disagree about some of this. I agree that the investigation is very serious. It has deployed many resources, as Grand Jury investigations often do. The film makes it clear that there are those in the US who have it out for Assange.

I'm concerned about one thing. You refer to my script as saying "despite the lack of evidence of any secret plot." But that's not the final narration. The final narration (I am in transit so I can't give you the verbatim text) makes it clear that I am talking about the lack of evidence of any secret US-Sweden plot. As stated before, Assange's transcript is not accurate. That's why I hope that people who want to participate in this debate see the film, as you have done.

I do believe that Julian has come to believe that the US is seeking to extradite him no matter what. But you seem to be suggesting that seeking asylum would be rational, sensible or even inevitable in the face of a Grand Jury investigation. That just isn't so. Otherwise, embassies all over the world would be full. Furthermore, Assange is not without resources. Unlike people far less famous than he, he has access to the world's best human rights lawyers.

Assange also seems to be concerned about US efforts to link him to Manning. I don't see why. According to first amendment lawyers I have spoken to at the ACLU and elsewhere, Assange—as a publisher—had every right to talk to Manning (if he did). Bob Woodward encourages federal employees to leak classified material all the time. He does so within the law. As a publisher, WikiLeaks can do so also.

I agree that Assange should take these investigations seriously. That's why I mentioned them. And I also agree that he has a right to seek asylum. But to assume that he will be extradited is a bridge too far. Assange doesn't even know the charges—

if any— that might be brought. If the charges are political (such as the Espionage Act) many countries— including Sweden— would refuse to extradite him.

This brings us to the point at hand. Was part of Assange's motivation to avoid being brought to account for sexual allegations in Sweden? If Assange was so convinced that he would be extradited by the United States, why didn't he seek asylum in the Ecuadorean Embassy prior to the final decision of the British court? The Grand Jury investigation was ongoing for a long time. What changed after the decision? Clearly Assange decided that the attempt to extradite him to Sweden was a back-door attempt to extradite him to the United States. But we know from many experts— including members of his own legal team— that it would be more difficult for the US to extradite Assange from Sweden than from the United Kingdom. There is also no good evidence that demonstrates that the Swedish government is conspiring with the United States to extradite Assange to America.

I disagree with you about Stratfor emails. They do not represent anything more than rumor. The folks at Stratfor boast about knowing stuff that they don't really know all the time.

Manne: As in all answers in this final round I will be as brief as possible.

Your film does not suggest the size or seriousness of the grand jury investigation.

I have never claimed that Assange will be extradited. In my reply I argue that no one knows what are the US administration's intentions.

The probable reason that the FBI have sought assiduously to find details about Assange's contact with Manning is that they are considering a conspiracy charge. And **if Assange's concerns regarding the question of his contact with Manning are groundless, how do you explain the fact that the FBI sent a dozen people to Iceland on a WikiLeaks fishing expedition or required Google to hand over the entire records of four WikiLeaks volunteers?**

Assange only went to the Ecuador Embassy after all his appeals against extradition to Sweden had failed. For much of the time before that he was in prison or under house arrest. He believed that the US was not going to embarrass the UK government by jumping the extradition queue, and has recently said that he will remain in the Ecuador Embassy even if Sweden drops the sexual charges.

As you admit that Assange's fears are genuine, it is clear that he is not confident that Sweden will refuse to extradite him to the US. Although I am not a lawyer, I don't believe your simple statement— about the groundlessness of Assange's fears because Sweden is not willing to extradite anyone on political grounds— is well-based. **I'm certain that if the US tried to extradite Assange it would deny that the cause— let's say conspiracy to commit espionage— was political. You might think you know how Sweden would act in that case. I do not.**

I had to rely on the WikiLeaks transcript as Universal Pictures in Australia were unwilling to send anyone an advance DVD.

Review text: No one could tell from watching *We Steal Secrets* that, ever since the empanelling of the grand jury, Assange has had excellent reason to believe that if extradited to the United States he will be in danger of spending the remainder of his life in one of its prisons. Assange's fears are not fanciful, as Gibney suggests, but genuine and well founded.

Gibney: As noted above, the existence of a Grand Jury investigation should not, in any way, lead one to conclude that Assange "will be in danger of spending the rest of his life in prison."

Manne: I have argued my chief point already. All I need add here is something almost self-evident: That if Assange is indeed eventually extradited to the US he will most likely face charges that carry the possibility of a very severe prison sentence.

Gibney: Please look at this string of “ifs” and “most likely”s. Should everyone who might face serious charges seek [to avoid?] extradition?

Manne: As a matter of fact, almost everyone does. I believe that Assange is justified in trying to avoid extradition to the US because (like you) I do not believe that what he has tried to achieve at WikiLeaks is criminal or wrong and also because he has no reason to be confident that he will be treated impartially by the US justice system.

Review text: To tell the inside story of WikiLeaks without interviewing Assange or any of his loyal supporters, Gibney was forced to rely on some of the insiders who have either been dismissed from WikiLeaks, like the German Daniel Domscheit-Berg, or who have defected, like James Ball, the young Englishman. Assange is a charismatic leader of a besieged organisation. It cannot have been easy for Domscheit-Berg or Ball to part company with Assange gracefully or without guilt. For this reason, the danger of relying uncritically on such witnesses ought to have been obvious. The evidence of *We Steal Secrets* suggests that for Gibney it was not.

Gibney: The documentary includes notice that Ball and DDB fell out with Assange. So, the audience can keep that in mind. The documentary also notes that Assange declined to participate. The audience can judge that also, as you have done.

Manne: Of course it's true that we know that these people have fallen out with Assange. **But how the audience is likely to judge what they say is not as simple as that. In my view, in what I call the moral economy of the film, very great weight is placed on DDB's and Ball's statements** especially towards the end of the film— DDB's statement about WikiLeaks turning into the kind of authoritarian organisation it once detested and opposed and in the idea of Assange excusing his bad behaviour on what Ball describes as “noble cause corruption”. **In the way the film is structured the viewer is encouraged to see these as telling and objective judgments rather than interesting but also partial, bitter, even maybe guilty ones.** Because Assange is such a powerful and charismatic personality, the fallings out with him are certainly likely to have been fraught. For that reason I think it unbalanced to give people in this situation **what seems to me like the final word.** (I was struck by the way by Jonsdittir's moderation compared to DDB and Ball.) And if Assange had asked my advice, I would have encouraged him to participate so his views could at least provide a balance to those of his former allies and present enemies.

Gibney: It's interesting to me that you find the reactions of those who fell out with Assange as “fraught,” but can't find fault with Assange's perceptions. To your last point, I am also disappointed that he did not participate. But that was his choice, not mine.

Manne: To say that the fallings out were fraught is self-evident. One of the issues your film never discusses is the guilt some former WikiLeaks people might have felt in abandoning the cause as the legal and rhetorical threats from the US rose. Rop Gonggrijp, an ally who went to Washington with Assange in 2010, has acknowledged this factor with rare honesty: “I guess I could make up all sorts of stories about how I

disagreed with people or decisions, **but the truth is that during the period that I helped out, the possible ramifications of WikiLeaks scared the bejeezus out of me. ‘Courage is courageous’, my ass.**” Some others involved were probably very scared. I have however never said and would never say that in these bust-ups all the fault was on one side. **In such cases, outsiders cannot easily know all the relevant facts.**

Review text: Take the evidence of James Ball, who describes to Gibney his reaction to being asked by Assange to sign a non-disclosure agreement. “I found this a little awkward— being asked by a transparency organisation to sign exactly the kind of document used to silence whistleblowers around the world. It seemed pretty troubling and so I refused.” It is an apparently telling judgement. There are, however, problems with it. It is an oversimplification to call WikiLeaks a transparency organisation. WikiLeaks is based on the idea of seeking to expose corruption by guaranteeing its sources not transparency but absolute anonymity. This is one reason non-disclosure agreements might be needed. Nor is it reasonable to expect transparency from a tiny organisation under threat from an almighty state. Even more obviously, as Assange has proven, Ball did in fact sign a first non-disclosure agreement, on 23 November 2010.

Gibney: I urge you to read Ball's piece in the Daily Beast on this subject. There was an NDA re: the documents that was signed by Ball. However, JA then wanted Ball to sign a document that attempted to prevent him, for ten years, from talking about his experiences at WikiLeaks. If you want my personal view, I think that is hypocritical and all too like the corporations and governments that Assange likes to hold to account. I didn't say that in the film, however. Audiences can draw their own conclusions.

Manne: From this I take it, and anyhow know it to be true, that James Ball now concedes that he did in fact sign one non-disclosure agreement. I assume you didn't know that while making the film. I'm actually not surprised that Assange tried to get him to sign the second one. **Nor do I think the demand can be described as simply “hypocritical”. WikiLeaks is firstly not straightforwardly a “transparency organisation”. It is rather a revolutionary organisation trying to create a better world by providing a means for whistleblowers to expose corruption without risking prosecution or martyrdom. It is anonymity not transparency that it offers its informants.**

Even more importantly, because both Assange and WikiLeaks have challenged the most powerful state on earth, they have very powerful enemies and are facing very real dangers. In such circumstances, transparency could be lethal. You will have noticed that it has just been revealed that in 2011 an Icelandic volunteer, Sigurdur Thordarson, joined WikiLeaks and then shortly after began providing the FBI with information that presumably might be useful in the prosecution of either Manning or Assange. **Given this kind of situation, demanding loyalty from insiders and non-disclosure agreements from those leaving the organisation, seems to me understandable even prudent.**

Gibney: Here, you and I have a serious disagreement, possibly a philosophical one. I did know about the earlier NDA but did not include it for reasons of economy. (Films, unlike books, have to face the issue of time.) As a personal matter, I will sign NDAs re: materials, but won't sign those that infringe on my ability to speak about events or people I encounter. I felt free to include Ball's remark because it concerned that latter type of NDA.

This second NDA was also pernicious in a way that Ball suggests in his on-camera interview. Had he signed it, he would have been in violation of it the moment the ink dried on his signature. Julian intended that it be used as a means of controlling and blackmailing Ball and others.

I am rather more concerned by your blithe acceptance of the need for such a document. WikiLeaks never presented itself publicly as a “revolutionary organization.” Indeed, from a legal perspective, it made the claim— which I agree with in principle— that WL was a publisher. We can agree that source protection, or anonymity, was one goal of the organization. But it’s also true that the other, more profound goal of WikiLeaks was to hold powerful governments and corporations to account by publishing leaked documents which reveal mendacity and corruption. In other words, it was a transparency organization.

Manne: This last sentence is a *non sequitur*. Part of WikiLeaks’ modus operandi was the guarantee of anonymity to sources. Moreover once the US began to act against Assange, by a legal investigation which it told the Australian government was vast in scale, transparency would have been foolish and lethal.

Gibney: Particularly in that context, I think that Ball was right to resist signing a document that would have prevented him from speaking freely about what he observed at WikiLeaks.

You suggest that, when it comes to WikiLeaks, its noble end can justify ignoble means. If that is what you mean, I fundamentally disagree. This is one of the key themes of the film.

I once made a film about the way in which the American government justified torture, extraordinary rendition and detention in Guantanamo— all in the name of a noble cause.

To be clear, I am NOT saying that Assange’s misbehaviour was equivalent to state-sanctioned torture. What I am saying is that, when it comes to taking on the American state, it pays to take the moral high ground. We depend on stories to create meaning. When an organization that seeks to hold others to account makes the claim that it is “above” accountability— perhaps because, as you say, it is a “revolutionary organization”— the narrative of WikiLeaks is no longer convincing. You either believe in free speech or you don’t. It doesn’t do to publicly demand protection for whistleblowers and then blackmail your own employees— under threat of a multi-million dollar judgement— into remaining silent about whatever mendacity or corruption they might uncover in the course of their work. Here is my point of view: I don’t believe that the end justifies the means— for the US government or for WikiLeaks.

Julian likes to hold others to account but has a desperate fear of being held to account himself. He can’t admit even small mistakes and that leads to bigger ones. I think this is a problem that deserves to be discussed in the film since the subject of the film is WikiLeaks. As Julian once told me, “I am WikiLeaks.”

I do suggest in the film that WikiLeaks inhabited too much of the paranoid spirit of the institutions it reviled. When you start seeking “intel” on others in order to embarrass them or protect yourself, and when you start using the language of the Espionage Act to reprimand your colleagues, you start acting like a storybook spy. (By this, I am NOT implying that WikiLeaks should be prosecuted under the Espionage Act. I do not believe that. Indeed, I would be among the first to defend WikiLeaks if that were to happen.) When you start acting like a spy, you start playing the spy “game.” There are professionals who can play that game much better than WikiLeaks. It is a game WL is bound to lose.

I was interested in WikiLeaks as a David and Goliath tale. Sadly, Julian became, over time, more interested in acting like a Goliath than a David. (Saying that WL has a “harm minimization program” sounds more like the Pentagon than a nimble publisher of leaks.)

Manne: It’s seriously strange that you interpret me to be saying that in this case immoral behaviour is justified because the cause is noble or that in this case the ends justify the means. Surely you must know that I do not agree that in the case of the non-disclosure agreement or indeed in general that WikiLeaks has behaved immorally. Nor do I think it sensible to argue that WikiLeaks could afford simply to take the moral high ground no matter how much that might have appealed to mainstream liberal opinion. **What you do not seem to grasp imaginatively— I do not know why— is that since April 2010 WikiLeaks has been under very great pressure from the US state which would like to destroy it. Trying to prevent former insiders who are leaving the organisation from disclosing things about its staff or its operations seems to me not immoral but prudent.** To be honest, I think it ludicrous to regard this as blackmail. Assange had no power to enforce any non-disclosure agreement. **Many WikiLeaks volunteers thought Assange far too concerned about security. As we now know, one of its Icelandic volunteers was an FBI informer.**

Review text: There are also legitimate questions about the film’s account of the Swedish sexual allegations. Some arise from the way Gibney has edited material from contemporary interviews with Assange. In one, Assange is shown to be saying: “I have never said this is a honey trap. I have never said it’s not a honey trap.” And shortly after: “There are powerful interests that have incentives to promote these smears.” Here is a fuller version of the interview Gibney draws upon:

Assange: I have also never criticised these women. We don’t know precisely what pressures they have been under, exactly. There are powerful interests that have incentives to promote these smears. That doesn’t mean that they got in there in the very beginning and fabricated them.

Interviewer: So you’re not suggesting this was a honey trap?

Assange: I have never said that this is a honey trap.

Interviewer: You don’t believe it?

Assange: I have never said it’s not a honey trap. I’m not accusing anyone until I have proof.

The differences between the original interview and the comments seen on screen are subtle but significant. Gibney’s misleading edit underpins the scathing assessment by Davies that follows directly and which carries the film’s final interpretative weight: “What Julian did was to start the little snowball rolling down the hill, that this was some kind of conspiracy.” Davies is hardly an objective witness on this matter. Responsible for the first analysis in the British press of the leaked Swedish police report concerning the allegations, his competence and fair-mindedness were immediately challenged by Assange and his supporters. One of his most acerbic critics was Guy Rundle, in an article in this magazine. Several months after its publication, a still-enraged Davies threw a glass of wine in Rundle’s face.

Gibney: The film shortened Assange's exchange but the essential meaning was retained. Indeed, the longer version— with its reference to "powerful interests that have incentives to promote these smears"— is more redolent of conspiracy. Further, we also show WL tweets which indicate that Assange promoted the idea that the allegations were part of a "smear campaign." There is no proof that the allegations were, in any way, "cooked up" as part of a conspiracy to discredit WikiLeaks. Indeed, if Assange had taken an HIV test, there would have been no "allegations."

Manne: I'm a bit confused here. Later in the film you do quote Assange's words about the "powerful interests that have incentives to promote these smears" **but again without sentences that come before and after these words: "I have never criticised these women" and "that doesn't mean they got in there at the very beginning and fabricated them." In my view, the editing did not fairly convey the nuance and tone of Assange's views as stated in that particular interview. I do not think he can be held responsible, at least not without evidence, for the things his supporters said.** Again, according to evidence presented in the annotation, Assange stayed in Sweden for quite a number of days offering himself for a police interview without success and only then left Sweden. Do you believe this is a lie? He also produces evidence in the annotation from the police statement of one witness suggesting he was willing to take an HIV test.

Gibney: I believe I properly conveyed Assange's meaning. He was always careful never to say that the Swedish Affair was a "honey trap," but he often suggested it in ways that were meant to create that impression. This is consistent with the way Julian likes to promote intrigue. In the case of the "Wank Worm," he has never taken responsibility and never denied his involvement. A release of a statement of "agreed-upon facts" in the extradition hearing indicates that Assange left Sweden the day before an arranged meeting with prosecutors. RE: HIV— Davies notes correctly, in the film, that he did agree to take the test...after the women had gone to the police, ie: when it was too late.

Manne: **Where you see a penchant for intrigue, or perhaps deliberate innuendo, in his discussion of the case brought against him by Anna and Sofia, I see great care with his words.** So far as I know, he never spoke in the cavalier way Mike Moore does in your film. I do not believe the editing of the BBC interview was fair to him.

Review text: Far more importantly, Gibney misleads his audience about the reason Assange has fought so fiercely to avoid extradition to Sweden. The interpretation he favours is best expressed by one of Assange's Swedish accusers, Anna Ardin: "He has locked himself up to avoid coming to Sweden to answer a few pretty simple questions." This is utterly unconvincing. There is direct evidence that the US is delaying action until the conclusion of the Swedish cases.

Gibney: Please show me this "direct evidence." Arguments by his paid attorneys do not qualify.

Manne: The direct evidence to which I referred is in a report in the Independent, a very reputable British newspaper, of December 8 2010: "The Swedish government seeks Mr Assange's extradition for alleged sexual offences against two women. [US] sources stressed that no extradition request would be submitted until and unless the US government laid charges against Mr Assange, and that attempts to take him to America would only take place after legal proceedings are concluded in Sweden."

Gibney: I fear that I don't see the same things as you. There is no named source here, no charges, and no demand for extradition.

Manne: What I see is this: The US in early December 2010 was considering laying charges and had determined not to take any action until the Swedish extradition attempt had been concluded one way or another. Sources in such cases are never named. But diplomatic correspondents of serious newspapers don't customarily invent reports of this kind.

Review text: Indeed, Assange's lawyers believe that US legal authorities are compelled to wait for decisions on both the request for extradition from Britain and the hearing in Sweden of possible charges before moving on Assange. Those interested can find their detailed reasoning in the tightly argued and cogent document, 'Extraditing Assange'.

Gibney: You could also read a number of far more convincing arguments—in the New Statesman and the Guardian and elsewhere—that indicate that extraditing Assange would be far more difficult from Sweden than from the United Kingdom.

Manne: I'm surprised you put it like this. WikiLeaks produced a 70,000 word document (to which I refer in the review) answering the position outlined in The New Statesman. It is extremely carefully argued. Perhaps the most important point is this: The US administration was highly unlikely to make an extradition request to the UK until the question of the prior Swedish request for the extradition of Assange had reached its conclusion.

Gibney: I disagree with your contention about the WikiLeaks document. I do not find it convincing at all. I do agree that it is long. Swedish law is clear on the matter of the fact that it does not extradite for political offenses.

Manne: **Your sense of the clarity of Swedish law in this case seems to me dogmatic and over-simple.** What is political needs to be defined. Would Sweden for example refuse to extradite a suspected anti-American terrorist to the US because his motives were "political"? I urge readers to look at the WikiLeaks document, "Extraditing Assange", and judge for themselves on this and other matters whether or not it is tightly argued.

Review text: In *We Steal Secrets*, Gibney breezily ignores all this. He claims rather that "members of Assange's legal team admitted that it would be easier for the United States to extradite Assange from Britain." At best, this is a vast oversimplification. Gibney relies here on an interview fragment from Baroness Helena Kennedy, who has since told Assange that she has been misrepresented.

Gibney: I have the transcript, which was shown to attorneys. Helena Kennedy responds to a direct question on this subject.

Manne: There is no doubt that Helena Kennedy said the words you show in the film. **But there is also no doubt that she said many other things as well. Kennedy has argued that she "did not expect that [Gibney] would fillet my interview" and that "I regret thinking I could present a sensible perspective".**

The issue is anyhow not really, in my view, whether it would be easier for Assange to be extradited from the UK than Sweden but whether he might be extradited from Sweden if he was forced to go there to face the sexual charges. Assange has recently said that even if the Swedish charges were dropped he would not leave the Ecuadorean Embassy because of his fears about extradition from the UK.

Gibney: Many interview subjects would like all their words to be included. As you know, even in an article, that is not possible. Kennedy's statement was in direct response to my question precisely on that point. As lawyers say: "asked and answered."

The last statement by Assange is interesting. But it is outside the period of time covered by my film. In the case of Snowden, Assange has also been acting recently in ways that might suggest, in a legal context, that WikiLeaks could be seen as something other than a publisher. If I were Assange's attorney, I might be concerned about that. But this event—and the consequences therefrom, if any—takes places beyond the timeframe of my film. I fear that WikiLeaks' involvement in the Snowden case may not end up being good for Snowden or WikiLeaks. But I say that as a distant observer of that story, with no inside knowledge.

Manne: On the substantive point I would say WikiLeaks is a revolutionary organisation whose method centres on the publication of documents provided by anonymous whistleblowers revealing the encroachment and corruption of state and corporate power.

Review text: The risks facing Assange are very real, and if there is one quality in him that cannot possibly be doubted, it is his quite extraordinary courage.

Gibney: Manning is proving to be more courageous than Julian Assange because he is willing to stand up, in court, for a principle. *[Note: Manning did not report himself willingly. He was reported by another person who betrayed him. --A.B.]* He has pled guilty to leaking documents but is challenging the government's outrageous contention and outlandish legal theories that he is spy.

Assange is seeking asylum from charges which, so far as anyone knows, have not been brought. Further, he is avoiding being held to account for allegations of sexual abuse and rape which, the British courts have ruled, would be crimes— if proven— in the UK and Sweden. Assange has certainly shown courage in his ability and willingness to hold others to account. He does not seem so brave when others seek to do the same to him.

Manne: The suggestion Assange is cowardly for seeking to prevent extradition to the US is I think both unfair and oddly high-minded. Assange is a non-violent anarchist revolutionary fighting against very steep odds to bring about a better world through the struggle against corrupt state and corporate power. There is more to Assange's fight than the desire to live a life in freedom, a desire not customarily condemned as cowardly. He is a fiercely political person. Once extradited, tried and imprisoned, his political struggle and his organisation would either be immensely weakened or entirely destroyed.

Assange would have understood the risks in publishing the Manning material. As a consequence, I do not see how his courage can be doubted.

Gibney: As I state below, Assange is courageous in some ways and not in others. He was extraordinarily courageous in publishing the video and the documents leaked by Manning. He was not courageous, in my view, in the way that he sought to avoid being held to account for the way he behaved toward two women and the way he failed to speak out about the terrible way they have been treated by his supporters.

No one put Assange in the Ecuadorean Embassy; he put himself there. He wants us all to believe that he has to be there. But after hearing so many noble lies, it's hard to believe him.

Manne: **I am not aware of these many noble lies. I believe he genuinely fears extradition to the US, a view you seem to share (see above).**

AG: There are those in the Pentagon who are delighted that Assange has sentenced himself to asylum. There are also, apparently, those in the Department of Justice who still think that there is a legal theory able to distinguish Assange and WikiLeaks— a legitimate publisher— from the New York Times and so bring an indictment. I would like to see that tested because I believe that, if it were, the US government would be embarrassed in court.

Here I quote my executive producer, Jemima Khan: It may well be that the serious allegations of sexual assault and rape are not substantiated in court, but I have come to the conclusion that these are all matters for Swedish due process and that Assange is undermining both himself and his own transparency agenda— as well as doing the US department of justice a favour— by making his refusal to answer questions in Sweden into a human rights issue. There have been three rounds in the UK courts and the UK courts have upheld the European Arrest Warrant in his name three times. The women in question have human rights, too, and need resolution. Assange's noble cause and his wish to avoid a US court does not trump their right to be heard in a Swedish court.

Manne: I agree that the rights of the women matter greatly although it also seems to me that the question of the sexual relations between them and Assange has taken on a significance no-one involved wanted or could have predicted. The most plausible account of what happened that I have read is in the initial interview Donald Bostrom gave to the Swedish police. Moreover, when asked why the Swedish prosecutor could not travel to London to question Assange, the Swedish Supreme Court judge, Stefan Lindskog, said: "I would like to comment on the possibility of the prosecutor to go to London. It is possible that the prosecutor could travel to London and interrogate him there. I have no answer to the question why that hasn't happened."

Gibney: I agree with you when you say that the question of sexual relations between Assange and the women "has taken on a significance no one involved wanted." One of the women, Anna, says so in the film. However, I'm afraid that Julian bears a great deal of responsibility for turning a personal matter about sexual relations into a battle for free speech. Had he gone to Sweden early on, this matter would be long done by now. Indeed, there are many in Sweden who believe he would have been found innocent.

For questions about interrogating Assange on British soil, I recommend to you my online piece in the New Statesman which seeks to rebut John Pilger's attack on Jemima Khan. I quote the Swedish prosecutor, Marianne Ny, who makes it clear that Assange is not wanted in Sweden for questioning in the sense that the prosecutor wants more forensic detail. The prosecutor has said clearly that she is prepared to charge Assange. But, according to Swedish law he must be arrested, on Swedish soil, in order to be

charged. So long as Assange never goes to Sweden, he can never be charged. The only questions that Ny wants to ask Assange are those that would be part of a last-minute inquiry as to whether Assange can provide any reason as to why he should not be arrested and/or charged.

Manne: The document you scorn, "Extraditing Assange" discusses this issue carefully. See section 8e.

Review text: Shortly before this film was released, the New Yorker launched a whistleblower drop-box coded by another young electronic freedom fighter, Aaron Swartz, who earlier this year took his life rather than face trial following a grand jury indictment for illegally downloading large numbers of academic articles. And, at the time of writing, the world learnt that the American government had been secretly collecting the phone, email and text records of its citizenry, a practice that Al Gore described as "obscenely outrageous". Julian Assange is the fearless and imaginative inventor of a political means by which individuals in the electronic age can expose the encroachment and corruption of state and corporate power. For this reason, he seems to me to deserve far more sympathy and credit than is found in Alex Gibney's superficially impressive but ultimately myopic film.

Gibney: I think that if you will view the film one more time you may discover that it applauds Assange for his ideas and his founding principles. Indeed, I include admiring quotes from you re: Assange being a "John Lennon-like revolutionary." As a description of his intent, I would agree. The film also applauds Assange for his bravery in publishing Manning's documents and the video.

Manne: All these points are covered in my account of the tale you tell in the film in the first third of the review.

Gibney: However, it does criticize Assange for undermining his own values and becoming all too like his enemies in his willingness to believe that ignoble means are justified by noble ends. More and more, he is undone by his own paranoia and delusions of grandeur.

In response to the spying of the US government, he takes on the coloration of a spy. That's not a good place to be. It plays into the hands of the executive branch of the US government. In the long run, it doesn't pay to speak lies to power just because you think that your cause justifies your mendacity. Acting like a publisher and speaking truth to power is the only way to win the battle for greater transparency.

A careful reading of the film will reward the viewer with this conclusion: Assange will always have a place in history for the invention of his website and its publication of the Manning materials. We should applaud him for that. But, in our enthusiasm to praise Assange, we should not avert our eyes to his failings. As we all try to understand how best to expose abuses of power, it's important not to ignore mistakes made along the way, or we will be doomed to repeat them.

Manne: It is a very serious accusation to say that Assange has taken on the coloration of a spy. **It is also very difficult to grasp your meaning. Spies work for and against particular states by concealing their true motives and identities. Assange works for no state. His motives are transparent. He is a very public figure. For excellent reasons, the identities of the WikiLeaks' sources are disguised.**

One of the reasons I was interested in Assange as a thinker and actor was the clarity of his ambition and the fact that unlike so many of those involved in political struggle he was genuinely impartial between different ideologies and state systems. Indeed, in my judgment, there is no current government (perhaps with the exception of Ecuador !) whose corruption he would not reveal. If in early 2010 a Chinese or Russian dissident had sent WikiLeaks hundreds of thousands of secret military and diplomatic documents, I firmly believe that WikiLeaks would have published them.

In that case he would most likely be a villain in either Beijing or Moscow and a hero in London or Washington.

In my view, the central weakness of your film is the failure to understand the character and the seriousness of his battle against state and corporate power. Even though his thinking begins with the cypherpunks movement and its attempts to use the resources of the internet to maintain individual liberty against the encroaching power of the corporation and state, in your film the orientation of his political thought is hardly discussed and its cypherpunks foundations never mentioned. This matters. **Assange's thoughts and actions cannot be accommodated if the frame is no wider or more specific than the one you present in *We Steal Secrets*— the liberal idea, or cliché, about “speaking truth to power”.**

No doubt he has flaws of character. Most people who try to change the course of history do. [*And so do most people who don't try to change the course of history. --A.B.*] However, like many other idealistic and talented post-Cold War internet activists— here I have both Aaron Swartz and Edward Snowden in mind— he is leading an important struggle to maintain individual liberties at a time when they are threatened in a novel manner by the electronic surveillance resources available to the state. **Given this, discussions concentrating on Assange's real or supposed personal failings seem to me far less important than the larger political questions this new group of young activists have raised about the nature of the contemporary era.**

Gibney: Again we must agree to disagree. [I.e. his real or supposed personal failings are more important? --A.B.]

First of all, now I'm confused about something you just said. You said Assange's “motives are transparent.” But earlier, you said he was a revolutionary who had to keep those motives secret.

Manne: Why can a revolutionary not have transparent motives? All I know about Assange I read in documents from the organisation posted on the internet.

Gibney: My remarks about Julian taking on the manner of the spy is not meant to suggest that he is literally, or legally, a spy. I don't believe that at all.

Rather, I think that Julian, who lives his life vicariously through his computer, has fallen in love with intrigue the way that some spies do.

Manne: In my view Assange's behaviour in the Snowden case shows how profoundly wrong you are (as also are those in your film who speak like this) in saying that Assange lives his life vicariously through a computer. The Snowden case shows him to be a purposive political actor. For his current worldview, I would strongly recommend his introduction to the recently published, *Cypherpunks*.

Gibney: And, also like spies, Julian thinks he has more power than he really does. In fact, he is weakened by the paranoia of the spy game. Birgitta Jonsdottir got it right in her quote in the recent NY Times article about the Grand Jury investigation: “paranoia is going to kill us all.”

In light of the revelations of an FBI informant inside WikiLeaks, I would also quote Hunter S. Thompson: “just because I’m paranoid, it doesn’t mean I don’t have enemies.”

You suggest that I’m missing the point of a new political paradigm. But I think I have seen this story before: revolutionaries who think that they can beat the state at their own power game.

Like you, I was interested in WikiLeaks because it did offer what seemed to be a paradigm shift: a way of holding the powerful to account by being a very different kind of institution. The laptop computer is a great weapon in an asymmetrical battle for greater democracy. At its best, WikiLeaks did a great job and its founding principles remain an inspiration. But now Assange— in the face of the power and hypocrisy of the American military industrial congressional complex (as Eisenhower originally put it)— has lost sight of his global mission and become more narrowly anti-American.

Manne: I don’t see the evidence for this. I have no reason to believe he would not publish material on other powers, as I know WikiLeaks originally intended. Nor do I believe his admiration for the US founding fathers is insincere.

Gibney: In so doing, must he and his most devoted followers now defend abuses of power in Ecuador?

Manne: Given that Ecuador is his life-line I think you are once more a little high-minded here.

Gibney: He started out as a non-political actor and now he has become a politician: running for the Senate in Australia. That looks more like a man who has fallen in love with power than one who wants to hold it to account.

Manne: I see it differently. He wants to deepen his freedom agenda— defence of whistleblowers; attacks on state surveillance etc— by conventional political means, and also perhaps, **if he could win a Senate seat, to put pressure on the Australian government, which has so far let him hang out to dry, to offer diplomatic support against our great and powerful ally.**

Gibney: You accuse me of falling prey to a cliché. But I believe you are being naïve. You see the struggle of the “internet activists” in a positive light, just as I do. But you do us all a disservice if you think that they, or more importantly, Julian Assange, should be able to use ideology to mask personal failings.

Manne: **I have never said anything of this kind.**

Gibney: Over the course of my films, I believe I have learned quite a lot about noble cause corruption. My film suggests that it is not enough to have a noble cause. If you talk the talk, you should walk the walk.

There is quite a lot of “talk” now about the way that “we”— the magical “we”— must avoid personal stories in favour of political ones. Nothing matters, we are told, except exposing the corruption and criminality of institutions.

I disagree. Bob Dylan once said, “to live outside the law you must be honest.” I fault Julian because he believes it is a good thing not to be honest, to be “nobly untruthful,” in the service of a greater cause.

Manne: I'm sorry, this seems to me straightforwardly untrue. As an adult activist, Assange has never, so far as I am aware, defended an ethic of noble untruthfulness. It seems to me rather unfair to regard his adolescent computer 'handle', 'Mendax', as somehow illuminating the essence of his identity. In his pre-WikiLeaks blogs, he writes eloquently and beautifully about two absolute values: truthfulness and justice.

Gibney: He wants to believe in leaking machines because he thinks, naively, in my view, that they are a more perfect, non-human way to hold the powerful to account. But, as we are now learning about the internet, machines are only as good as the people who use them. The internet is at once our salvation and our prison, a means for free expression and a surveillance tracker.

Manne: The view you present is actually at the core of cypherpunks' and Assange's thinking. As a cypherpunk, his view is, I think, that the internet can be a force either for individual freedom via privacy software or for state totalitarianism. That is the essential struggle of our era, in his view.

Gibney: That's why Bradley Manning is the essential hero of the film. He doesn't try to hide or excuse his personal failings in the slogans of his political cause. Instead, he embraces his flaws. That is his great strength. He offers hope for us all because he is saying—by linking to that great essay by Carl Sagan—that we are both a small part of more powerful forces and terribly important as individuals. It turns out our personal stories do matter as much as our political ones. Manning is telling us that we can all be heroes.

By his own example ("WikiLeaks needs a face"; "I am WikiLeaks") Julian Assange is suggesting that heroes must be great men—presumably like him—whose followers must sign NDAs so that his faults can never be disclosed. This is all supposed to be in service of the powerful idea. Frankly, I saw that kind of behaviour at Enron, where loyalty to leaders and ideology excused bad behaviour. I've seen it in the Catholic Church: "we do so much good, so we are entitled to overlook a 'few bad priests.'" When I hear that train a comin', my instinct is to look for blood on the tracks.

Manne: This is interesting, taking us in my view to the reason for the false interpretation of WikiLeaks offered in your film. I think you have imposed a misleading trope—seen truly in the case of two powerful institutions, Enron and the Catholic Church—to an instance where I do not believe it applies. WikiLeaks is a tiny organisation fighting with only native wit and settled values.

Gibney: Political commitment is vital. But so is personal doubt, because it keeps us honest. That's the reason I picked a key phrase from the Lamo chats as Manning's last line: it is both a call to action and a suggestion that we are more than political animals because we have the capacity to wonder. He says it so simply, in lower case letters, with elegant punctuation: "I care...?"

Manne: In the age where our political elites have brought us Iraq, Wall Street, Fox News and passivity in the face of the impending, foreseeable catastrophe of global warming, I must admit that I have come to admire highly fearless and intelligent political animals like Julian Assange.

[Note: The foregoing is only a partial replication of the exchange between Gibney and Manne. For the complete version: www.themonthly.com.au/blog/robert-manne/2013/07/01/1372650669/we-steal-secrets-response-alex-gibney

WikiLeaks documentary: 'Julian Assange wanted \$1m'

Alex Gibney's film We Steal Secrets is the first WikiLeaks documentary out of the gate, but it nearly didn't happen. The prolific film-maker talks Assange, Bradley Manning and paranoia

Steve Rose
The Guardian
9 July 2013

Had things worked out differently, Alex Gibney and Julian Assange could have been soulmates— instead, they've ended up more as enemies. Gibney is one of the most prolific documentary-makers of today, and his films often take the perspective of the victim or antihero. As such, Assange was hard to resist. "Here's this tremendously romantic figure travelling the world with a laptop in his knapsack, exposing abuses of power," says Gibney. "That sounds like a pretty good story to me."

He's not the only one: the saga of WikiLeaks, the group's part in exposing US atrocities in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the subsequent sexual charges levelled at Assange, is one of the biggest of our era. It's a real-life, 21st-century spy thriller full of twists— and the race to tell it is on. Gibney's former colleague Charles Ferguson (director of the Oscar-winning *Inside Job*) was at one time working on an HBO/BBC documentary. Another film-maker, Laura Poitras, has the co-operation of WikiLeaks for her movie, as does Ken Loach. The *Hurt Locker* writer Mark Boal is reportedly working on a WikiLeaks script. Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks has just wrapped *The Fifth Estate*, with Benedict Cumberbatch as Assange. And those are just the frontrunners.

But Gibney's documentary *We Steal Secrets: the Story of WikiLeaks* is first out of the gate— though the central subject is conspicuous by his absence. That's part of the reason their relationship soured, explains Gibney. The director was in talks with Assange for almost a year. Initially, they got on. Jemima Khan (one of *We Steal Secrets*' producers) introduced them— Gibney even attended Assange's 40th birthday party in Norfolk, along with Vivienne Westwood and Bianca Jagger, not to mention his rivals Ferguson and Poitras. "Charles got in trouble because he kept sneaking out his camera," Gibney says with a laugh. "Laura always had access to Julian. And now she's got Snowden"— as in Edward, whose own whistleblowing saga is the next must-have subject. Poitras filmed Snowden's Hong Kong interview for the Guardian in June.

But negotiations broke down when Assange told Gibney the going rate for an interview was \$1m. Gibney said he never paid his subjects. He goes on: "[Assange] then came up with an outrageous idea: 'How about you spy on the other interview subjects and report back to me, because I want to know what they're saying.' I said, 'No. I can't do that for you. I don't work for you.' [Assange] said in a huff, 'I don't work for you, either.'"

Even without that interview, *We Steal Secrets* feels like the inside story. It's a typically polished Gibney product, shaped for maximum dramatic impact, with swooping CGI representations of cyberspace that wouldn't look out of place in a *Matrix* sequel. And Gibney gets prime material, including intimate footage of Assange from another documentary-maker, Mark Davis, and testimony from one of Assange's Swedish accusers, Daniel Domscheit-Berg, and hacker Adrian Lamo— who weeps at the recollection of shopping Bradley Manning to the CIA.

Gibney's version of events has drawn the ire of the "Assangistas", as he calls them. From their point of view, most of the film's interviewees are its enemies. Neutrality seems impossible in this world. WikiLeaks published an annotated transcript of the film, disputing key points (inevitably, someone leaked it to them). They deny Assange asked for \$1m. They condemn Gibney's "sensationalist" editing and narration. They describe the film's title as "irresponsible libel" (it's actually the NSA director Michael Hayden who says "we steal secrets", the "we" being the US government). Gibney disputes their points, dismissing many as trivial. "I'm satisfied we didn't get anything wrong."

And one benefit of Assange's non-cooperation was that it pushed Gibney to focus on Manning, the soldier on trial for leaking the war documents to WikiLeaks. It's here the film is strongest. Manning's online chats with Lamo are rendered full-screen, and the troubled human behind the text shines through. He discusses his sexuality and gender-identity issues, his political conscience and alienation. "im in the desert, with a bunch of hyper-masculine trigger happy ignorant rednecks as neighbors," he types, "and the only safe place i seem to have is this satellite internet connection." Manning is the real hero and protagonist of the piece.

Gibney has come under fire for focusing on Manning's personality, and even for turning him into, in the words of one blogger, "the crudest gay caricature". Isn't he deploying the same smear tactics as the US government? "That's not what the film is doing," says Gibney. He argues that Manning's character is at the heart of what went wrong with WikiLeaks' supposedly anonymous system. "If there's this perfect leaking mechanism, and Manning therefore could get away scot-free, why did he then reach out to Lamo? Manning actually outed himself. Because he desperately needed to talk to somebody. Lamo was also openly bisexual, and Manning remarks on that. He wanted to discuss these issues and found the perfect person— then Lamo lied to him and turned him in. It's an important part of the story."

As for Assange, Gibney suggests arrogance undid what his genius had wrought. "I think he liked living life as if he was in some spy thriller, but the more famous he got, the more he came to inhabit this idea of being a spy, as opposed to a transparency radical. So now he's 'getting intel' on people and lying to throw people off. You don't speak truth to power, you speak lies to power." Assange's paranoia was not unfounded, admits Gibney. At least one WikiLeaks volunteer was discovered to be an FBI informant. "But there was an element of him that was always in that paranoid zone. I think ultimately he flipped over."

It's safe to assume Gibney has been struck off Assange's party invite list. But he is used to making enemies, and has a reputation for holding the powerful to account. Subjects he's weighed in on in the past decade include the Enron scandal, Iraq and Afghanistan (Taxi to the Dark Side, for which he won an Oscar), political lobbying and Freakonomics. Most struggle for years to make one film, but Gibney churns out several a year. No wonder rivals compare him to an old master, who simply puts finishing touches to his studio's work as it rolls off the production line. "It's not that bad," he says. "I do all the interviewing. I do all the shoots. I write the narration, I'm just not in the editing room every day. It's not like we crank them out in a hurry. It's just that there are a few going on at once." Already this year, he has given us an explosive expose of the Catholic church's complicity in sexual abuse— *Mea Maxima Culpa: Silence in the House of God*— which followed the trail all the way to Pope Benedict, and may even

have played a part in his resignation. Gibney compares WikiLeaks' response to that of the Catholic League, who denounced Mea Maxima Culpa as "a fraud" and even issued threats against him. He didn't take them too seriously though. "Usually when you get threatened that's not the problem," he says. "What you fear is that something unexpected will happen ... but at the end of the day, you drive yourself crazy if you think about that shit too much."

That's where he and Assange differ, perhaps. But in the wider struggle for transparency and democratic accountability, they are fundamentally in agreement. Gibney unequivocally condemns the Obama administration's persecution of whistleblowers like Manning and Snowden: "They're trying to send a message, and that message is, 'Watch out, because we're coming after you hard.' That's not what I would call the rule of law."

The WikiLeaks story is by no means over; it will likely be decades before a definitive account can be told. Gibney has at least told his before WikiLeaks fatigue sets in—though it could have a short shelf life as a result. Never mind; the production line rolls on. His next film is about disgraced cyclist Lance Armstrong, which will be ready for festivals by autumn. He has been following him since well before last year's doping scandal, including every stage of the 2009 Tour de France. It should be quite a story.

The Lab Results

Assange in Sweden
July 1, 2013

These are the lab results presented to Chief Inspector Mats Gehlin on Monday 25 October 2010. At this point, only one interrogation remained (that of Marie Thorn).

Gehlin had submitted two condoms to the state crime lab SKL (Statens kriminaltekniska laboratorium, <http://skl.polisen.se>) on 25 August, exactly two months earlier, which was quite the feat, as one came from Sofia Wilén— even though Chief Inspector Eva Finné, who was in charge of both Sofia Wilén and Anna Ardin's cases at the time, had demonstratively closed the more serious part relating to Wilén, stating that 'no crime had been committed'; and she expressly ordered Gehlin to keep his 'hands off'. **Nonetheless, Gehlin submitted Wilén's condom under Ardin's case number.**

The lab results, available two months later, seemed to have perplexed the good inspector. He'd not asked the lab to check for DNA, only to see if they could determine how the condoms had been torn. But they did a DNA test anyway, and came up with some rather shattering results, results the Swedish media have done their best to hide from the citizenry ever since.

The condom submitted by Anna Ardin showed no traces whatsoever of chromosomal (genomic) DNA — meaning the condom cannot have been used for sex.

<http://assangeinswedenbook.com>

The Information Terrorists: Assange on Manning

Pedro Miguel

La Jornada(International Boulevarda

3 July 2013

It has been a year since Wikileaks founder Julian Assange took refuge in Ecuador's embassy in London. He remains trapped in the embassy, on the run from Swedish criminal charges that seem remarkably convenient for Western intelligence agencies that fear his site's power.

In this interview with Mexico's *La Jornada*, Assange attacks the US prosecution of Bradley Manning as a show trial designed to frighten government whistleblowers, and lay the groundwork for prosecuting himself and Wikileaks. Manning's prosecutors claim that leaking to the press is the equivalent of aiding al-Qaeda, and therefore that whistleblowing on illegal government activity is treason, Assange says. And he speculates on why Sweden's government allowed itself to become a proxy for Washington in its attempt to destroy Wikileaks.

* * *

The prosecution of Bradley Manning—accused by the United States of giving secret government documents to Wikileaks—is a farce with a predetermined outcome. So says Julian Assange, founder of the organization, which Washington hates and detests more than any other in the world after Al Qaeda. In Manning's trial, the defense's hands are tied, while the prosecution tries to set a precedent and establish a totalitarian level of control over government employees while laying the groundwork for a prosecution "of both Wikileaks and myself," Assange says.

From his sanctuary at Ecuador's embassy in London, the Australian granted this newspaper an extensive interview in which he discussed not only the prosecution of Manning, but Assange's own prospective candidacy for a seat in the Australian parliament, the role of the traditional media, the explosion of independent information on the internet, the increasing politicization of the net, the role of special interests in American politics, Sweden's realignment as a close and subordinate ally of the United States, and other issues.

Our conversation took place in a bare office in the Ecuadoran embassy, less than four meters away from a British policeman, whose cap could be glimpsed through the room's elevated window. Outside, London life boiled along normally, heated by shoppers at Harrod's, the department store located a block away.

Quite possibly, the two uniformed officers outside the embassy really were there to provide security for the embassy. But to keep Assange from escaping, a hive of 'secret' agents—they are as unmistakable here as anywhere in the world—swarms along Hans Crescent road and the surrounding areas. They represent various agencies, not all of them British; among them agents of MI5, which is charged with protecting the United Kingdom from threats to its national security; there are also American agencies present, according to Assange.

However, no one tries to bar the way to the diplomatic mission, or asks questions or search bags when people enter. You just ring the bell, and an embassy employee opens the door and lets you in, inviting you to have a seat in a large office. A few minutes later, Assange emerges from the back of the embassy.

It has now been nearly two and a half years since the night, on Tuesday March 18, 2011, when, in a town in eastern England, Assange gave Jornada a USB stick that contained 2,995 cables sent to the US State Department in previous years and months by the US embassy and consulates in Mexico. The hunted man is as cheerful now as he was then, and seems serene as he talks. Two visible changes since then: he no longer projects the air of a mischievous boy, and his hair, which was a nearly white intense shade of blond, has lost the 'nearly' part.

We begin with Assange's thoughts on the court-martial that is sitting in judgment of Manning at the Fort Meade military base in Maryland, where the enormous headquarters of the National Security Agency is located.

You have described Manning's trial as a masquerade.

Yes. It is entirely political. A trial should be about trying to determine the truth, the guilt or innocence of a person. Its outcome should depend on what witnesses say, and so on. But this trial was deliberately planned to come to a predetermined conclusion. It is a show trial.

Verdict and sentence already decided?

The judge put limitations on the defense: **they cannot call more than a handful of witnesses, while the prosecution is allowed 141; virtually all of the defense witnesses were vetoed. The court prohibited the defense from making any arguments based on motives**, the defense cannot try to prove that the defendant did not intend to damage the United States, its soldiers or its government, but wanted to give people information about war crimes and their context. And furthermore, **the defense is prohibited from presenting any proof, any government report, or any witness that shows that the defendant did not actually cause any damage [to the US].**

Here is an analogy; imagine that they accuse you of murder and they send you to court like the one that is prosecuting Bradley Manning. You could not argue that it was self-defense, or show video that backs up that assertion, since that would be talking about motives. You were defending yourself, not trying to kill anyone, but they would prevent you from showing that. If the supposed victim was actually still alive, they would not let you bring them before the court, because you can't show that there was no damage. **In other words a defense is not allowed to defend.**

The most serious charge the prosecution has made against Manning is that of aiding the enemy. It is a serious crime. The prosecutor has asked for life imprisonment, but the judge could actually, if she wanted, sentence him to death. Given the gravity of the possible sentence, this charge should be treated very seriously. But in fact the trial and the prosecutor are thumbing their noses at the world; **they say that the prosecution doesn't have to demonstrate that Manning actually helped the enemy.**

So, what do they mean by aiding the enemy? Well, they say that Manning communicated with a journalistic organization, which in turn communicated with the public, and the public includes Al Qaeda. The term they use in the indictment is 'indirect communication with Al Qaeda via Wikileaks.' In other words the enemy is the public, which includes anyway Al Qaeda. If you communicate with a journalist, and thereby with the public, it turns out you have communicated with Al Qaeda. So **communicating with a journalist is now a possibly capital crime in the United States.** That is the precedent they are trying to create. They want to do this because it implies a totalitarian control over United States government employees.

The judge established that all the prosecutor has to demonstrate is that along with the rest of the world, Al Qaeda read the reports of Wikileaks. He does not even have to prove that Al Qaeda did anything with this information. It is enough that the terrorist organization has read the New York Times and watched CNN, read Wikileaks, along with everybody else.

And what is up with Wikileaks?

The trial is not only being carried out to terrify future Bradley Mannings; it is also to prepare the ground for charges against Wikileaks and myself. If people were paying attention last week, they saw how from day 1, **the prosecution was saying that Manning was an agent of Wikileaks, that I was controlling him, I gave him tasks to carry out, information to dig up.**

There was no need to do this in Manning's case because he has already admitted, in his declaration, that he passed information to Wikileaks, and Wikileaks published it afterwards. But the prosecutor does not say that 'the accused has already admitted to doing this, there is nothing to argue about'; no, he says that Assange did this and this. **He does this in order to establish a story for the public, which is politically and legally necessary for the next case.** It is also part of the show against Manning, but also against Wikileaks and against me.

A demonstration of what will happen if they extradite you?

We know that they are working on what they say, in their formal correspondence with the Australian embassy in Washington, is an investigation that is unprecedented in its scale and nature, with more than a dozen agencies involved. The Department of Justice admitted three days ago that it will continue. And I have strong evidence that there is a sealed indictment against me. The person in charge is Neil McBride, the federal prosecutor for the Eastern District of Virginia, which is where all national security prosecutions are carried out. The jury would be made up of people who work for the CIA, the Pentagon and the NSA. The region has the highest concentration of employees of national security offices in the United States.

People tell me absurd things like, 'Don't worry, Julian, if someone from your team gets extradited to the United States, the First Amendment will protect them.' Please! That is completely absurd. We know where the trial would be carried out, we know they have already been handing out grand jury subpoenas for the last three years, since July of 2010; that people are being interrogated, that they are demanding records, taking information from Google, forcing witnesses to testify in secret. They have even forced girlfriends and mothers to testify against people in some cases. They have asked for records from our Internet Service providers, from Google Earth, from Twitter.

So if they put you on trial it would be a mere formality...

A mere formality. **If you are charged under federal law in the United States, your chances of being found guilty are 99 percent.** This is not a justice system: with 99.97 percent chance of being indicted if you are brought before a grand jury, and a 99 percent chance of conviction if you are indicted...

And Sweden? Why don't you trust Sweden?

In Sweden, people are detained without charge for months, and kept in isolation. They are denied access to television, newspapers, any information, any friends, etc, during the investigation. **Even the [US] State Department has a warning about travel to Sweden because of the detention without charges: don't get arrested as it can be dangerous.** The international Corrections and Prisons Association says that conditions in Swedish prisons are the worst in Europe; and that includes Romania. *[The criticism refers to some conditions in jails. The prisons are widely regarded as models of humane treatment. --A.B.]* Fair Trials International condemned the isolation without charges that is practiced in Sweden. This just happened to a friend of mine.

What happened?

A Wikileaks volunteer who worked on the "Collateral Murder" video, a year ago was taken illegally by agents of the Swedish secret services, the SAPO, from Cambodia, where he had been living, to Sweden; there he was arrested on the tarmac and put in prison, in complete isolation, for three months. The secret agents were in Cambodia. A dozen of them, according to official documents the foreign affairs ministry gave up as a result of a freedom of information request. *[He was arrested on grounds that have nothing to do with WikiLeaks — mainly with copyright encroachment. --A.B.]*

Sweden is the only country that has voluntarily handed over to the United States people who had already been given visas: two Egyptians who were seeking political asylum. Both had wives and children in Sweden; they were political refugees. The SAPO gave them to the CIA; an airplane came and got them and brought them to Egypt where they were tortured by the Mubarak regime. This action was condemned by the UN, and even by Human Rights Watch, a very conservative organization.

Why is the Swedish government so dependent on Washington? Why has it accepted this role?

Sweden is up there on the borders of continental Europe, far from what it considers its powerful friends and allies. It fears Russia. Polls show that it is the most anti-Russian country in Europe, more than Poland, even more than Finland. It is also the most pro-American country in Europe. These geopolitical realities, in the context of Russia's resurgence under Putin in the past 10 or 15 years, have made Sweden want to get as close as possible to the United States. *[This is a highly dubious, and certainly over-simplified analysis. --A.B.]*

In 2006, the conservatives came to power and they formed a cabinet in which 80 percent of the ministers had studied in the United States. Karl Rove's only job as a political consultant overseas was as political consultant to the party now in power in Stockholm. He is a close friend, for the past 40 years, of the Swedish foreign minister Carl Bildt. As we revealed in the Kissinger papers, back in 1974, when Bildt was 23, he entered a leadership program in Washington where he met Rove. So there are both geopolitical and personal reasons that Sweden has become so close to the United States. It's not something that just happened after the change in government in 2006.

We released some cables last December that indicated the following: the Department of State is promoting a policy that tries to get other countries to sign a treaty called HSPD6 (Homeland Security Presidential Directive Six) that basically consists of the following: give the US a huge amount of information about terrorism suspects who might travel to the United States, or who might be of interest to us. It is a

formal agreement; Washington sent it to Stockholm to high level people to try to get the Swedes to sign it. But the Swedish Justice Ministry went to the American embassy and told them, 'we don't think we should sign this.' Why? 'Because we are already giving you, informally, much more than what is in the agreement. [???' But if we sign a treaty, this would have to go through parliamentary scrutiny, and the majority of Parliament has no idea what we are giving you under the table. Also, what we are already doing is probably unconstitutional.' So they didn't sign it. *[Also a questionable analysis. See www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/assange-usa.pdf --A.B.]*

<http://www.internationalboulevard.com/europe/97-united-states/246-the-information-terrorists-assange-on-manning>

Part 2: Assange on Securitization, Politics, and the Survival of Wikileaks

Julian Assange's lengthy and thoughtful interview with Mexico's *La Jornada* continues. Are the attacks on Wikileaks, and the zealous American pursuit of leakers-Bradley Manning, Edward Snowden, John Kiriakou and others—a game of securitization by the establishment, or are they outgrowths of a real fear of the democratization of access to information?

Something is amiss when the Pentagon, which should be projecting itself as mighty, starts playing the victim. So says Julian Assange, regarding the reaction of US officialdom to the Wikileaks revelations of 3 years back. The Australian ponders the power that new information technologies can give to common citizens, describing them as the most important instrument of mass political education that has ever existed.

The traditional American media, he says, has always been very corrupt, and have now given up their task of scrutinizing the behavior of the powerful: they have become nothing more than arenas to settle conflicts between differing factions of the regime.

Our conversation with Wikileaks' founder takes place in the tranquility of the Ecuadoran embassy in London, in a comfortable salon with high windows overlooking the street. At some point a muted rumble intrudes. The interviewee cocks an ear, interrupts the conversation with a courteous gesture, and walks toward the balcony. On the opposite sidewalk, a small group is raising placards of Assange's face, chanting slogans for his release. The refugee opens the curtain and waves to his sympathizers with a gentle, almost shy wave of the hand, and signs the 'V' for victory with his fingers. He remains there for a few moments and then returns to the monumental sofa.

The greeting is part of his daily routine since the 19th of June of last year, when he entered the Ecuadoran diplomatic mission, asked for political asylum, and left his American, Swedish and British pursuers in the dust. Thus began a diplomatic dispute, in which Washington will not recognize its own role, leaving London and Stockholm to do the dirty work of refusing to recognize the right of political asylum. This week the impasse will be a year old, and the Ecuadoran chancellor Ricardo Patino will travel to the British capital to try to resolve the conflict, seeking to obtain from his British counterpart a safe-conduct permitting the Australian to leave the United Kingdom for Ecuador.

"At one point they stood guard outside 24 hours a day," says one of Assange's associates, in reference to the fans who are shouting their support outside. They still come every day.

The conversation is interrupted again later, when Assange's associates bring in the first reports of former CIA employee Edward Snowden's leaks about the enormous and illegal network of telephone and internet espionage erected by the National Security Agency.

Julian Assange's reaction: "It is interesting to see this recent revelation— it is something we have been talking about for years, but now we have very solid evidence about it. An order to spy on all telephones, every day; where people are calling from, who they call, what kinds of telephones they have, and everything is sent to the NSA every day. It is such a vast invasion, it includes every reporter, every office, it includes everyone. It is an enormous violation of... which amendment, the Fourth? Anyway, it is a violation of the constitutional protection against searches and seizures, a violation as huge as you can imagine.

La Jornada: In 2010, Wikileaks made three enormous and devastating revelations of US documents, many of them secret until now: those about the wars in Iraq and Iran [Afghanistan?] and the State Department cables.

Julian Assange: The Pentagon's reaction was to play the victim, say that it was deeply injured and worried. We saw Robert Gates [US Defense Secretary between 2006 and 2011] almost on the verge of tears, and this seems to have been a reflection of the state they were really in: their sins had been exposed. They knew that we still had a lot of material which was still unpublished, hundreds of thousands of classified documents, they hadn't read them all yet, they did not know what kind of impact they might have, they were terrified before the unknown and in the United States they launched a sort of neo-McCarthy witch-hunt [against leakers] that has ended up extending to the rest of the world. It was very interesting to observe.

So now: the Pentagon is an organization that specializes in appearing strong and powerful so that its threats carry weight. Basically the Pentagon is a device for blackmail: it threatens to physically dominate countries, or alternatively remove its protection from them, leaving them open to the domination of a third country, or perhaps it involves itself in the sale of arms to neighboring countries, and threatens others with ceasing to sell them arms. **So [the American military] is a tool of intimidation, of applying threats to obtain concessions from numerous countries and institutions, and for that reason it needs to appear powerful all of the time.** But if your mafia enforcers start playing the victim, that means the mafia's racket is not working. So in short, they were terrified.

Furthermore: there is a concept in critical theory, not well known, but very useful, which is known as securitization. I'll put it in my own words: we are all motivated by the fear of, or desire for, something; essentially fear and desire make us want to either recoil or move forward... At one extreme, fear completely dominates hope and desire; you are in fear of losing your life or the lives of people you love...

If we translate this from a psychological level to a political level, an institution takes a situation and tries to extract value from fear, and this is what is called **securitization: transform a situation into a threat to security, and later propose that the institution can save you from the threat.** Okay.

Securitization is what the Pentagon does every day: look for any situation in the world that can be securitized, and say that the solution to the fear is protection by force of arms. In a similar way the police try to do this in every circumstance: the solution to murders, robberies, spying, fraud and some forms of terrorism is a strong and aggressive police force.

So I have to ask myself: this assault on Wikileaks, with Hillary Clinton saying that our publications were an attack on the United States and on the entire international community; with the public and private attacks by the Pentagon and the State Department and many other organizations, were they just securitizing the situation?

Trying to attract more resources, terrorize the establishment so they would give up more money [to these security institutions]? There was an element of that, but they were also themselves terrorized about the dawning of a new public perception about their own power.

La Jornada: An interesting coincidence: the American authorities were playing the victim and inventing or exaggerating the damage caused by Wikileaks; and then this same year, Fidel Castro, after the publication of the Iraq War Logs, said in interviews [with Jornada and Telesur] that we were standing before the most powerful weapon that had ever existed; communication, and that with it, armed revolutions are no longer necessary, and that Wikileaks deserved a public monument. Was he exaggerating?

Julian Assange: A bit. It is nice to hear words like that, but... everything starts with the truth, and without the truth there can be no further steps. In the end, everything comes down to who has the monopoly of force over a given piece of land where people live.

Your email is stored with Google. You may think your personal correspondence with other people is an important part of your life. But if it is stored on servers in California, where Google has its headquarters, the courts in California, the federal courts, the US central intelligence agency, control it. Even so, physical coercive power is important. And who controls the police and soldiers?...

Going back to Fidel Castro—we are now in a position where, thanks to advances in military and police technology, the difference between a campesino with a rifle and a policeman in his Kevlar armor is so huge that it is not easy to imagine armed insurrections without the aid of a state. George Orwell wrote an article in 1945, just after the bombing of Nagasaki, comparing the different types of military technology. Rifles, anyone could have them; they were a very democratic military technology. If you have more people you have more rifles in action. And so military success is quite closely related to how many people you have. But at the other extreme, only a few states are capable of building nuclear weapons, because very large and centralized industrial processes are needed, so it is an essentially anti-democratic form of military technology.

La Jornada: But these days many people have access to the internet, just as almost anyone has access to a rifle.

Julian Assange: In contrast to advances in military and police technology, which consist of very anti-democratic power, there is the horizontal transmission of information: almost anyone who knows anything can communicate it, at least in theory, to everyone else, although distribution and publicity networks may interfere. **The most important instrument of mass political education that has ever existed has been created.** The number of people exposed to it, the number of cultures, the number of languages, the geographical connections, are largest of any moment in history.

The key transition came as a result of the attack against Wikileaks and its publications. If you go back four years, basically the internet was politically apathetic. You had small networks and some political groups using it, but as a whole the internet was politically apathetic. And people could watch in real-time the war against Wikileaks. Even if you were not on the front line, even if just from the margins, witnessing the claims and counterclaims, the action, allowed a comprehension beyond a lesson or reading of history. With our geopolitical fight against the US and its allies, we educated a whole generation on the internet, woke it up to the geopolitical realities of the world, and **woke it up to the fact that the internet is a political space, rather than simply a space for communication like the telephone system.**

La Jornada: A battlefield...

Julian Assange: A battlefield yes, but not a distant battlefield, its a theater of operations which people are part of, you yourself as well. If we are going to talk about individual contributions, I think this is the most important one from Wikileaks: transforming the internet from a politically apathetic space into a political space, and in the process educating basically a whole generation. Even people who are sixty-something years old have told me: 'because I saw what happened, nowadays I see the world differently.' But especially people between 16 and 28 felt that they were part of this political drama that was playing out. And many of them were a direct part, because they distributed information, took part in virtual protests. Young people were interested, they read what the media were saying about us, and later read what we were saying, or read the cables, or what their friends were saying by email, and saw a completely different point of view, and trusted our point of view more because it was based on primary-source documents, which do not lie.

La Jornada: What good is the truth, Julian? To make political systems function better, or to put an end to them?

Julian Assange: Do you want a poetic answer, or do we go at it from a different point of view? [Laughs] The truth is all we have. There is no hope with anything else. Every action, every decision, every thought we have, is based on what we perceive, but it acts on our shared reality, on the real world. So if we are not thinking the truth, we are not thinking about the world that we must actually act upon. If we do not take action based on the truth, our possibilities for action in the real world are just random. [Assange appears to have a very simple-minded conception of "truth". --A.B.]

And what makes truth? Blowing up political systems or permitting their reform? Either of these things can happen, depending on the extent to which they are based on truth or not. If they are principally based on lies, if the truth has failed, it will be a catastrophic collapse (although there were other factors as well) such as happened in Tunisia or Egypt. It seems to me that systems [based primarily on lies] get to such a bad state that they collapse. You have to put them in a position that they have to expand so much that they go over the edge... Some of these systems can patch themselves up. On the other hand, maybe when you get to the point where you can overthrow them, maybe it doesn't happen, or perhaps they expand more, get more dangerous, more powerful and corrupt....

La Jornada: Is what people call the Fourth Estate collapsing in the US?

Julian Assange: **The rise of alternative media, especially on the Internet, has allowed us to see how corrupt the media that are part of the system really are.** Okay: can the Internet be a resource for making them less or more corrupt? I am not so sure. On the one hand, when corruption, errors, lies or propaganda exposed, the reputation of traditional media is affected, and so independent information can act as an incentive to make them behave better.

But on the other hand, the market for criticizing the powers-that-be is now better taken care of by new publications, so the conventional media feel freed of the responsibility to do this task; they feel that others have taken that business away from them and don't feel the need to keep doing it. **In any case, remember that they cannot do it very well; traditional media have always been involved with one faction of the**

system that is criticizing another. They have never been in the business of being critics of the establishment per se. They have always been very corrupted.

Let's look at the case of the New York Times: we know that in 2003, there was a story similar to Watergate, about illegal wiretaps; the New York Times sat on the story for 18 months so Bush could be reelected. They only published their story when a rival publication was on the point of letting the cat out of the bag. An institution like the New York Times is, absent the quality of certain journalists, an arena for different factions of the system to struggle among themselves in public, or for them to publicize their own positions.

That is why people like to read it, not because it is more accurate than other newspapers. It constantly commits important errors and even publishes fabricated stories; it for example said that Al Qaeda had weapons of mass destruction. **Why do people still bother to read it? Because what powerful people say is interesting.** If Obama or the CEO of Bank of America, or Schmidt, from Google, suddenly claims that the Martians have landed, without any evidence, it is very interesting because it represents something about the declarers themselves, about their position. Everything that has to do with a powerful organization is by definition interesting, because it can have an effect on the world. So people read the New York Times to see the position of various factions of the regime. This has always been the case. *[Or, it serves as a "voice of authority" in a world of confusing and contradictory information. --A.B.]*

Let's go back to 1917, when Eugene Debs, an American socialist agitator, was accused under the Espionage Act, the same they are trying to apply to me, of having called for draft resistance in World War I. Debs only said that the mandatory draft was bad, and that people should oppose it. Well, the New York Times in its editorial called for Debs to be tracked down and arrested, and indicted under the Espionage Act, for giving a speech. So in that sense, nothing has changed.

* * *

The sun has finally agreed to warm this London afternoon, and Julian Assange seems relaxed. Amidst the judicial, financial and propaganda harassment, carrying around his neck the hostility of three governments, among them the most powerful one on the planet, demonized by all and sundry—there are the Western right-wingers accuse him of being a terrorist, and there are no lack of mad voices on the left that see Wikileaks as some kind of CIA plot; ready to compete in the field of intelligence with enormous institutions of espionage and repression; forced to choose between a billiard-game of extraditions that might end in a trial in Alexandria, Virginia, or imprisonment in the embassy of a distant though friendly country, Julian Assange remains calm. There is no crazy optimist in him. On the contrary, his perception of the current state of the planet is rather somber:

Julian Assange: The end of the Cold War and the classic ideological struggles left us in a position where the entire Earth is now steeping in a single ideology, the West's, and we cannot see beyond it. Some thinkers believe they are moving in a different current, that they have some kind of perspective, but this is impossible....

The first thing that has to be done is change the system of knowledge, the flow of information and education. I figured that out a long time ago, and that is why I did not get involved in politics, but started with Wikileaks: because to making information known, publishing primary-source documents, make life difficult for institutions that live on secrets, these are things that change the media environment, the knowledge environment.

People need to see hope. To get good people involved, you need to show them that a certain activity will accomplish something, and to do that you need ethical motivations. But in the end, everything comes down to how well you understand the political situation. If we go back to the classic Marxist description, people need to recognize their own class and position. **If individuals do not recognize that they are in it together, under particular conditions, there is no hope to accomplish anything....**

I have always thought that politics, as it is traditionally done, does not raise hopes.

La Jornada: Despite that, you are running as a candidate for the Australian senate, and you are forming a political party in your home country:

Julian Assange: And according to polls in Australia right now, we have 40-percent support among people under 30 years old, despite its being the first election we are contesting.

La Jornada: Okay. But now you are in the struggle for power. A political party is a tool in the struggle for power.

Julian Assange: A kind of power, yes, but in essence it is the same kind of power Wikileaks has been struggling for: the power to reveal, to bring the truth into the light.

La Jornada: You want to win an election.

Julian Assange: Yes, **but not to form a government. We are running for seats in the Senate, which is the chamber that monitors, its functions is to keep an eye on the government, make its functionaries testify.** In Australia, we do not have the post of president, so it does not matter how popular I am, I could not win. We have a prime minister, but he is elected by the parliament. So we would have to arrive at a position where we controlled more than half of parliament. Maybe in a few years but not in this one.

La Jornada: Julian, when you found a party and contend an election, you always run the risk of coming into power.

Julian Assange: Yes [laughs]. But in this election, we would achieve a position of relative power, between one and three senators. This is relatively powerful, but a small amount of power compared to what Wikileaks already wields as an organization.

Often Australians call themselves, with scorn, 'the 51st state.' But it is the truth: Australia is a state of the United States without the right to vote. [So, perhaps Sweden is not unique in its affinity with the United States, as stated above? --A.B.] **We have a president, Obama, whom we did not vote for.** Once you recognize this—it's something I realized 10 years ago—you realize that you have to interact directly with the Empire. You have to interact directly with the great center of power. You cannot take the attitude that 'I am going to just look out for myself.' The important thing is the Anglophone alliance, what we maybe should call the Western Empire: the alliance of the US, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

It is an alliance that shares intelligence: many official US documents are classified as Secret/NoFORN. What does NoFORN mean? It means no foreigners, that is, the document is off-limits to any citizen of even close allies of Washington, like Germany

or Italy, whether an intelligence agent or an employee of NATO. **But a regulation recently approved by the US intelligence services holds that the citizens of Great Britain, Australia and Canada can have access to NoFORN documents.**

On Wikileaks we revealed an enormous high-tech joint military intelligence exercise which involves the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain, which is carried out annually: it is called **Operation Empire Challenge**. If anyone does something annoying, all of their spy satellites can communicate between one another, in addition to the airplanes and the troops of the 5 countries, to confront the situation. That is how internally the Empire organizes and conceives itself. So the point is: moving Australia politically, is an important way to politically move the Empire, because Australia is part of it.

La Jornada: That is a way of looking at things. But right now it appears to me that you are the person who has suffered the most extreme international political persecution since Leon Trotsky [who was eventually murdered by Stalinist agents in Mexico City, not far from La Jornada's newsroom].

Julian Assange: I am not so sure about that comparison, (Assange grumbles). Where you are probably right is that in Trotsky, the Kremlin saw a similar kind of threat that the Western Empire sees in me: as much a symbol as a real leader. And in both cases we are talking about perceptions.

What is the real threat that I represent for the Western establishment? And what real threat did Trotsky represent for the Soviet Union? It is difficult to evaluate. But in the end, if there is a broad perception of a threat, then there is a threat. It's a little bit like football [soccer]: What does it really matter if one team or another wins? It doesn't change anything really. But for a ball to matter, all you need is for a lot of people to think it does.

La Jornada: In any case, you are a ball that is living on the run. And under threat.

Julian Assange: There was a threat to assault Ecuador's embassy by the British government. There were policemen coming down on rappelling lines, this embassy was surrounded by police early that morning, and it received a formal written threat. The anger at the attempt at violating the embassy's sovereignty made the British government pull back, and they won't try to do that again. They may try other types of attacks but they will not try to assault the embassy. They can huff and puff as much as they want. The reality is that Ecuador studied the situation and gave me political asylum

La Jornada: some, in the pro-Western media, have said it is a paradox that you have asked for asylum from a government accused of repressing the freedom of expression.

Julian Assange: **There is no paradox. It would be a paradox to ask asylum from a country that does not offer asylum. Nobody makes judgments like that about someone who asks for asylum in the United States; they do not say 'how can you ask for asylum from a country where the rule of law has collapsed, etcetera.'**

In fact, more than a few of international attacks on Ecuador's reputation in terms of freedom of expression are simply attempts to tarnish me, and **in those cases, the Ecuadoran government is nothing but a collateral target....** My asylum has nothing to

do with that, and moreover I am not a spokesman for the government in Quito. For the rest, **these claims that Ecuador has journalists in prison, that Ecuador routinely sends journalists to jail, they are false.**

Take the case of the Committee to Protect Journalists, a conservative group in the US, founded by the official press, or **Reporters without Borders, they keep the lists of imprisoned journalists in lots of countries, but in Ecuador the number is zero. In Turkey there are 48.** Or take a look at Freedom House, founded by the government of the US. Every year they make rankings for freedom of the press. They have three categories: 'free,' 'partly free' and 'not free.' Of course they classify the US as free, along with Britain and Sweden; that's how they classify the majority of Western countries. **Before I went into the embassy, Freedom House put Ecuador as partially free; once they gave me refuge, Ecuador was reclassified as 'not free.'**

In the case of Human Rights Watch, if for certain they have done good things, as in the case of Bahrain, they go too far in the case of Russia or in the cases of Venezuela, Ecuador and other countries. **This reflects their personnel and their financing.** Let's take a look at their personnel: their chief of Global Initiatives, Minky Worden, worked before as a speechwriter for the US attorney General. And three months ago, her husband, Gordon Crovitz, demanded in the Wall Street Journal, that I be indicted for espionage... Last year **Amnesty International hired Suzanne Nossel, a longtime functionary of the State Department, and who has published billboards actually supporting NATO's presence in Afghanistan.**

Amnesty, like Human Rights Watch, has refused to recognize Bradley Manning as a prisoner of conscience. The definition of a political prisoner, according to Amnesty's own directives, is that the supposed offense be of a political nature, or that the prisoner's action was carried out with a political intention, or that the investigation has been carried out for political reasons, or that the investigation is politicized, or the imprisonment is politicized. **It is indisputable that Bradley Manning falls under the majority of these conditions, but nevertheless Amnesty has told us that they are not even going to take the trouble to determine if Bradley Manning might be a prisoner of conscience or political prisoner, until he is sentenced. What good will it do then?** When these organizations see which way the wind is blowing, and when Manning is in prison facing a life sentence, or a death sentence, only then, and only if they can get some kind of political benefit from it, would they declare him a political prisoner, but not before.

So these organizations are bankrupt and in general cannot be trusted. If you look at what they say about a country that is not in one camp or the other, like for example Equatorial Guinea, then maybe you can trust what they say. But if they talk about Bradley Manning, or about Ecuador, Russia, or the United States, their agendas are too slanted.

Amnesty was a grassroots organization; it once got most of its financial support from society, but that has all changed. When an organization accepts funding from governments, or from establishment organizations like the Ford Foundation or the Rockefeller Foundation, who are its real interlocutors? When Amnesty issues a press release, is it for the public or for those who finance it? In sum, it is about corrupt organizations and we need to see where they get their money from and where they recruit their people from.

La Jornada: What is your biggest satisfaction of the past three years?

Julian Assange: Well, I suppose every day is a political satisfaction....A big satisfaction has been keeping our people from getting arrested, detained or jailed, keeping the organization functioning, keep it from going bankrupt. We have not fired anyone from

the team for financial reasons, although people have had to adjust to salary reductions of 40 percent, as a result of the financial blockade. They have not dismantled the organization, they have not been able to put any members of our team in prison yet. And although I am in a difficult position, I have been able to keep working.

If someone told you that a small, radical publisher was going to take on the White House, the CIA, the Department of Defense, the Pentagon, the NSA and the FBI, what chance would you give it to still exist three years later? You would say none at all. But here we are, and that is a satisfaction.

<http://www.internationalboulevard.com/europe/116-united-kingdom/249-assange-on-securitization-politics-and-the-survival-of-wikileaks>

Assange & Sweden: Update

Nordic News Network
4 July 2013

Over a year has passed since Julian Assange walked into Ecuador's London embassy and applied for asylum in order to avoid extradition to Sweden and, more crucially, subsequent delivery to the United States. That surprise move has provoked much "shrill abuse", but media reports of his friendless isolation are greatly exaggerated, as recounted in a PDF document at:

<http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/productive.pdf>

Assange jobbar vidare, trots hetsjakten

WIKILEAKS Julian Assange har oförtrutet fortsatt sin gärning för demokratisk öppenhet och informationsfrihet från sin fristad på Ecuadors ambassad i London. Det hade varit omöjligt om det svenska journalistdrevet fått råda, skriver Al Burke, redaktör för Nordic News Network.

SVT-Debatt
2013-07-12

Det har nu gått över ett år sedan Julian Assange steg in i Ecuadors ambassad i London för att undgå utlämning till Sverige och därmed, med stor sannolikhet, så småningom till USA. Assanges farhågor bekräftades då reaktionen blev häftigast just från USA, som pressade Storbritannien till att hota invadera ambassaden och ta ut Assange med våld.

Av olika skäl verkställdes inte det hotet. Men det var allvarligt menat och avslöjade USA:s starka intresse i frågan om Assanges utlämning till Sverige. Den pensionerade CIA-analytikern David MacMichael har iakttagit att "det vore dåraktigt att vifta bort tanken att mäktiga delar av USA:s regering skulle tillgripa nästan vilka medel som helst för att lägga vantarna på Assange och, praktiskt taget, lyncha honom".

Men i Sverige har denna tanke ändå viftats bort av journalister, politiker och andra som i spydiga ordalag har fördömt Assanges flykt. "Assange är en egoistisk ynkrygg....

Hans tal om att han är rädd för att överlämnas till USA är bara ett försök att flytta fokus. Den faktiska risken finns inte” hävdade politiker-advokaten Claes Borgström som varit pådrivande i förföljelsen av Assange.

“Assange visade sig vara ett fegt kräk” dundrade Oisín Cantwell i Aftonbladet. “Sjukt” instämde KD-partiledaren Göran Hägglund i Expressen i sann kristen anda. I Dagens Nyheter överträffade Hanne Kjoller sig själv genom att länka Assanges namn med detta av Oscar Pistorius, den sydafrikanske idrottsstjärna som sköt ihjäl sin fästmö.

Får stöd av HD-domare

Två huvudteman i avfärdandet av Assanges uttalade skäl för att söka asyl är (a) att det är omöjligt för den svenska åklagaren att intervjua honom i London och (b) att den svenska regeringen inte kan garantera att han inte blir utlämnad till USA, därför att det är en juridisk angelägenhet som regeringen inte får blanda sig i.

Grunden för båda resonemangen rycktes undan i april i år av ingen mindre än en domare i Högsta domstolen. I ett tal i Australien konstaterade Stefan Lindskog nämligen att, förutsatt att det inte finns något rent juridiskt hinder mot utlämning, är det faktiskt regeringen som bestämmer. Dessutom sade han att “Åklagaren kan mycket väl åka till London för att intervjua Assange. Jag har inget svar på frågan om varför detta inte redan skett.”

Domaren Lindskogs stöd för Assanges ställningstagande har knappast uppmärksamrats i Sverige. Men av allt att döma skulle det inte spela någon roll. Ty i Sverige har det sedan länge bedrivits en hetsjakt mot Assange som har ytterst litet med fakta eller rationellt tänkande att göra.

Under tiden har Assange arbetat vidare i sitt rum i ambassaden och har trots allt åstadkommit en hel del. Bland annat har han: samordnat stöd till den av USA jagade visselblåsaren Edward Snowden; skrivit böcker och artiklar; lett arbetet med stora WikiLeaks-publiceringar av bl.a. Global Intelligence Files och Kissinger Cables; skött ett globalt nätverk av kontakter och samarbetspartners; startat ett nytt politiskt parti i Australien tillsammans med ett stort antal supportrar; m.m.

Inget av detta hade ju varit möjligt om han i stället under obestämd tid hade suttit i ett svenskt häkte eller under säkert en väldigt lång tid i ett fängelse i USA.

Allt detta ger skäl att begrunda den fråga som ställts av den hyllade brittiske utrikeskorrespondenten Patrick Cockburn: “Vem skulle frivilligt ta en fem procents risk att en flygtur till Stockholm skulle resultera i en vistelse på 40 år i en fängelsecell i USA?”

Obs! Detta är en kortad version av en längre artikel på engelska som finns på:
<http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/productive.pdf>

<http://debatt.svt.se/2013/07/12/assange-jobbar-vidare-trots-hetsjakten/>

Review


We Steal Secrets: The Story of WikiLeaks

Philip French
The Observer
14 July 2013

Alex Gibney has directed some of the best political documentaries of recent years including the Oscar-winning *Taxi to the Dark Side*, *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room* and, most recently, the devastating exposé of sexual predators in the Catholic church, *Mea Maxima Culpa: Silence in the House of God*. In *We Steal Secrets* he is at his forensic best in fairly and lucidly telling the story of how the infinitely devious Julian Assange became the world's most famous whistleblower through his revelation on WikiLeaks of American state secrets, and of how one of his most significant sources, Pfc Bradley Manning, a lonely, idealistic, cross-dressing military intelligence analyst, had his identity revealed to the CIA by the young bisexual, possibly autistic hacker Adrian Lamo.

Drawing on the testimony of more than 20 witnesses (though not Assange, who fell out with everyone, Gibney included), the film creates an astonishing picture of the complex new world of internet communications, intelligence and the ever-expanding web of post-cold war secrecy. It's into this fragile, ill-managed china shop that Assange, Manning and Lamo, the raging anti-establishment bulls, so recklessly charged, raising enough moral and ethical issues to occupy philosophers and political scientists for decades to come. The film's title is provided by the plausible General Michael Hayden, who spent a decade between 1999 and 2009 as director of first the NSA and then the CIA. "We steal secrets. We steal other nation's secrets," he genially confesses. "We cannot do that above board and be very successful for a very long period of time."

BBC: 2013-07-18

	<p>Wikileaks accused loses challenge</p> <p>A US military judge refuses to dismiss the most serious charge facing Bradley Manning, the soldier accused of leaking thousands of secret documents.</p> <p>Profile: Bradley Manning ▶ Manning case in 80 seconds</p>
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BBC clearly has no doubts about the Manning-WikiLeaks connection. — A.B.

'Worst thing anyone's said? That I was so mean to their cat it turned psychotic': Inside the head of... Julian Assange

Sarah Oliver
Daily Mail (U.K.)
20 July 2013

As well as cat-bothering, the WikiLeaks founder has been accused of working for the CIA and Hezbollah and had an out-of-body experience the day Thatcher died, but can you guess which part of his body is abnormally big?

What is your earliest memory?

When I was three or four, my family's house on Magnetic Island off the coast of Queensland burned down. I stood and watched in awe as the shotgun shells we used for killing snakes exploded in the fire.

What sort of a child were you?

Curious, naughty, adventurous— always muddy and usually in some sort of danger. I loved tunnelling into the abandoned quarry system near where we lived in New South Wales. Down by the sea I would build rafts, have them nicked by rival gangs and steal them back by building mantraps of hollowed-out sand holes on the beach. It was a classic boy's childhood.

What is the worst thing you've said to anyone?

I don't love you any more.

What are you best at?

Being annoying. I can cite many sources...

What would you like to be better at?

Dancing and boxing.

What is your best character trait?

My stubbornness. WikiLeaks wouldn't exist without it. Broadly it also means I keep promises and hold fast to my principles.

What is your worst character trait?

My stubbornness. Almost every bother imaginable in my life has been a result of my refusal to compromise.

What has been your biggest achievement?

In terms of action, going head to head with the U.S. State Department, the Pentagon, the White House, the FBI and CIA and winning: WikiLeaks hasn't destroyed any of its publications or stopped publishing as they demanded. In terms of results, helping move the internet from a politically apathetic space to a politically engaged one. Just look at the Arab Spring.

What has been your biggest disappointment?

Learning that even intelligent people can be cowards and that courage is a much rarer attribute than intelligence.

What's the worst thing anyone has said about you?

Among others, that I am a CIA agent, a Mossad agent, a Hezbollah agent and an agent of George Soros. Also that I am a cat-torturer. A book claimed I was so mean to someone's pet cat when I visited their flat that I induced feline psychosis.

Who is your dream dinner date?

Margaret Thatcher.

When did you last tell a lie and what was it?

See my answer to the dinner date question. On the day of her funeral we had a six-hour power cut here in the Ecuadorian embassy. I thought she might be trying to re-animate.

What is your most treasured possession?
My integrity.

What is your biggest regret?
That my children and others I love have been so affected by my work. They've had to move house, change their names and be careful about conducting a relationship with me.

Tell us something we wouldn't know about you.
I am one of the ten per cent of people whose second toe is longer than their big toe

What's been the best night of your life?
Watching the people of Egypt rise up and take Alexandria. It was a clear sign the Arab Spring was extending beyond Tunisia. Publications by WikiLeaks contributed to that, helping men and women choose their destiny. *It's our raison d'être.*

What do you think of The Fifth Estate, the upcoming WikiLeaks film with Benedict Cumberbatch?
We are WikiLeaks so we have a leaked copy of the script! It's a hostile work and, although Benedict Cumberbatch is personally supportive, when he asked to come and meet me in the embassy I said no because I didn't want to legitimise the film.

Who do you admire most and why?
Bradley Manning, the U.S. soldier currently on trial for leaking Iraq War documents to WikiLeaks; and Daniel Ellsberg, the whistle-blower who released the Pentagon Papers containing America's Vietnam War secrets in 1971. Manning's trial will go down as one of the most disgraceful perversions of justice ever. A show trial whose purpose is to deter whistle-blowers.

What do you think about the U.S. secret surveillance programme Prism and the CIA man who revealed it, Edward Snowden?
It's clear proof of the transition of the Western world to a surveillance dystopia. Prism is beyond the worst nightmares of Orwell and the greatest fantasies of the Stasi. Obama has taken on what Bush began and decided to 'do it properly'. Snowden is a hero who stands accused of everything from spying for the Chinese to being rude to his neighbours.

How would you like to be remembered?
I wouldn't. It's more important to get things done than to be remembered for having done them.

THE LAST WORD		
LAST FILM YOU SAW? At the cinema? It's too long to recall because I have been in prison, under house arrest or in the embassy for the past three years. On DVD it was <i>Sir! No Sir!</i> , a documentary film about the anti-Vietnam War movement in the US military.	LAST BOOK YOU READ <i>The Bible</i> : Mark 4:22: 'All that is concealed will be revealed.' A US group sent me a bumper sticker saying 'Jesus ♥ WikiLeaks' and referring to that passage.	LAST GIG YOU WENT TO Erm, I don't get to many. It would probably be INXS in Sydney when I was a teenager.
		LAST TV YOU WATCHED I love a good box set. I've just been watching <i>The Thick Of It</i> .

www.dailymail.co.uk/home/event/article-2368613/Julian-Assange-Worst-thing-anyones-said-That-I-mean-cat-turned-psychotic.html#ixzz2ZhxVr8RB

"Assange har förlorat sin plats i historien"

Julian Assange har kommit att bli den globala nätaivismens galjonsfigur. I dokumentärfilmen "We steal secrets— the story of Wikileaks" får vi följa Assange, läckan Bradley Manning och organisationen Wikileaks. SvD fick en pratstund med filmens regissör Alex Gibney.

Varför bestämde du dig för att göra en dokumentärfilm om Wikileaks?

– Jag blev intresserad av ämnet eftersom det kändes som en klassisk David mot Goliat-berättelse; en man som försöker ställa människor med makt inför rätta.

Hur resonerade ni kring det faktum att ni gjorde en dokumentärfilm om ett pågående skeende?

– Vi behövde bestämma oss för ett tillfälle där vi kunde sätta punkt. Om man försöker berätta precis allt i en historia är det lätt att fastna - istället beslutade vi oss för att bryta när Bradley Manning och Julian Assange båda satt fängslade.

Julian Assange ställde aldrig upp på en intervju för dokumentären, varför inte?

– Han var aldrig bekväm med tanken att jag spelade in en självständig film, där jag inte kunde garantera att jag skulle stå på hans sida. Vid ett tillfälle bad han om pengar för att ställa upp, och jag sa att jag inte kunde ge honom det - och sedan, under den mest bisarra förhandlingen, föreslog han att jag i utbyte skulle spionera på mina intervjupersoner och rapportera till honom. Det är oerhört märkligt för att komma från en person som bryr sig så mycket om källskydd.

Förändrades din bild av Julian Assange under arbetet med dokumentären?

– Ja, det gjorde den; framför allt på grund av vad som hände i Sverige. Inledningsvis trodde jag faktiskt att det fanns ett korn av sanning i hans teori om att händelserna i Sverige var iscensatta av amerikansk underrättelsetjänst, men när jag undersökte saken fann jag inga som helst bevis för det. [Han har aldrig påstått att det bevisligen var "iscensatt", utan i likhet med många andra betraktar det som en möjlighet. --A.B.]

När vi ser tillbaka på den här epoken, tror du att Assange kommer att framstå som en hjälte eller en bedragare?

– Jag anser att Bradley Manning är hjälten i min film och att Assange är en sorts antihjälte. De tillfällen då Wikileaks publicerat sina dokument kommer för många att förbli heroiska, men Julian Assange har nog förlorat sin plats i historien genom att bli för mycket som sina fiender.

Edward Snowden lämnade nyligen ut ytterligare viktiga dokument om amerikansk underrättelseinformation. Hur borde regeringar hantera dessa läckor?

– Jag tycker att den information som Edward Snowden läckte är väldigt viktig; att NSA:s verksamhet bekräftas är värdefullt för både amerikaner och oss andra. Den sorgliga aspekten är att Obama-administrationen fortsätter att se på läckor som spioner, vilket jag anser är en grundläggande missuppfattning av vad dessa läckor faktiskt gör.

Julian Assange launches 'Wikileaks Party' by videolink from the Ecuadorian embassy

Mr Assange announced his own candidacy for a seat in the Australian Senate in the national elections later this year

*Rob Williams
The Independent
25 July 2013*

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has launched his Australian political party via videolink from the Ecuadorian embassy in London. Mr Assange, who remains in the embassy... where he has been granted asylum over charges of rape in Sweden, made the announcement to an assembled audience at Melbourne's Fitzroy library.

During the statement Mr Assange also announced his own candidacy for a seat in the Australian Senate in the national elections later this year.

Assange, a computer hacker most famous for his involvement in releasing a massive haul of US diplomatic cables, is seeking to win a Senate seat in Victoria.

The WikiLeaks Party will field seven candidates in total— they include academics, journalists and human rights activists.

According to the Australian website for the party: "The WikiLeaks Party stands for unswerving commitment to the core principles of civic courage nourished by understanding and truthfulness and the free flow of information.

It is a party that will practise in politics what WikiLeaks has done in the field of information by standing up to the powerful and shining a light on injustice and corruption."

Speaking from the Ecuadorian embassy in London, Mr Assange said: "The Wikileaks Party is a party of accountability, it's not a party of government."

"It's a party to put into the Senate, to make sure whoever is put into the government does their job. It's an insurance against the election."

According to Australian law Mr Assange would have to take up his seat within one year of being elected, although the Senate could grant him an extension.

Assange a bigger fish for Manning prosecutors

*Philip Dorling
The Age
July 27, 2013*

American military prosecutors have WikiLeaks publisher and Australian Senate candidate Julian Assange firmly in their sights.

In summing up the case against United States Army private Bradley Manning, lead prosecutor Major Ashden Fein presented Mr Assange as a co-conspirator, allegedly guiding and directing Manning's leak of hundreds of thousands of secret diplomatic and military reports.

He told military judge, Colonel Denise Lind at Fort Meade, Maryland on Thursday that Private Manning had betrayed his country and "aided the enemy" by passing classified information to WikiLeaks. 'Your honour, he was not a whistleblower, he was a traitor.'

The prosecution's closing arguments included more than 20 direct references to Mr Assange and many more to WikiLeaks which was characterised as a group of "information anarchists" rather than a traditional media organisation.

The prosecution's case draws on records of online chats, allegedly between Mr Assange and Private Manning, that computer forensic examiners discovered on the soldier's personal Apple Mac laptop.

The texts of the chats have not been released by the military court and only fragments have been placed on the public record.

Major Fein charged that Private Manning "knew that WikiLeaks, and specifically Julian Assange, considered themselves the first intelligence agency for the general public' [*Is that "anarchy"? --A.B.*]' because it did "everything an intel[ligence] agency does".

"What is obvious is that Manning pulled as much information as possible to please Julian Assange in order to get that information released and Julian Assange found the right insider to mine [classified] databases," the prosecutor said.

The prosecution said Private Manning and Mr Assange discussed access to the US Central Intelligence Agency's Open Source Centre which collects and analyses "information on foreign political, military, economic, and technical issues beyond the usual media", with Mr Assange allegedly saying that "OSC is, something we want to mine entirely".

Mr Assange has spent more than a year inside the Ecuadorian embassy in London where he has been granted asylum on the grounds he is at risk of extradition to the US to face conspiracy or other charges arising from WikiLeaks obtaining classified information from Private Manning.

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/assange-a-bigger-fish-for-manning-prosecutors-20130726-2qq1h.html>

The Assassination of Julian Assange

"We Steal Secrets": A Masterclass in Propaganda

Jonathan Cook
Information Clearing House
July 29, 2013

I have just watched *We Steal Secrets*, Alex Gibney's documentary about Wikileaks and Julian Assange. One useful thing I learnt is the difference between a hatchet job and character assassination. Gibney is too clever for a hatchet job, and his propaganda is all the more effective for it.

The film's contention is that Assange is a natural-born egotist and, however noble his initial project, Wikileaks ended up not only feeding his vanity but also accentuating in him the very qualities — secretiveness, manipulateness, dishonesty and a hunger for power — he so despises in the global forces he has taken on.

This could have made for an intriguing, and possibly plausible, thesis had Gibney approached the subject-matter more honestly and fairly. But two major flaws discredit the whole enterprise.

The first is that he grievously misrepresents the facts in the Swedish case against Assange of rape and sexual molestation to the point that his motives in making the film are brought into question.

To shore up his central argument about Assange's moral failings, he needs to make a persuasive case that these defects are not only discernible in Assange's public work but in his private life too.

We thus get an extremely partial account of what occurred in Sweden, mostly through the eyes of A, one of his two accusers. She is interviewed in heavy disguise.

Gibney avoids referring to significant aspects of the case that would have cast doubt in the audience's mind about A and her testimony. He does not, for example, mention that A refused on Assange's behalf offers made by her friends at a dinner party to put up the Wikileaks leader in their home — a short time after she says the sexual assault took place.

The film also ignores the prior close relationship between A and the police interviewer and its possible bearing on the fact that the other complainant, S, refused to sign her police statement, suggesting that she did not believe it represented her view of what had happened.

But the most damning evidence against Gibney is his focus on a torn condom submitted by A to the police, unquestioningly accepting its significance as proof of the assault. **The film repeatedly shows a black and white image of the damaged prophylactic.**

Gibney even allows a theory establishing a central personality flaw in Assange to be built around the condom. According to this view, Assange tore it because, imprisoned in his digital world, he wanted to spawn flesh-and-blood babies to give his life more concrete and permanent meaning.

The problem is that investigators have admitted that no DNA from Assange was found on the condom. In fact, A's DNA was not found on it either. **The condom, far from making A a more credible witness, suggests that she may have planted evidence to bolster a case so weak that the original prosecutor dropped it.**

There is no way Gibney could not have known these well-publicised concerns about the condom. So the question is why would he choose to mislead the audience?

Without A, the film's case against Assange relates solely to his struggle through Wikileaks to release secrets from the inner sanctums of the US security state. And this is where the film's second major flaw reveals itself.

Gibney is careful to bring up most of the major issues concerning Assange and Wikileaks, making it harder to accuse him of distorting the record. Outside the rape allegations, however, his dishonesty relates not to an avoidance of facts and evidence but to his choice of emphasis.

The job of a good documentarist is to weigh the available material and then present as honest a record of what it reveals as is possible. Anything less is at best polemic, if it sides with those who are silenced and weak, and at worst propaganda, if it sides with those who wield power.

Gibney's film treats Assange as if he and the US corporate-military behemoth were engaged in a simple game of cat and mouse, **two players trying to outsmart each other. He offers little sense of the vast forces ranged against Assange and Wikileaks.**

The Swedish allegations are viewed only in so far as they question Assange's moral character. No serious effort is made to highlight the enormous resources the US security state has been marshalling to shape public opinion, most notably through the media. The hate campaign against Assange, and the Swedish affair's role in stoking it, are ignored.

None of this is too surprising. **Were Gibney to have highlighted Washington's efforts to demonise Assange it might have hinted to us, his audience, Gibney's own place in supporting this matrix of misinformation.**

This is a shame because there is probably a good case to make that anyone who takes on the might of the modern surveillance and security empire the US has become must to some degree mirror its moral failings.

How is it possible to remain transparent, open, honest — even sane — when every electronic device you possess is probably bugged, when your every move is recorded, when your loved ones are under threat, when the best legal minds are plotting your downfall, when your words are distorted and spun by the media to turn you into an official enemy?

Assange is not alone in this plight. Bradley Manning, the source of Wikileaks' most important disclosures, necessarily lied to his superiors in the military and used subterfuge to get hold of the secret documents that revealed to us the horrors being unleashed in Iraq and Afghanistan in our names. Since he was caught, he has faced torture in jail and is currently in the midst of a show trial.

Another of the great whistleblowers of the age, Edward Snowden, was no more honest with his employers, contractors for the US surveillance state, as he accumulated more and more incriminating evidence of the illegal spying operations undertaken by the National Security Agency and others.

Now he is holed up in a Russian airport trying to find an escape from permanent incarceration or death. Should he succeed, as he did earlier in fleeing Hong Kong, it will probably be because of secrecy and deceit.

This documentary could have been a fascinating study of the moral quandaries faced by whistleblowers in the age of the surveillance super-state. Instead Gibney chose the easy course and made a film that sides with the problem rather than the solution.

www.informationclearinghouse.info/article35689.htm

Why I'm running for Senate with WikiLeaks alongside Julian Assange

Yes, I'm a feminist who's also a WikiLeaks party candidate in Victoria for the Australian Senate. The two are not irreconcilable — here's why

*Leslie Cannold
The Guardian
29 July 2013*

Last week I was announced as the second WikiLeaks party candidate in Victoria for the Australian Senate. My running mate— the bloke in the number one spot— is Julian Assange.

I'm a well-known feminist author, media commentator and public speaker who has dedicated her career to defending women's rights to control their bodies. This means I have fought for a woman's right to choose abortion and to decide if she'll engage in sexual activity, what sort and with who. I've volunteered as a sexual assault crisis counselor and, several years ago, went public about my own experience of rape.

This background has led some to question my decision to run for the WikiLeaks party. The concerns raised have had nothing to do with party's agenda of bringing transparency, accountability and justice to the Australian Senate. Rather, the accusation is that by running with Assange I am attempting to whitewash allegations he sexually assaulted two Swedish women.

I disagree. But before I explain why, I want to show my respect for the people who have raised their concerns with me. Despite disagreeing with many of their premises and conclusions, most are genuinely concerned about the way western societies have long treated victims of sexual assault and I sincerely thank them for this.

My view is that I wasn't bedside when the events that have given rise to the allegations against Assange took place. No one was, except him and the women involved. This means that I don't know what happened, and neither does anyone else. *[Actually, a great deal is known. See <http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange.htm> --A.B.]* Because none of us knows what happened, no one has grounds to judge him or the two women as either guilty or innocent. Such judgments are for the courts.

Juries, judges and judicial system are the best means we've discovered so far to determine the facts of a case and the culpability of anyone involved. I worry about low reporting and conviction rates for sexual assault and would support remedies to bring such figures in line with comparable crimes. However, this view doesn't justify a presumption that a man is guilty in any particular case.

Assange has not been charged with sexual assault or any other crime. Rather, Swedish authorities want him for questioning. He has repeatedly said, including to me personally, that he is eager to answer questions on this matter. Indeed, from his perspective, the sooner the better so that the matter can be dismissed or charges. For him— and the two women I'd imagine— the delays to justice in this case have resulted in justice being denied. The reputations of all involved will remain in peril, and all lives on hold, until the matter is resolved.

So what's holding things up? The answer is the unyielding attitude of the Swedes. They won't question Assange in the Ecuadorian embassy nor talk to him by video-link, nor make use of the routine legal solutions like those provided by the mutual legal assistance treaty to resolve the impasse. **Sadly, the Australian government has declined to help, despite making efforts less than two weeks ago to assist six Australians accused of murder to give evidence by video-link.**

What does Assange fear from Sweden? The same thing he fears from Britain— that the moment he sets foot outside the Ecuadorian embassy, he'll be extradited to the US. There, he is likely to face charges under the espionage act for publishing sensitive information— including the collateral murder video - that whistleblower Bradley Manning says he leaked to WikiLeaks.org.

Any doubts that the US has Assange firmly in his sights was laid to rest in the prosecution's closing arguments in the Manning case, which directly referenced him more than 20 times and described WikiLeaks.org as a group of "information anarchists".

Persecution by the US is why Assange sought and was granted asylum in the Ecuadorian embassy. Not wanting to answer the Swedish allegations had nothing to do with it.

For active and concerned citizens, this is the crux of the dilemma. How can they support a super power's judicial persecution of a man whose only crime is to have published leaks in the public interest— a super power whose record in prosecuting Manning for these leaks includes torture? Yet, how can they raise their voices against the judicial persecution of that man without making light of the allegations raised against him?

The solution is two-fold. Firstly, we need to put pressure on the Swedish government to stop dragging its feet and implement one of the many simple and obvious ways to question Assange. In the interim, we must scrupulously maintain both his presumption of innocence regarding allegations of sexual assault, and the women's regarding allegations they have lied. *[Anna Ardin's lies are apparent from her own statements. and behaviour. --A.B.]*

But most importantly we must remember that the worldwide movement of people inspired by the WikiLeaks solution to the problem of declining democracies across the west— a movement that gave birth to the Australian WikiLeaks party— is bigger than one man.

I have chosen to stand for the WikiLeaks party because I want to bring the WikiLeaks disinfectant of transparency and accountability to the Australian Senate.

This decision reflects nothing more or less than my respect for the rule of law and a desire to make Australia safe for democracy again.

Swedish serial killer who raped and ate his victims to be freed—because he made it all up

Murder confessions are accepted as fantasies after Sture Bergwall served 20 years in jail

Charlotte McDonald-Gibson
The Independent
31 July 2013

He was once Sweden's most infamous serial killer, a self-confessed cannibal who claimed to have murdered 30 people. But Sture Bergwall could soon be freed from a high-security psychiatric unit after prosecutors dropped the last charge against a man they now accept was a fantasist.

The case gripped Sweden in the 1990s, when Bergwall— then known by his alter-ego, Thomas Quick— told police tales of the dozens of people he had raped, killed and even eaten. He was eventually convicted of murdering eight people, including three children.

More than a decade later, however, Bergwall had a different story to tell: encouraged by therapists and befuddled by medication, he had invented Thomas Quick, the serial killer, as a cry for help. Without his confessions, there was little other evidence to back up the convictions, and one by one courts struck them down.

Today, prosecutors withdrew the final outstanding case: the murder of a 15-year-old who disappeared in northern Sweden in 1976. Although the remains of Charles Zelmanovits were not discovered until 1993 and it was impossible to determine the cause of death, Bergwall had been convicted on the strength of his testimony alone.

"That a person has been convicted of eight murders and later been declared innocent, that is unique in Swedish legal history," said the attorney general, Anders Perklev. "It has to be considered as a big failure for the justice system."

Psychiatric evaluators now have to decide whether to release 63-year-old Bergwall, who told the Associated Press that today's events were "overwhelming and emotional" and he would now push for his freedom.

The case has raised questions over why courts found Bergwall guilty of eight crimes when there was no forensic evidence or witness statements to back up his stories. At the time he began confessing to grisly murders spanning decades, he had already been detained in a secure psychiatric unit for three years.

In an interview with GQ magazine published this week, he said that when he was first incarcerated for bank robbery in 1991, he was feeling lost and battling with low self-worth. "I had burned so many bridges, and I was plunged into this profound loneliness," he said. "I wanted to be this interesting person. I didn't want to be this grey bad person. I wanted to be something else."

He agreed to start therapy, and as the sessions progressed **Bergwall noticed that the darker his tales, the more people listened.** Craving the attention, he started to open up with stories of childhood abuse and trauma.

He began to weave ever more intricate fantasies, until he finally confessed to a killing which had been dominating the Swedish media at the time: the death of 11-year-old Johan Asplund.

The confessions continued to tumble out, aided by the high doses of benzodiazepines he was on. Bergwall was eventually convicted in a series of trials between 1994 and 2001 of killing Johan, Charles, a nine-year-old girl, a Dutch couple, an Israeli student and two women in Oslo.

[Note: Quick/Bergvalls defence attorney was Claes Borgström, who is also largely responsible for reopening the case against Julian Assange after it had been dismissed by a well-respected prosecutor. In this case, Borgström essentially conspired with the prosecution to ensure that his nominal client would be convicted. --A.B.]

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Julian Assange: 'I miss the outside world'

*Michael Crooks
WHO magazine (Australia)
August 1, 2013*

Julian Assange occupies one room, but sleeps in a renovated bathroom in the Embassy of Ecuador in London. Inviting WHO into the Knightsbridge haven, a short stroll from Harrods department store, the co-founder and editor-in-chief of WikiLeaks shared his daily routine, his fears and the difficulties of living in the embassy.

"I couldn't sleep because of the Harrods loading bay and the cops always doing shift changes outside," says Assange, 42. "And the quietest room is the women's bathroom, the only room that's easy to sleep in. So I thought I'd try and somehow get hold of it and renovate it. Eventually, somewhat reluctantly, the staff relented. They ripped out the toilet. They've been very generous."

Since June 19 last year, Assange has been living in exile at the Ecuadorian Embassy, avoiding an extradition order to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning over two alleged sexual assaults.

But Assange, who vehemently denies the accusations, says, "I didn't come here because of Sweden," telling WHO he fears only the threat of eventual extradition to the US, where he faces potential espionage charges over his whistleblowing website's leaking of classified material.

And so, relying on family, friends, colleagues and embassy staff for his daily and work needs, and using a sunlamp to keep his vitamin D levels up, Assange has carved out a working life in his embassy niche.

"I miss all the outside world, obviously," says Assange, who tells WHO he is constantly shifting rooms in the embassy, which occupies a single floor of the building: "We've had this room for about a week and we don't draw attention to which rooms. That's quite dangerous."

He is guarded about where his meals come from, too. When an embassy staffer brings him a sushi lunch, Assange asks that the name of the restaurant not be published. "They might track the place down," says Assange, who was born in Townsville, Queensland [significance? --A.B.J.]. "They might put something in there that won't kill me, but make me very sick so I'll have to go to hospital."

He believes his family are potential targets, too. **"American right-wingers put out a call that the way to get me was to 'take out' my eldest son," says Assange. "My son has had to move, change all his identities. My mother has had to move, too. There are many death threats made to the lawyers."**

He finds comfort through his support base. Visitors to his embassy home have included Lady Gaga, actor John Cusack, fashion designer Vivienne Westwood, members of Pussy Riot and Yoko Ono, who has visited "several times," says Assange.

Australian friends try to quell the homesickness with gifts— "flannel shirts, Tim Tams, Vegemite, gum leaves" —and at 4 PM each day, a small group including former refugees and soldiers hold a vigil for Assange outside the embassy.

"They try and keep my spirits up," he says. "And they do."

<http://au.lifestyle.yahoo.com/who/latest-news/article/-/18254387/julian-assange-I-miss-the-outside-world/>

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Julian Assange welcomes Who magazine into his embassy home

WikiLeaks founder poses for Hello!-style photoshoot billed as 'my life inside the embassy'

Paul Owen
The Guardian
2013-08-02

Julian Assange has posed for a Hello!-style photoshoot billed as "my life in the embassy" for an Australian glossy magazine.

The cover of this week's Who magazine sees the WikiLeaks founder— who has been living in London's Ecuadorean embassy since June 2012— perched between "Kate & George's first days at home" and "stars hit the beach", dressed in a dark suit and red tie and casually holding a mug advertising the Australian rock band AC/DC.

Inside, the magazine shows Assange sitting at a leather sofa in front of a large wooden bookcase, dressed less formally in a beige T-shirt and grey jumper, staring intensely into the lens. To his left is pinned the picture of Edward Snowden mocked up to look like Shephard Fairey's Barack Obama "Hope" poster the WikiLeaks founder tweeted last month.

In front of him, **presumably carefully placed**, are three books, including *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control* by Medea Benjamin and Barbara Ehrenreich, which the Guardian called "a justifiably angry sourcebook and a call to action for the growing worldwide citizen opposition to the drones".

A version of the Who piece on the Yahoo! website begins— bizarrely under the circumstances— by hewing cheerfully to the standard formula adopted by celebrity magazines lucky enough to get a tour of stars' homes: “Inviting Who into the Knightsbridge haven, a short stroll from Harrods department store....”

The tactlessness of noting that anywhere is a “short stroll” in a piece about a man who is in effect under self-imposed house arrest seems lost on the author.

In the article, Assange— who successfully applied for asylum at the embassy in June 2012 to avoid being extradited to Sweden to face questioning over sexual assault allegations and has been there ever since— reveals more about his living arrangements:

“I couldn’t sleep because of the Harrods loading bay and the cops always doing shift changes outside. And the quietest room is the women’s bathroom, the only room that’s easy to sleep in. So I thought I’d try and somehow get hold of it and renovate it. Eventually, somewhat reluctantly, the staff relented. They ripped out the toilet. They’ve been very generous.”

He also reiterates his case that it is the fear of possible extradition to the US on charges relating to WikiLeaks’s publication of classified documents, rather than the possibility of conviction in Sweden, that has led to his refusal to leave the embassy: “I didn’t come here because of Sweden,” he says.

He seems to fear his food might be poisoned, asking Who not to publish the name of a sushi restaurant from which his lunch has been ordered. “They might track the place down ... They might put something in there that won’t kill me, but make me very sick so I’ll have to go to hospital.” *[The validity of that concern seems lost on the author of this piece. --A.B.]*

Perhaps for the same reason, he says he is constantly moving from room to room in the embassy. “We’ve had this room for about a week and we don’t draw attention to which rooms. That’s quite dangerous.”

Assange has been back in the spotlight again recently as his organisation helped US whistleblower Edward Snowden as he successfully arranged temporary asylum in Russia, and the case of Private Bradley Manning— the soldier who leaked thousands of classified documents to WikiLeaks in its most high-profile publication— came to a close with his conviction for espionage.

But the Who interview might in fact be part of a strategy by Assange to win more sympathy at home in Australia, where he is running for the Senate in the general election expected to be called soon— presumably in the hope that the UK or Sweden would be reluctant to extradite a sitting foreign politician.

[Apparently not satisfied with devising their own attacks on Assange, the seemingly infantile editors of The Guardian are now exploiting other publications in their campaign of denigration and ridicule. --A.B.]

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2013-08-07: After airing its interview with Julian Assange, 60 Minutes Australia held a poll asking if people would vote for him. 62% said they would.



<http://www.thisdayinwikileaks.org>

Statement from Julian Assange in response to President Obama's plans to reform America's global surveillance program

Submitted by JohnSmith
WL Central
2013-08-10

On Friday 9 August 2013, US President Barack Obama addressed the world through a live feed at the White House website. Several topics were discussed, but the main topic— the obvious reason for the address— was of course the revelations about illegal NSA surveillance programmes. Today Julian Assange responds.

Obama insisted he'd already begun a review of these programmes before they became known to the general public. **Dan Gillmor reminded everyone on Twitter that this supposed review process was itself a secret.**

An archive of the address can be found at the White House website, but it is not featured on the first page of recent addresses.

Statement from Julian Assange

Today, 10 August 2013, Julian Assange responded at the website of the WikiLeaks Party of Australia.

Today the President of the United States validated Edward Snowden's role as a whistleblower by announcing plans to reform America's global surveillance program. **But rather than thank Edward Snowden, the President laughably attempted to**

criticize him while claiming that there was a plan all along, "before Edward Snowden." The simple fact is that without Snowden's disclosures, no one would know about the programs and no reforms could take place. As Thomas Jefferson so eloquently once stated, "All tyranny needs to gain a foothold is for people of good conscience to remain silent." Luckily for the citizens of the world, Edward Snowden is one of those "people of good conscience" who did not "remain silent", just as Pfc Bradley Manning and Daniel Ellsberg refused to remain silent.

Ironically, the Department of Justice is betraying two key principles that President Obama championed when he ran for office— transparency and protection for whistleblowers. During his 2008 campaign, the President supported Whistleblowers, claiming their "acts of courage and patriotism, which can sometimes save lives and often save taxpayer dollars, should be encouraged rather than stifled." Yet his administration has prosecuted twice as many whistleblowers than all other administrations combined.

Moreover, the US government's hypocrisy over Snowden's right to seek asylum has been stunning. America offers asylum to dissidents, whistleblowers and political refugees without regard to other governments opposition all the time. For example, **the US has accepted 3,103 of their own asylees, 1,222 from Russia and 1,762 from Venezuela.** (http://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2011/ois_yb_2011.pdf)

Today was a victory of sorts for Edward Snowden and his many supporters. As Snowden has stated, his biggest concern was if he blew the whistle and change did not occur. Well reforms are taking shape, and for that, the President and people of the United States and around the world owe Edward Snowden a debt of gratitude.

The Courage Of Bradley Manning Will Inspire Others To Seize Their Moment of Truth

*John Pilger
New Statesman
August 8, 2013*

The critical moment in the political trial of the century was on 28 February when Bradley Manning stood and explained why he had risked his life to leak tens of thousands of official files. It was a statement of morality, conscience and truth: the very qualities that distinguish human beings. This was not deemed mainstream news in America; and were it not for Alexa O'Brien, an independent freelance journalist, Manning's voice would have been silenced. Working through the night, she transcribed and released his every word. It is a rare, revealing document.

Describing the attack by an Apache helicopter crew who filmed civilians as they murdered and wounded them in Baghdad in 2007, Manning said: "The most alarming aspect of the video to me was the seemingly delightful bloodlust they appeared to have. They seemed not to value human life by referring to them as 'dead bastards' and congratulating each other on the ability to kill in large numbers. At one point in the video there is an individual on the ground attempting to crawl to safety [who] is

seriously wounded... For me, this seems similar to a child torturing ants with a magnifying glass." He hoped "the public would be as alarmed as me" about a crime which, as his subsequent leaks revealed, was not an aberration.

Bradley Manning is a principled whistleblower and truth-teller who has been vilified and tortured— **and Amnesty International needs to explain to the world why it has not adopted him as a prisoner of conscience**; or is Amnesty, unlike Manning, intimidated by criminal power?

"It is a funeral here at Fort Meade," Alexa O'Brien told me. "The US government wants to bury Manning alive. He is a genuinely earnest young man with not an ounce of mendacity. The mainstream media finally came on the day of the verdict. They showed up for a gladiator match— to watch the gauntlet go down, thumbs pointed down."

The criminal nature of the American military is beyond dispute. The decades of lawless bombing, the use of poisonous weapons on civilian populations, the renditions and the torture at Abu Graib, Guantanamo and elsewhere, are all documented. As a young war reporter in Indochina, it dawned on me that America exported its homicidal neuroses and called it war, even a noble cause. Like the Apache attack, the infamous 1968 massacre at My Lai was not untypical. In the same province, Quang Ngai, I gathered evidence of widespread slaughter: thousands of men, women and children, murdered arbitrarily and anonymously in "free fire zones".

In Iraq, I filmed a shepherd whose brother and his entire family had been cut down by an American plane, in the open. **This was sport**. In Afghanistan, I filmed a woman whose dirt-walled home, and family, had been obliterated by a 500 lb bomb. There was no "enemy". My film cans burst with such evidence.

In 2010, Private Manning did his duty to the rest of humanity and supplied proof from within the murder machine. This is his triumph; and his show trial merely expresses corrupt power's abiding fear of people learning the truth. It also illuminates the parasitic industry around truth-tellers. Manning's character has been dissected and abused by those who never knew him yet claim to support him.

The hyped film, 'We Steal Secrets: the Story of WikiLeaks', mutates a heroic young soldier into an "alienated... lonely... very needy" psychiatric case with an "identity crisis" because "he was in the wrong body and wanted to become a woman". So spoke **Alex Gibney, the director, whose prurient psycho-babble found willing ears across a media too compliant or lazy or stupid to challenge the hype and comprehend that the shadows falling across whistleblowers may reach even them**. From its dishonest title, Gibney's film performed a dutiful hatchet job on Manning, Julian Assange and WikiLeaks. **The message was familiar— serious dissenters are freaks**. Alexa O'Brien's meticulous record of Manning's moral and political courage demolishes this smear.

In the Gibney film, US politicians and the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff are lined up to repeat, unchallenged, that, in publishing Manning's leaks, WikiLeaks and Assange placed the lives of informants at risk and had "blood on his hands". On 1 August, the Guardian reported: "No record of deaths caused by WikiLeaks revelations, court told." The Pentagon general who led a 10-month investigation into the worldwide impact of the leaks reported that not a single death could be attributed to the disclosures.

Yet, in the film, the journalist Nick Davies describes a heartless Assange who had no "harm minimisation plan". I asked the **film-maker Mark Davis** about this. A respected broadcaster for SBS Australia, Davis was an eyewitness, accompanying Assange during much of the preparation of the leaked files for publication in the Guardian and the New York Times. His footage appears in the Gibney film. **He told me, "Assange was the only one who worked day and night extracting 10,000 names of people who could be targeted by the revelations in the logs."**

While Manning faces life in prison, Gibney is said to be planning a Hollywood movie. A "biopic" of Assange is on the way, along with a Hollywood version of David Leigh's and Luke Harding's book of scuttlebutt on the "fall" of WikiLeaks. Profiting from the boldness, cleverness and suffering of those who refuse to be co-opted and tamed, they all will end up in history's waste bin. For the inspiration of future truth-tellers belongs to Bradley Manning, Julian Assange, Edward Snowden and the remarkable young people of WikiLeaks, whose achievements are unparalleled. **Snowden's rescue is largely a WikiLeaks triumph:** a thriller too good for Hollywood because its heroes are real.

Ecuador restates support for Julian Assange on asylum anniversary

A year after granting WikiLeaks founder political asylum, Ecuador says it remains committed to finding solution to standoff

*U.K. Press Association
16 August 2013*

The Ecuadorean government has stressed its commitment to finding a solution to the standoff over Julian Assange, on the anniversary of the WikiLeaks founder being granted political asylum.

The Australian has been living inside the Ecuadorean embassy in London for more than a year as part of his campaign to avoid extradition to Sweden, where he faces allegations of sex crimes against two women— claims he denies.

Assange fears that if he travels to Sweden he will be forcibly taken to the US to face questioning over documents published by WikiLeaks.

A statement from the Ecuadorean government said: "One year ago today Ecuador took the decision to award asylum to Julian Assange, a journalist who feared political persecution after publishing information sensitive to the US government that exposed war crimes, killings, torture and other human rights abuses that would otherwise never have come to light.

"After thoroughly examining the evidence, the government of Ecuador concluded that it shared Julian Assange's concerns that there is a real and present danger to his freedoms."

The statement said the recent guilty verdict against the WikiLeaks source Bradley Manning and attempts to prosecute Edward Snowden for leaking information about US surveillance underlined why Ecuador granted asylum.

It added: "The decision taken was based on Ecuadorean and international law. As article 14 of the universal declaration of human rights declares, 'everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution'.

"However, Ecuador accepts that resolving Julian's status and specifically his right to leave the embassy without threat of arrest and onward extradition to the US involves the jurisdictions of three sovereign nations— the UK, Sweden and Ecuador.

"The government of Ecuador remains committed to finding an equitable solution to this situation that respects domestic and international law while at the same time protecting Julian Assange from inhumane treatment and the threats of political persecution."

‘Australian men don’t tell’ says Julian Assange of Sweden sex allegations

“Unfortunately, to a degree, I am an Australian and therefore Australian men don’t like talking about their private lives”.

AFP/The Journal (Ireland)
2013-08-13

JULIAN ASSANGE SAYS he will not publicly address Swedish sex allegations before his bid for office in Australia because “Australian men don’t like to talk about their private lives”.

Assange, standing for election to the upper house in 7 September national polls, also said Australian men did not bad-mouth their lovers, when asked whether he would explain himself to voters on the sex crime claims that have seen him holed up in London’s Ecuadoran embassy for more than a year.

“Unfortunately, to a degree, I am an Australian and therefore Australian men don’t like talking about their private lives,” the former computer hacker said in an online election forum published by Fairfax Media on Thursday.

Assange has been living inside Ecuador’s embassy since June 2012 as he fights extradition from Britain to Sweden, where authorities want to question him over alleged sex crimes.

The activist has voiced fears that he will be sent on to the United States to be tried over huge leaks of sensitive diplomatic correspondence and material on the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

He told the Fairfax forum, conducted on Wednesday, he had “nothing to hide” on the Sweden allegations and there was “extensive information about the case” available at the site justice4assange.com.

“I have not been charged. It’s an extraordinary situation that someone could be detained for three years without charge. That’s part of the abuses in this case,” he said.

Assange acknowledged that he is not a typical politician, with questions over whether he will even be able to assume his Senate seat if he wins given his status in the embassy, but said he still felt that he could connect with voters.

“As an individual I haven’t just been an activist... I understand what it’s like to be a father, to start small businesses, to have problems of many different kinds,” he said. “I think Australians can relate to that sort of character. Even though I’m in a very unusual position for sure, I’ve also had the life experiences that many Australians have had.”

Assange is one of seven candidates running for election to the Senate for his WikiLeaks Party, which has vowed to be an “independent scrutineer of government activity” on a range of issues including tax reform, asylum-seekers and climate change policy.

The Australian whistleblower believes he stands a good chance of winning his seat, saying this week that polling numbers are positive.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/julian-assange-qa-allegations-sweden-1027315-Aug2013/>

FBI spionerede mod Assange via Danmark

FBI mødtes med hemmelig kilde i Aarhus, efter at Islands regering afbrød en amerikansk operation mod WikiLeaks i Reykjavik. Oplysninger om flere danske journalister kan være blandt det udleverede materiale. Justitsminister Morten Bødskov vil ikke svare på, om danske myndigheder havde kendskab til operationen.

*Bo Elkjær
Journalisten (Danmark)
14 aug. 2013*

I kølvandet på den seneste tids afsløringer af overvågning og registrering bliver Danmark nu impliceret i en spionageoperation, rettet mod lækageorganisationen WikiLeaks og dens stifter, Julian Assange.

Danske journalister kan potentielt være bragt i FBI's søgelys i forbindelse med FBI's operation, der blev afviklet i Aarhus sidste år.

Efter at den islandske regering i august 2011 opdagede og afbrød en FBI-operation mod WikiLeaks og Julian Assange, fortsatte FBI operationen mod lækageorganisationen — men styrede den nu i stedet via Danmark.

Agenter fra FBI har holdt flere møder med en hemmelig WikiLeaks-kilde i Aarhus. Her har kilden udleveret store mængder data om WikiLeaks til FBI. I det udleverede materiale er også oplysninger om journalister, der har haft kontakt til WikiLeaks.

Flere danske journalister har været i tæt forbindelse med WikiLeaks. Blandt dem er Informations Charlotte Aagaard. Dagbladet Information fik forhåndsadgang til 391.832 Irak-dokumenter. Charlotte Aagaard var med i den gruppe af journalister på Information, der arbejdede med materialet.

»Vi har selvfølgelig haft kontakt med Assange og andre fra Wikileaks, så jeg ved ikke, om vi optræder på den liste,« siger Charlotte Aagaard.

En anden af de danske journalister, der var i tæt kontakt med WikiLeaks og Julian Assange, er Filip Wallberg. Han var dengang på Ekstra Bladet, men er nu lektor på SDU:

»Jeg har besøgt dem. Jeg har siddet og røget vandpibe med Julian Assange. Altså ... Huha ...«

Journalisten spurgte mandag skriftligt justitsminister Morten Bødskov, om danske myndigheder havde kendskab til den amerikanske operation på dansk grund. torsdag morgen svarede justitsminister Morten Bødskovs særlige rådgiver i en mail: **"Tak for din mail. Justitsministeriet har ingen kommentarer."**

Det er det amerikanske magasin Slate, der afslører, at FBI rykkede til Aarhus efter at være blevet sparket ud af Reykjavik.

Det var den islandske indenrigsminister, Ögmundur Jonasson, der afbrød den amerikanske operation i Island. Derefter protesterede den islandske regering officielt mod operationen over for Washington.

"Jeg var ikke klar over, at de kom til Island," sagde indenrigsminister Ögmundur Jonasson i et interview med Associated Press i marts 2013. "Da jeg hørte om det, forlangte jeg, at Islands politi skulle afbryde ethvert samarbejde, og understregede, at folk, der interviewes eller afhøres i Island, skal afhøres af islandsk politi."

Den formelle protest blev afleveret af islandske diplomater i Washington.

"Vi gjorde det klart for de amerikanske myndigheder, at det herfra ikke blev positivt betragtet," sagde Ögmundur Jonasson.

FBI-agenterne landede i privat jet i Reykjavik i august 2011. FBI havde ikke i forvejen orienteret Island om, at man ville indlede operationen.

Det er ellers et formelt krav mellem alle NATO-lande — herunder også USA og Island — at man indbyrdes orienterer om den type operationer, inden de indledes. Det fremgår af sikkerhedsaftalen "Security Within the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation", der første gang blev formaliseret og ratificeret i 1955, og som siden er blevet justeret løbende.

Tilsvarende har også Danmark altså krav på at blive informeret fra USA, når FBI indleder operationer på dansk grund.

Efter at FBI-agenterne var landet i Reykjavik, kontaktede de lederen af det islandske politi og den ledende islandske statsanklager i et forsøg på at få adgang til alle tilgængelige oplysninger om WikiLeaks.

Da indenrigsminister Ögmundur Jónasson hørte om FBI-besøget, mødtes han med agenterne og sagde, at den islandske regering ikke kunne tillade fremmede magter at udføre operationer på islandsk grund. FBI-agenterne blev derefter beordret til at forlade landet.

Efter et islandsk regeringsmøde forestod udenrigsminister Össur Skarphéðinsson den formelle protest over for USA.

I august 2011 befandt WikiLeaks' stifter, Julian Assange, sig i London.

FBI's kilde var den nu 20-årige islænding Sigurdur Thordarson, der som teenager blev aktivist i WikiLeaks. Sigurdur Thordarson udleverede data om Assange, om WikiLeaks og om tilknyttede aktivister og personer til FBI. Den unge islænding blev afsløret som kilde til FBI-operationen i magasinet Wired i juni.

I sidste måned blev Bradley Manning dømt for spionage, tyveri og computersvindel efter at have lækket store mængder oplysninger til WikiLeaks, herunder videooptagelser af luftangreb i Irak og diplomatiske og militære telegrammer og oplysninger.

Julian Assange opholder sig på Ecuadors ambassade i London og forsøger at undgå at blive udleveret til Sverige, hvor han er anklaget for seksuelle krænkelser. Assange frygter, at Sverige vil udlevere ham til USA til retsforfølgelse i lækagesagerne.

Operationen mod WikiLeaks fortsatte, efter at FBI var blevet sparket ud af Reykjavik. Den 18. marts 2012 mødtes Sigurdur Thordarson i Aarhus med agenter fra FBI.

Det var her, Sigurdur Thordarson udleverede størsteparten af det materiale, han havde indsamlet som infiltrator i WikiLeaks. Materialet blev overdraget på løse harddiske, der var spækket til randen med oplysninger om lækageorganisationen. I alt udleverede Thordarson otte harddiske med en samlet kapacitet på 1 terabyte data, dvs. 1.000 gigabyte.

Til sammenligning lagde WikiLeaks-organisationen selv i 2010 en krypteret fil på nettet som forsikring i tilfælde af, at myndighederne fik held med at stoppe organisationen. Denne krypterede fil, der bærer navnet "forsikring", er på 1,4 gigabyte, dvs. en brøkdel af det samlede materiale, FBI fik adgang til ved operationen i Aarhus.

FBI's kilde Sigurdur Thordarson har bl.a. udleveret logfiler fra private online-chats, fotografier, kontaktinfo på frivillige, aktivister og så altså journalister med kontakt til WikiLeaks.

»Det er meget forventeligt, men jeg synes ikke, at det er særlig sjovt,« siger Informations Charlotte Aagaard. »Da vi arbejdede med dokumenterne, forsøgte vi at være meget sikkerhedsbevidste, også med vores kommunikation med WikiLeaks.«

»Vi forsøgte selvfølgelig at sløre så godt som muligt, også da vi havde fået dokumenterne. Men vi regnede hele tiden med, at det ville have myndighedernes interesse, det er klart. Vi lavede også nogle juridiske undersøgelser for at finde ud af, hvad kunne vi blive draget til ansvar for. Det var heldigvis sådan, at kongressens retsudvalg i USA ret hurtigt lavede en undersøgelse, der slog fast, at den amerikanske kildebeskyttelse også gælder udenlandske journalister og medier. Ikke bare amerikanske medier. Vi havde også fat i vores egen advokat her i huset for at finde ud af, hvad det kunne have af repressalier. Der konkluderede vi, bl.a. på baggrund af Grevilsagen, at der nok ikke ville være nogen.«

»Det er dybt bekymrende, hvis FBI også interesserer sig for journalister i andre lande end USA. De burde dybest set kun interessere sig for ting, der foregår i USA eller direkte truer USA. Men jeg forventer det, vil jeg sige.«

Charlotte Aagaard er bekymret over, at FBI brugte Aarhus til at mødes med den på det tidspunkt hemmelige islandske kilde.

»Hvis det er foregået uden dansk viden, så er det ulovligt. Så nemt er det. Men hvis det er foregået med danske myndigheders vidende, det er ikke rart at tænke på.«

Filip Wallberg rejste i 2010 til London for at mødes med Julian Assange og tale om de lækede dokumenter og havde gennem et stykke tid løbende kontakt med organisationen.

»Så står jeg nok i en FBI-file. Hyggeligt! Et eller andet sted burde det som journalist pisse mig helt vildt af, men helt ærligt: Det kan ikke overraske mig på nogen som helst tænkelig måde.«

»Efter den seneste tids afsløringer skal der nok også mere til at forarge mig. Du må ikke misforstå mig, jeg burde blive harm over det, men det er jo det, jeg forventede, at de ville gøre.«

»Jeg er ikke en vigtigper, jeg er en lillebitte brik i et stort spil og på ingen som helst måde en trussel mod amerikansk sikkerhed. Men når man har med en så forhadet organisation som WikiLeaks at gøre, så er man bare nødt til at tage den helt store sølvpapir-hat på og forvente det værste,« siger Filip Wallberg.

Hvad tænker du om, at FBI flyttede operationen til Danmark?

»Jamen der er to scenarier: Har danske myndigheder haft kendskab til operationen eller ej? Hvis den danske administration, og her tænker jeg både på Justitsministeriet, Udenrigsministeriet, på Politiets Efterretningstjeneste, og Forsvarets Efterretnings-tjeneste, hele banden samlet set, hvis de ikke har vidst, at FBI var i Danmark, så er det jo pinligt for dem! **Det er jo næsten det værste, hvis de ikke vidste det,«** siger Filip Wallberg.

»Det burde de vide. Det er faktisk en af de ting, de får løn for. At opfange, når andre landes efterretningstjenester opererer i Danmark. Hvis der er fremmede magter i Danmark, så burde der gå en alarmklokke op for danske myndigheder. Hvis PET ved, at der foregår en operation i Danmark, så bør det meldes op i systemet.«

»Selvfølgelig skal FBI ikke have fri leg i Danmark til at indsamle oplysninger. Det må de gøre hjemme i USA. FBI er ikke en myndighed i Danmark. Vi skal ikke facilitere dem, vi skal ikke hjælpe dem i Danmark mod WikiLeaks. Det er gået galt for Julian Assange, og det er gået galt for WikiLeaks, men når det er sagt, så har de jo ikke gjort noget ulovligt. De har fremlagt materiale, hvor vi journalister har fået dokumentation for en række forhold. **Det er en helt klassisk lækage.**«

»Danmark skal ikke facilitere FBI i sådan en efterforskning, og det er også en hjælp at sige "I må gerne holde møde oppe i Aarhus. God fornøjelse. Vi anbefaler det hotel, hvor vi holdt møde med Morten Storm". Det er ikke det, vi skal gøre. Det er jo idioti.«

Ved mødet i Aarhus med den islandske kilde fik han en skriftlig kvittering for de otte harddiske, som han overleverede til FBI. Alle harddiske var password-beskyttede, og FBI fik senere adgangskoderne til indholdet.

Hverken WikiLeaks eller Julian Assange har ønsket at kommentere sagen over for Journalisten.

<http://journalisten.dk/fbi-spionerede-mod-assange-danmark>

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‘He’s very, very pale’:

Mick Wallace and Clare Daly met Julian Assange yesterday

The independent TDs held a wide-ranging meeting with the Wikileaks founder at the Ecuadorean embassy in London yesterday.

The Journal (Ireland)
2013-08-15

INDEPENDENT TDS [*members of Irish parliament*] MICK Wallace and Clare Daly met with Wikileaks founder Julian Assange at the Ecuadorean embassy in London yesterday, saying they discussed a number of issues in a wide-ranging and lengthy meeting.

Assange, who has overseen the publication of thousands of Afghan war, Iraq war and diplomatic cables in recent years, has been holed-up in the embassy since June 2012 following a court ruling that he must be extradited to Sweden to face questioning over two sexual assault allegations.

Daly and Wallace initiated a meeting with Assange to “learn of his position on a lot of things going on at the moment” according to Wallace, a Wexford TD, who spoke to Drivetime on RTÉ this evening.

The meeting also came in the context of Assange’s attempts to be elected to the Australian Senate for the WikiLeaks Party, a campaign which Wallace and Daly gave their backing to in a joint statement issued today urging Irish-Australians to support Assange and the party.

Daly, a Dublin North TD, told TheJournal.ie: “He [Assange] was very concerned about situation with Bradley Manning, he said the international community should rally around him. He was concerned that the international community rally around Edward Snowden.”

“We discussed Irish issues in the context of this era of global mass surveillance and we agreed to open up a channel of communications,” she said, adding that they are awaiting more information before pursuing matters raised during the two-hour meeting in the Dáil.

Asked about his physical condition given he has not been outside of the embassy for over a year, Daly said Assange was “very, very pale”.

"He can't leave the building, it's not an easy position, but he's got a really positive outlook. I am known for being pale and he's a lot paler than I am. I get the impression he's a workaholic," she added, saying that Assange was "incredibly appreciative" of the Ecuadorean embassy.

Daly said that the issue of Assange being wanted for questioning about two alleged sexual assaults in Sweden was "discussed briefly".

However she added that she was "at a loss" as to why Swedish authorities would not take Assange up on his offer to answer questions over the phone. The Australian-born activist fears he will be extradited to the US to face espionage charges if he complies with his extradition to Sweden.

Earlier, Wallace told Drivetime: "Sexual crimes are very serious and he does need to answer any allegations that are out there."

www.thejournal.ie/mick-wallace-clare-daly-julian-assange-wikileaks-1039266-Aug2013

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This Day in WikiLeaks
2013-08-19

Ecuadorian FM Ricardo Patiño said that the UK was making a "serious mistake" by denying safe passage to Julian Assange and stated that a 15-page document was given to them showing why their treatment of Mr Assange is illegal.

<http://www.thisdayinwikileaks.org>

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Michael Grunwald, Time Magazine Reporter, Sends Out Shocking Tweet About Julian Assange

Braden Goyette
Huffington Post
2013-08-19

A TIME magazine reporter caused ire on Twitter Saturday night when he said that he "can't wait to write a defense of the drone strike that takes out" Wikileaks founder Julian Assange.

Michael Grunwald's tweet, since deleted, was quickly met with outrage and bewilderment. Glenn Greenwald, who recently broke several revelations about NSA surveillance programs based on documents provided to him by leaker Edward Snowden, was particularly vocal in expressing his disgust with Grunwald's statement.



Glenn Greenwald  @ggreenwald

18 Aug

For those asking, @MikeGrunwald's now-deleted tweet: "I can't wait to write a defense of the drone strike that takes out Julian Assange"



adam hernandez

@Ahernz1991



@ggreenwald @MikeGrunwald here's a screen cap
pic.twitter.com/89kuRyRchq

2:04 AM - 18 Aug 2013



Michael Grunwald 

@MikeGrunwald



I can't wait to write a defense of the
drone strike that takes out Julian
Assange.

8/17/13, 7:25 PM



Glenn Greenwald 

@ggreenwald



Things like this make you not just understand, but
celebrate, the failings of large media outlets - TIME
edition: twitter.com/MikeGrunwald/s...

1:38 AM - 18 Aug 2013

211 RETWEETS 92 FAVORITES



Blake Hounshell 

@blakehounshell



Derp RT @MikeGrunwald: I can't wait to write a defense
of the drone strike that takes out Julian Assange.

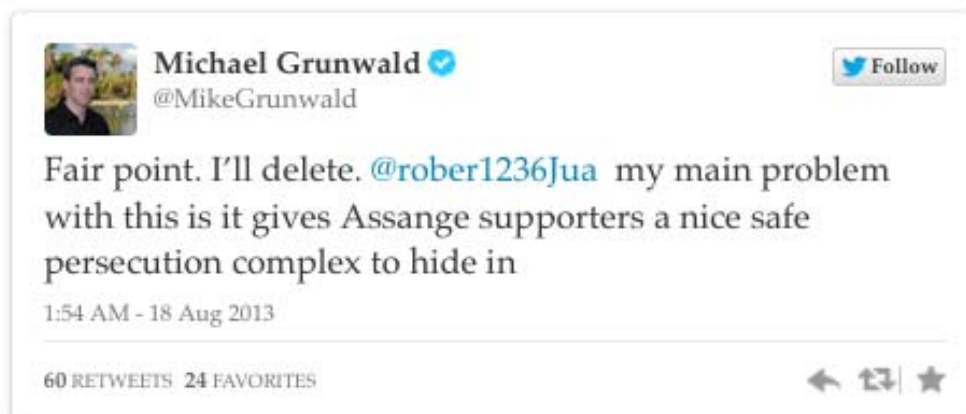
1:47 AM - 18 Aug 2013

30 RETWEETS 14 FAVORITES





Grunwald deleted his tweet after a follower argued that it would only encourage Assange supporters.



But that didn't stop the incredulous responses.





As the backlash against Grunwald's tweet kept coming, he retweeted some of the more aggressive responses on his account.



Shortly afterwards Grunwald apologized for the tweet, calling it "stupid."



The reporter had previously criticized the opposition to drone strikes. In March, Grunwald tweeted that he doesn't understand why people were concerned about the death of Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen, by drone strike in Yemen.



In April, Grunwald wrote a piece for TIME criticizing libertarians and defending the government's efforts to fight terrorism:

But while the “stand with Rand” worldview is quite consistent — against gun restrictions, traffic-light cameras, drone strikes, antidiscrimination laws, antipollution laws and other Big Brother intrusions into our private lives — it’s wrong. And most of us know it’s wrong, which is why we celebrate our first responders, our soldiers, our law enforcers. They’re from the government, and they’re here to help. We know our government is fallible, because it’s made up of people, but we still count on it to protect us from terrorists, from psychos with guns, from exploding factories. We also need it to protect us from floods and wildfires, from financial meltdowns and climate change. We can’t do that kind of thing ourselves.

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[Warning: This poorly written “analysis” contains several exaggerated and dubious assertions that are *highlighted in red*. --A.B.]

Klara Kops — It’s a story

Assange in Sweden
August 20, 2013

The following is an excerpt from the book ‘Assange in Sweden: The Police Investigation’. A portion of the proceeds from your purchase will go to the WikiLeaks Defence Fund. Thank you.

‘Klara Kops’ was an expression minted to describe the bungling efforts of the Swedish police and prosecution authority to handle the case of Julian Assange. It’s of course based on the famous ‘Keystone Kops’ from the days of silent movies.

The story of ‘Assange in Sweden’ is not so much a story of Assange as it’s a story of modern Sweden— the Sweden that superseded the ‘golden years’ of Tage Erlander and Olof Palme, when the US Republican Party gained a foothold by cultivating a young Fredrik Reinfeldt, when CIA buddy Carl Bildt was openly sending information to his friends in Langley who then, according to diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks, concocted the big ‘Russian submarine scare’ of the 1980s— all the while Bildt was taking the podium in the parliament and denouncing the sitting government for ‘going soft’ on the Russians— all in a concerted effort to push public opinion in the country to the right and into the waiting arms of the United States.

It's a story of a woman who'd published a 'revenge plan' to use when jilted by a lover— **a woman with mysterious ties to strange organisations.**

It's a story of how, on word of mouth alone, the prosecutor-on-duty at one of Stockholm's most trafficked police stations issued a warrant in absentia in a case where there still hadn't been any formal testimony, on the grounds that foreigners could skip the country— only for this same prosecutor to spill the beans to the tabloids, thereby undermining her own stated intentions.

It's a story of how this 'Klara Kops' police station, one of the busiest in the country, sitting atop the biggest train station in the country, with strict orders to make video recordings of all testimony in all cases of this nature, suddenly had no video equipment available, professedly had no audio equipment available either, and yet, using a 'conceptual format', took down the words of witnesses anyway, interpreting those words as they went on.

It's a story of how a few Swedish journalists decided to 'out' Julian Assange, despite clear rules of ethics against such willful **defamation**— possibly because they intuitively realised, from their editor-in-chief on down, that they'd stumbled onto the biggest scoop in their publishing history.

It's a story of how one of the country's premier advocates of 'politically correct' went on national television and **instructed the citizenry to not think about the puzzling case.**

It's a story of how one lawyer possibly saw a chance to make a career comeback, and petitioned to have a case that had been dropped reopened— something even the women making the accusations didn't know was possible.

It's a story of a country long famous for its equality between the sexes, **where equality has long since ceased to be an issue**, and where radical feminist conventions regularly end their meetings with chants about how they're going to dismember and hang all men.

It's a story of a country with a long and **unmatched history** of miscarriages and travesties of justice, created by a **flimsy judicial system where court judges most often have no education in the law whatsoever**, and by powerful media organisations intent only on increasing their readership, damn the torpedoes and the innocents.

It's a story of **a country completely out of control**, where a serial killer turned out to be no more than an institutionalised and drugged-out victim of **authorities who were the really crazy ones.**

It's a story of radical 'feminism' so out of control that clinics in the capital regularly issue 'rape certificates' based not on forensic science but on what the 'patients'— and above all the doctors— feel.

It's a story of a small **country where everyone knows everyone, and everyone knows how the game is really played**; so it's no surprise that most of the evils exposed never get legs, because those in power always know someone who can stop the stories from spreading (as in the above case of the fake 'rape certificates' where the husband of the doctor in question is the head legal counsel for the country's biggest news organisation).

It's a story ripe with the stench of collusion. A collusion shared by the United Kingdom and Australia, and against a man and his organisation that otherwise enjoy unparalleled international renown.

It's a story that would never have been told if Julian Assange hadn't returned to Sweden on Wednesday 11 August 2010.

The truth will out, the truth wins out. *[Perhaps, but not with sloppy diatribes like this. -- A.B.]*

Stockholm/London 19 February 2013

<http://assangeinswedenbook.com/>

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Hård kritik mot SVT:s "Min sanning"

"Som en spik i ögat" Nu riktas hård kritik mot SVT:s intervjuprogram "Min sanning". Anledningen är att man i tisdagens sändning hade förre arbetsmarknadsministern Sven-Otto Littorin som gäst.

Oskar Lindell
SVT
21 augusti 2013

Littorin avgick hastigt ur regeringen för tre år sedan efter anklagelser om sexköp. Dagens kritik kommer från den anonyma kvinna som anlagat Littorin för att ha köpt sex av henne.

I en artikel i Aftonbladet kritiserar den anonyma kvinnan Sveriges Television för att, på bästa sändningstid, låta Sven-Otto Littorin redogöra för sin syn på sexanklagelserna.

Anklagelserna om sexköp är något som Sven-Otto Littorin starkt tillbakavisar.

I artikeln i Aftonbladet skriver den anonyma kvinnan, som kallas för "Anna":
"Det känns som en spik i ögat när Littorin nu ska sätta sig och berätta sin osanning rakt in i de svenska hemmen på bästa sändningstid. Det är som att någon hånskrattar mig och alla andra i min situation rakt i ansiktet."

Carin Ahlqvist är redaktör för "Min sanning" och hon förstår att programmet kan ha varit jobbigt att se på för "Anna".

- Jag kan förstå att det känns tufft att sitta och lyssna på en person som man tycker ljuger.

Det verkar som det finns två sanningar. Hur resonerade ni när ni bestämde er för att ge så stort utrymme för ena parten?

- Min sanning är ju ett program där vi bjuder in en person. En gäst, en timme och ett samtal, säger Ahlqvist.

- Vi var intresserade av att höra Sven-Otto Littorins berättelse. Men den ska sedan ta spjörn mot kritiska och initierade frågor. Och det tycker jag att den fick.

Om "Anna" skulle vilja träda fram offentligt skulle hon få berätta sin sanning?

- Absolut. Det finns säkert forum i Sveriges Television där det skulle tas emot med öppna armar, säger Carin Ahlqvist. Om hon blir en av "Min sanning"s gäster framöver kan jag inte säga just nu.

Littorin har sedan avgången nekat till sexköpsanklagelserna. Och frågan är om "Min sanning" förde frågan längre.

- **Självfallet jobbade vi på att vi skulle få fram helt nya uppgifter men dit nådde inte vi. Han gav inte mer än det som redan har sagts, säger Mette Friberg, ansvarig utgivare på SVT, till Göteborgs-Posten.**

[Jämför detta med hur SVT och andra medier har behandlat Julian Assange. --A.B.]

"We Steal Secrets: The Story of Wikileaks"

Filmrecension Historien om Julian Assange och Wikileaks är spännande som "Mission: Impossible", tycker Jane Magnusson och avlossar en av veckans tre fyror.

SVT

21 augusti 2013

Oktober 1989. Rymdfärjan Galileo skall skjutas upp från Florida. Risker för radioaktivt nedfall är stor för omgivningen och folk protesterar vilt. När ingen verkar lyssna sker något konstigt. En helt ny grej, en så kallad "worm" börjar sprida sig på Nasas datorer. Den raderar filer och ställer till det för Galileo. Wormen heter WANK (Worms Against Nuclear Killers). Under WANK står det: "You talk of peace for all, and then prepare for war."

Sistnämnda mening är tagen ur en låttext av det australiensiska bandet Midnight Oil, och är lite av ett motto för Julian Assange. Det sägs att han var hjärnan bakom WANK-attacken, långt innan Wikileaks blev världsberömt.

Just här vid Galileo-uppskjutningen öppnar "We Steal Secrets". En ung och anarkistisk Julian Assange börjar bekämpa världens enligt honom mörka krafter med hjälp av tangentbord och dator. Han bygger långsamt upp Wikileaks, avslöjar korruption, skeva banker, miljöförstöring. Han beskrivs som en John Lennon-typ, en "trancesparencyradical", en småskalig räddare på många sätt.

Så sker attackerna den elfte september och allt tar skruv. De mindre hemligheterna som Wikileaks läckt ersätts med enorma läckor och Assange blir både ett hot för stora nationer och en hjälte för många maktlösa.

"We Steal Secrets" är spännande som "Mission: Impossible". Regissören Alex Gibney har talat med höjdare inom den amerikanska säkerhetspolitiken, och blandat dem med intervjuer med de isländska programmerare som var med och byggde upp Wikileaks [???].

Vi får följa Assange från den trassliga barndomen och hacker-tiden i Melbourne till hans husarrest på Ecuadors ambassad i London. Vi är med Assange när han gör sina största läckor, när han tar emot pressen som hjälte och flyr den i skam.

För dem som inte följt Assange är "We steal secrets" en redogörande historia över Assanges uppgång och fall. För dem som är insatta erbjuder Gibney också något nytt. Bland annat en intervju med en av **de sjukt utsatta kvinnorna** som anmälde Assange för sexuella trakasserier när han bodde i Sverige ett tag 2010. *[Nej, det var polisen/åklagaren som gjorde det. --A.B.]*

Jag kommer ihåg den tiden. Assange gled omkring i TV-huset i Stockholm. Det var som att stå bakom Mick Jagger i lunchkön. Han var inne på Konsum och handlade. Jag tänkte: Där står världens just nu viktigaste man och klämmer på tomaterna. Så kom våldtäktsanklagelserna och allt raserades. Från att vara sanningens kämpe slutade Assange svara på frågor, blev en kuf, och försvann ur rampljuset.

Regissören Alex Gibney nöjer sig dock inte med att berätta historien om den numera nedsolkade Assange. Han vill berätta om sanningsandan som brann i slutet av 2000-talets första decennium, och fokuserar därför sin historia till stor del på den amerikanska soldaten Bradley Manning— källan till Wikileaks största släpp.

Gibney vill i första hand slå fast att en liten människa kan göra enorm skillnad genom att bara skita i konsekvenserna för sig själv. Det krävs kanske som i Mannings fall en viss del depression och en känsla av att man inte har något att leva för, men ändå— det går att göra skillnad! *[Jämför med Mannings egen förklaring. --A.B.]*

Vi får även möta Adrian Lamo som angav Manning. Vi får följa deras mejlkonversationer och växande vänskap fram till det fruktansvärda sveket. Lamo ville också göra skillnad och Gibney visar tydligt hur fel denna vilja också kan slå.

Aftonbladet: 2013-08-22

MEST LÄST IDAG

**Wikileaks uppgång och fall**
► När dokumentärfilmaren Alex Gibney bestämde sig för att...

**Manning en moralens hjälte**
► 35 års fängelse blev straffet för Bradley Manning...

Wikileaks uppgång och fall

Nya dokumentären om Wikileaks avslöjas Julian Assange brister som ledare för scoopsajten.

När dokumentärfilmaren Alex Gibney bestämde sig för att sätta tändarna i berättelsen om Wikileaks uppgång och fall, tänkte han sig en film på David och Goliat-temat. Vem kunde lämpa sig bättre för det än Julian Assange, den komplicerade, rotlöse australiske hackern som över en natt blev superstjärna och förebild för miljoner yttrandefrihetskämpar över hela världen? Men, skriver Gibney i sina inspelningsanteckningar, ju mer efterforskningar han gjorde, desto svårare blev det att upprätthållabilden av Assange som hjälte.

Var Wikileaks grundare, det unga datageniet, i själva verket en narcissistisk och paranoid skitstövel? Och kunde han, Gibney, vara säker på att olika rykten som spreds om Assange inte bara var rökridåer, utlagda av Wikileaks mäktiga, politiska fiender?

När det gäller sexbrottsmisstankarna undviker Gibney skickligt att ta ställning för eller emot Assange. Han konstaterar bara att de åtalande kvinnorna verkar tillförlitliga, samtidigt som svenska myndigheters tajmning var misstänkt god. Australiens mest berömda "ageing student hobo turned rock star" har vägrat att från sitt gömställe ge några som helst intervjuer eller annan input till filmteamet, så därifrån fanns ingen hjälp att hämta.

Filmen WikiLeaks: We steal secrets— på svenska biografer från och med i morgon— är en bra illustration av regissörens vändor. Den är nämligen lika svår att genrebestämma som att förhålla sig moraliskt till. Gibney, som visat sin analytiska skärpa i flera prisbelönta dokumentärer, allt ifrån den amerikanska tortyren av fångar i filmen *Taxi to the dark side*, till förra årets uppgörelse med katolska kyrkan och dess pedofiler *Mea maxima culpa: Silence in the house of God*, mjuknar när det kommer till Wikileaks.

Kanske beror det på att han i grunden känner sympati för Wikileaks sak, även om han ogillar Assange? Eller på att källorna i det här fallet är så tvetydiga, för vad är sanning och vad är lögn?

Den som förväntar sig ett försvar för transparens och total frihet på nätet, kommer att bli besviken. *We steal secrets* handlar lika mycket om de katastrofala konsekvenserna av Assanges oförmåga att tillsammans med etablerade tidningar och nyhetsredaktioner redigera sitt brännheta stoff, som om amerikanska myndigheters och politiska lobbyorganisationers smutsiga försök att tysta oppositionen.

Fast en stor förlorare— och ett krossat människoöde— finns ändå i filmen, nämligen den amerikanska soldaten och Wikileaks-läckan Bradley Manning som i förra månaden, efter flera år i arrest under vidriga förhållanden, dömdes för spioneri. **Det var Mannings privata problem, hans ångest och sexuella identitetsgrubbel som drev honom att kontakta Wikileaks;** det var ensamheten och den emotionella utsattheten på den där armébasen i Irak som fick honom att börja chatta med Adrian Mole, den mentalt störde hacker som senare förrådde honom, troligtvis på grund av sina kontakter inom CIA.

När jag går ut från biografen är det den **hundlika blicken från Mannings** bedrövade ögon, snarare än **Julian Assanges arroganta leende som stannar på näthinnan.**

• *Ulrika Kärnborg*



"Assanges beteende har svartmålat Wikileaks"

Journalisterna utvärderar Den första biofilmen om Julian Assange och Wikileaks berättar om läckan som förändrade världen och hackern som fick äran. Men vilka avtryck har Wikileaks gjort?

Sindra Grahn
SVT
22 augusti 2013

Julian Assange ville ha en miljon dollar för att ställa upp på intervju med Alex Gibney, för dokumentären "We Steal Secrets: The Story of Wikileaks" [påstår Gibney --A.B.]. Det blev aldrig någon intervju med Assange. I stället fick filmaren nöja sig med andras material och intervjuer med nyckelfigurer.

Filmen berättar historien om Julian Assange, Bradley Manning och Wikileaks. Om hur Mannings läckta dokument kom att göra Assange till en yttrandefrihetshjälte och Wikileaks till det perfekta vapnet.

Klart är att det finns ett före och ett efter Wikileaks. Så här berättar två journalister som har följt Wikileaks, om organisationens avtryck.

- Generellt tänker jag att efter Wikileaks har medborgare i hela världen fått en annan syn på USA, framför allt. Det man trodde var mer demokratiskt har visat sig inte vara det. Man är mer skeptisk och kanske har mindre förtroende för myndigheter generellt, säger journalisten Sofia Mirjamsdotter.

- Wikileaks var en enorm framgång. Även medierna har fått upp ögonen för nya sätt att arbeta. Nu finns radioleaks och SVT har, ganska sent kan man tycka, inrättat en krypterad tjänst. Dagens Nyheter har också det. Många vill få den här typen av drömläcka. Snowden är den typen av drömläcka, säger journalisten Jesper Huor.

Men Edward Snowden har ju visat att man inte behöver gå genom Wikileaks. Innebär det att Wikileaks har spelat ut sin roll?

- Ja, i någon mån har Wikileaks gjort det. Wikileaks är inte längre den källa som folk kanske vänder sig till, svarar Jesper Huor.

Skildringen av Assange går från ung datahacker till världens frihetskämpe— men slutar i bilden av **en maktfullkomlig och paranoid man**.

- Det visar sig att när han själv granskas och ifrågasätts så är han inte lika mycket med på noterna. Han är inte transparent alls. Julian Assanges rättshaveristiska beteende har tyvärr svartmålat även Wikileaks, och gjort att man har tappat förtroendet för Wikileaks. Det är väldigt, väldigt synd, menar journalisten Sofia Mirjamsdotter.

SvD: 2013-08-22



Syftet med Wikileaks verkar vara egosmek

FILMSVEP **Helgens filmer får höga betyg.**

Konsekvensneutralitet är ett begrepp och en princip som skvalpar omkring överallt i den eviga diskussionen om utgivansansvar. Det är ett begrepp som klingar litet tjusigt, man kopplar det gärna till den grundlagsfästa yttrandefriheten. Tanken är att man som publicist publicerar de uppgifter man tror sig veta är sanna utan att ta hänsyn till de personer eller intressen som menar sig lida skada. Det som är sant ska ut i offentligheten oavsett vem och hur det drabbar. Allmänintresset övertrumfar särintresset.

Det kanske kan låta rimligt, men en fundamentalistisk konsekvensneutralitet hamnar förr eller senare i bryderier. När den lilla men slagkraftiga organisationen Wikileaks berättar för världen om hur storägare i Kaupthing Bank har berikat sig själva före kollapsen, är det få förutom de rika islänningarna själva som misstyycker. Men när samma organisation avser att läcka militära dokument som innebär att civila afghaner riskerar talibansk vedergällning av strängaste sort, vill Wikileaks samarbetspartner The Guardian dra i nödbromsen och rensa bort uppgifter som innebär akut fara för människoliv.

Julian Assange, grundare av och frontfigur för Wikileaks, har för sin del ingen förståelse för den ståndpunkten. Och inte bara det: **han menar att de namngivna privatpersonerna förtjänar att dö, eftersom de har samarbetat med USA**. Han vill skynda på den gemensamma, koordinerade publiceringen.

Det är inte något helt igenom sympatiskt porträtt av Assange som framträder i Alex Gibneys mångbottnade undersökning av fenomenet Wikileaks. **Assange tar sig själv rätten att ljuga i ett högre och ädlare syfte**, men har ingen förståelse för att det är med ungefär samma argument som USA och andra värnar om sina militära hemligheter.

Man befinner sig i Afghanistan med vad man själv anser vara gott uppsåt och vill ogärna bjuda fienden på favörer i onödan. **Han tycks ha svårt att resonera på en nivå ovanför enkla klichéer, och det övergripande syftet för hela verksamheten tycks alltmer ha blivit egosmek.**

Faktum är att Gibney, om han hade velat, även kunde ha framhållit den smålustiga motsägelsen i att Assange å ena sidan predikar total och konsekvensneutral öppenhet, och å andra sidan ondgör sig kraftfullt över att hans egna polisförhör i samband med de påstådda sexövergreppen i Stockholm läcker från Åklagarmyndigheten till Expressen (se Wikileaks egen hemsida). Det kan ofta vara knepigt att leva som man lär.

Men det centrala här är ju förvisso inte om Assange är en noga genomtänkt hedersknyffel eller ej. Det gäller även styckets andra huvudperson, Bradley Manning, som rimligen är historiens mest framgångsrika distributör av stulna hemligheter och som här framställs som grundligt vilse i existensens pannkaka men samtidigt uppriktigt bekymrad av det material han förfogade över och ren i sitt uppsåt att informera det amerikanska folket om det krig som förs i dess namn.

Nej, kärnan i den tankegång som tar form i Gibneys suggestiva pussel av intervjuer, arkivbilder och animationer är att relationen mellan öppenhet och hemlighet nu, i den digitala interaktivitetens tidevarv, går in i en ny fas med nya spelregler. Gränsdragningsproblematiken blir alltmer delikat och samtidigt alltmer hotfull. Öppenhet kan framstå som något gosigt, men den totala öppenhetens desperados kan ställa till med stor skada. Särskilt som de nu förfogar över nya och sofistikerade instrument och kanaler.

Internet gör det inte lättare att tänka.

• *Jan Söderqvist*

Positivt mottagande för Wikileaksfilm

*Hanna Lundquist
Journalisten
23 augusti, 2013*

I dag har filmen om Wikileaks, "We steal secrets", biopremiär i Sverige. Mottagandet är överlag positivt.

"En exemplarisk dokumentär i den undersökande journalistikens tradition: förmågan att bena ut en komplicerad historia utan pekpinnar eller på förhand bestämda slutsatser. Redovisningen av materialet talar sitt tydliga språk", skriver Sydsvenskan.

DN tycker att Alex Gibneys film är "ett stycke bra, gedigen journalistik" och Aftonbladet slår fast att "den som förväntar sig ett försvar för transparens och total frihet på nätet, kommer att bli besviken".

Flera recensenter tar upp det faktum att själva huvudpersonen, Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange, inte medverkar - eftersom han begärde en miljon dollar för en intervju.

Kommentar

Inlagt av Al Burke fre, 2013-08-23

Ja, Gibneys grovt missvisande film passar Sveriges Assange-fientliga journalister alldeles utmärkt. För ett annat perspektiv se prof. Robert Mannes detaljerade kritik på: <http://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2013/july/1372600800/robert-manne/we-steal-secrets-alex-gibney-wikileaks-julian-assange>

Och/eller "The Assassination of Julian Assange" av Jonathan Cook på: <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article35689.htm>

<http://www.journalisten.se/nyheter/positivt-mottagande-wikileaksfilm>

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Wiehe sjöng "En sång till modet" för Assange

Väljer sina tillfällen Den svenska musikern Mikael Wiehe stöttade Assange på avstånd från Malmöfestivalens scen.

SVT-Kultur

23 augusti 2013

Nyligen väckte sångaren Mikael Wiehe uppmärksamhet när han vägrade låta sin låt "En sång till modet" spelas på en minnesstund för Anna Lindh - eftersom han ansåg att hon var modig nog att stoppa utvisningen av två egyptier 2001.

Igår kväll framförde han låten på Malmöfestivalen, tillägnad bland andra Julian Assange - den sexbrottsanklagade grundaren av Wikileaks.

Julian Assange sitter just nu i exil på Ecuadors ambassad i London **för att undvika att bli förhörd av den svenska polisen.**

* * *

Subject: Rättelse behövs

Date: Sat, 24 Aug 2013

From: Al Burke <editor@nnn.se>

To: kulturnyheter-na-webb@svt.se

Redaktion

SVT-Kultur

I er artikel "Wiehe sjöng 'En sång till modet' för Assange"(23 aug.) konstateras det att "Julian Assange sitter just nu i exil på Ecuadors ambassad i London för att undvika att bli förhörd av den svenska polisen."

Detta är fel. Det som han vill undvika är utlämning till USA, och han har hela tiden varit villig att förhöras av svenska polisen/åklagare. I nuläget vore det rimligaste ett förhör via telekommunikationer eller på plats in London.

Bakgrunden förklaras i ett inlägg på SVT-Debatt på:

<http://debatt.svt.se/2013/07/12/assange-jobbar-vidare-trots-hetsjakten>

Lägg särskilt märke till följande avsnitt:

Två huvudteman i avfärdandet av Assanges uttalade skäl för att söka asyl är (a) att det är omöjligt för den svenska åklagaren att intervjua honom i London och (b) att den svenska regeringen inte kan garantera att han inte blir utlämnad till USA, därför att det är en juridisk angelägenhet som regeringen inte får blanda sig i.

Grunden för båda resonemangen rycktes undan i april i år av ingen mindre än en domare i Högsta domstolen. I ett tal i Australien konstaterade Stefan Lindskog nämligen att, förutsatt att det inte finns något rent juridiskt hinder mot utlämning, är det faktiskt regeringen som bestämmer. Dessutom sade han att "Åklagaren kan mycket väl åka till London för att intervjua Assange. Jag har inget svar på frågan om varför detta inte redan skett."

Det fordras således en rättelse till artikeln, helst med ursäkt till Julian Assange.

Med vänlig hälsning,
Al Burke

* * *

(Uppdatering)

Wiehe sjöng "En sång till modet" för Assange

SVT 23 augusti 2013

Uppdaterad 26 augusti 2013

Nyligen väckte sångaren Mikael Wiehe uppmärksamhet när han vägrade låta sin låt "En sång till modet" spelas på en minnesstund för Anna Lindh, eftersom han ansåg att hon inte var modig nog att stoppa utvisningen av två egyptier 2001.

Igår kväll framförde han låten på Malmöfestivalen, tillägnad bland andra Julian Assange - den sexbrottsanklagade grundaren av Wikileaks.

Julian Assange sitter just nu i exil på Ecuadors ambassad i London. **Vissa menar att han sitter där för att undvika att bli förhörd av den svenska polisen. Andra menar att han är öppen för förhör, så länge polisen tar sig till London.**

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Julian Assange hopes his jokey video will win him a Senate seat

Don't be fooled by the spoof mullet — Assange and his WikiLeaks party may do well in Australia's Senate elections next month

Jon Henley
The Guardian
27 August 2013

Perhaps understandably, reaction to Julian Assange's recent appearance in a spoof video filmed partly at the Ecuadorian embassy in London, where he has been holed up for more than a year, has focused mainly on the terrible blond mullet wig the WikiLeaks founder and free-speech warrior dons to lip-sync a rehash of the 1980s John Farnham soft-rock hit "You're the Voice" (sample lyrics: "We have the chance to turn the pages over./ We can write what we want to write./ We gotta make things leak/ so we can get much bolder ...")



But the video— which also features eye-wateringly crude caricatures of leading Australian politicians Tony Abbott, Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard— is part of the campaign for a perfectly serious Senate run by Assange's WikiLeaks party, which is fielding six candidates, including Assange, in Australia's 7 September federal elections. So what do they stand for, and how might they fare?

According to its website, the WikiLeaks party believes that "truthful, accurate and factual information are [sic] the foundations of life and democracy". Quite how that will translate into concrete policies on, for example, the economy, is harder to say; the party promises only that its positions will always be driven by its "core values and guided by our objectives: the free flow of information and transparency to achieve true accountability".

Assange, who has been granted asylum by Ecuador but refused safe passage by the UK government, which wants him extradited to Sweden to answer questions about alleged sexual assault, is running in Victoria. The party says he satisfies all relevant electoral criteria, and that if he is elected but unable to take up his seat— he fears that if he does go to Sweden he will end up in the US, facing espionage charges— the vacancy will be filled by a party nominee.

Some polls have suggested support for his party might be as high as 26%. Many doubt it is that high, but some also point out it doesn't have to be: **in the 2010 federal election, a Democratic Liberal party candidate ended up in the Senate with just 2.3% of the primary vote.** Assange could easily do better than that, prompting one commentator to observe that the WikiLeaks party "might well end up holding the balance of power" between a resurgent centre-right Coalition, Labor and the Greens. Perhaps we shouldn't be sniggering at Assange's hair-do.

Julian Assange told: stop using embassy to make fun of politicians

Ecuador's Rafael Correa sends letter to WikiLeaks founder asking him to cease ridiculing Australian political figures

*Kevin Rawlinson and agencies
The Guardian
30 August 2013*

Julian Assange has been told to stop using the Ecuadorean embassy in London to poke fun at Australian politicians as part of his Senate election bid, it has been reported.

The South American nation's president, Rafael Correa, chastised Assange after a video appeared online in which the WikiLeaks founder— along with Juice Rap News— ridiculed Tony Abbott, Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard.

"We have sent him a letter: he can campaign politically, but without making fun of Australian politicians. We are not going to allow that," said Correa, who is attending a South American summit in the Surinamese capital Paramaribo.

Assange appeared wearing a comedy wig and bandanna emblazoned with the Australian flag in the video. He also performed a cover version of John Farnham's You're the Voice.

He is one of six WikiLeaks party candidates running for election. The party's chances at the ballot box were hit when Assange's running mate in Victoria, Leslie Cannold, resigned. She was followed out of the door by six other members.

Tensions between Assange and his Ecuadorean hosts were heightened during the Snowden affair, with diplomats saying that they felt that the WikiLeaks founder was trying to steal the limelight. [*"It was reported" but not confirmed. --A.B.*]

According to Agence France-Presse, Correa said: "The rules of asylum in principle forbid meddling in the politics of the country that grants asylum. But as a matter of courtesy, we are not going to bar Julian Assange from exercising his right to be a candidate. Just so long as he doesn't make fun of Australian politicians or people."

"Klart att Reinfeldt lämnar ut Assange till USA"

*Höglandsnytt
2013-08-31*

Mikael Wiehe uppträdde på Eksjö stadsfest ikväll lördag och passade på att dela ut några politiska budskap mellan sångerna. Han hyllade Edward Snowden, Chelsea Manning och Julian Assange.

Mikael Wiehe sjöng bland annat om chilenske trubaduren och frihetskämpen Victor Jara som mördades av regimen på 1970-talet och Mikael Wiehe beklagade att hjältar dör men påminde också om att nya hjältar föds. De nya hjältarna är Edward Snowden, Chelsea (Bradley) Manning och Julian Assange, menar Mikael Wiehe.

"Om jag vore Julian Assange skulle jag absolut inte våga mig hit. Klart att Fredrik Reinfeldt lämnar ut honom till USA", sa Mikael Wiehe....

<http://www.hoglandsnytt.se/klart-att-reinfeldt-lamnar-ut-assange-till-usa>

WikiLeaks Launches Criminal Investigation ahead of Wednesday's Obama Visit to Sweden

WikiLeaks
2 September 2013

Tomorrow morning, 3 September 2013, WikiLeaks will file a criminal complaint in Sweden, ahead of the arrival of the US delegation. The complaint concerns the likely unlawful seizure of WikiLeaks property on 27 September 2010, following its publication of thousands of classified US intelligence documents on the war in Afghanistan. WikiLeaks' publisher Julian Assange said: "Swedish authorities have the opportunity to demonstrate that no one, including state officials, is above the law."

This is the first of four criminal complaints to be filed in different jurisdictions by WikiLeaks during the month of September against unlawful interference in its journalistic activities.

The complaint, to be filed with Swedish police at 10 am tomorrow morning, details a number of matters not previously made public and **which WikiLeaks decided to withhold until the conclusion of the court martial of PFC Chelsea Manning.**

The property seized included evidence of a war crime perpetrated by US forces in Afghanistan in which more than sixty women and children were killed, known as the Garani massacre. The filing follows the revelation of unlawful FBI and US intelligence activities against WikiLeaks in Europe that have been forced onto the public record through a Parliamentary inquiry in Iceland and the Manning court martial.

The 186-page affidavit now made public details ongoing and illegal attempts by US authorities to interfere with WikiLeaks' publishing and journalistic activities. Attacks such as those that WikiLeaks has endured have become a concerning trend, as exemplified by the recent abuse of the UK Terrorism Act to seize electronic devices and other materials belonging to those working on the Edward Snowden US mass surveillance revelations.

Julian Assange, WikiLeaks' publisher, said: "Now is the time for everyone to take a stand to put an end to Obama's war against national security journalism— at home and abroad. This filing, recent court victories, and our successful intervention in the case of Edward Snowden, represent the continuing reorientation of WikiLeaks from legal defence to legal attack."

Link to HTML version of Julian Assange's affidavit (minus appendix):
http://wikileaks.org/IMG/html/Affidavit_of_Julian_Assange.html

Present status

On 24 April 2013 WikiLeaks won its three-year battle against the unilateral, extra-judicial US financial services blockade of WikiLeaks donors, securing victory in the Supreme Court of Iceland.

On 18 June 2013 WikiLeaks lodged a compensation demand for US \$75 million against Valitor (formally, VISA Iceland).

On 30 June 2013 MasterCard pulled out of the financial blockade against WikiLeaks.

As of 2 September 2013, Julian Assange has been detained for 1,000 days (440 days in the Ecuadorian embassy of London, where he has political asylum; 550 days under house arrest; and 10 days in solitary confinement). He has not been charged in the UK or Sweden at any stage. For further information, see <http://justice4assange.com/extraditing-assange.html>

On 4 and 5 September 2013 Barack Obama will visit Sweden en route to the G20, having cancelled a planned Russia-US summit scheduled for these dates. The White House stated that the cancellation was partly as a result of Snowden's successful asylum bid.

On 5 September 2013 an unendorsed Hollywood movie about WikiLeaks by Dreamworks and distributed by Disney, "The Fifth Estate", will premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival. The film stars Benedict Cumberbatch (Sherlock, Star Trek: Into the Darkness) as Julian Assange. The film's general release is on 18 October.

On 7 September 2013 Julian Assange and six other WikiLeaks Party candidates are running for the Senate in the national Australian elections.

In early 2014 the United Kingdom will withdraw from the EU extradition agreement (EAW) that has kept Mr Assange detained without charge in the UK in relation to Sweden's preliminary investigation.

WikiLeaks continues to publish thousands of documents every week.

The US Department of Justice probe against WikiLeaks and its staff continues.

<http://wikileaks.org/Press-Release-WikiLeaks-Launches.html>

WikiLeaks Files Complaint in Sweden Against 'Unlawful Interference in Its Journalistic Activities'

*Kevin Gosztola
Firedog Lake
September 3, 2013*

WikiLeaks has alleged in a criminal complaint filed in Sweden that its operations as a media organization were unlawfully interfered with when it was subject to "physical surveillance by US military intelligence" at a conference in 2009. Furthermore, a suitcase containing three laptops with "WikiLeaks material, associated data and privileged communications" protected by attorney-client confidentiality laws was seized in 2010.

An affidavit by WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange, reports that on September 27, 2010, Assange “arrived at Stockholm’s Arlanda airport shortly after noon. **It was on this flight that my suitcase, laptops, privileged attorney-client communications and other important information belonging to WikiLeaks disappeared.**”

By that time, the “Collateral Murder” video had been released, Pfc. Bradley Manning, who now goes by the name of Chelsea Manning, had been arrested, the “Afghanistan War Logs” had been released. The State Department was aware WikiLeaks might be publishing US diplomatic cables soon and the United States government was escalating its investigation and targeting of WikiLeaks.

“When I arrived at Berlin Tegel airport,” Assange recounts, “I went directly to the designated luggage carousel. My luggage did not appear. I then immediately went to the airport luggage claim office. The claim office said there was no unclaimed luggage there and that no one else from my flight, a direct flight within the Schengen area, was missing their luggage. The office also told me that it was extremely unusual that luggage had disappeared from a direct SAS flight within the Schengen open border area between Stockholm Arlanda and Berlin Tegel.”

Assange had tried to use “counter-intelligence practices” to “reduce the chance of post-flight surveillance” by buying and exchanging his tickets immediately before the flight. However, after attempting to purchase the ticket he wanted, he was unable to get a seat on his “preferred flight and had to wait until a later flight.” He waited much longer than he normally would have given “security concerns.”

Multiple inquiries into what had happened were made. The missing luggage, based on a 12-hour policy in place, should have been prioritized. That did not happen. Assange adds, “My suitcase had simply disappeared from the system. The lack of response or resolution on the part of the authorities and handling companies compounded these unusual characteristics.”

“No explanation has been given to me, directly or indirectly, as to the whereabouts or the reason for the disappearance of the WikiLeaks equipment and data, despite my efforts and the efforts of those acting on my behalf to recover it,” he shares. “None of the entities involved, including the Swedish police, the airline SAS, the airports Arlanda and Tegel and related handling companies GlobeGround and Acciona, have offered an explanation, and in one case refused to communicate at all.”

Assange was scheduled to meet with journalists Stefania Maurizi of L’Espresso and Holger Stark and Marcel Rosenbach from Der Spiegel. The meeting with Maurizi was “arranged over open email, which meant that this correspondence” could have been intercepted.

“The intelligence services could have had ample time to prepare an operation through monitoring these communications, for example by trying to seize material which was going to be handed over,” Assange suggests. He notes the first contact was made by Stefania Maurizi on July 26, 2010 and he replied on August 7, “four days before flying to Stockholm.” The meeting date was confirmed for September 27 or 28 “over a month” in advance.

The alleged seizure of materials bears a similarity to the seizure of materials in the case of Guardian journalist Glenn Greenwald’s partner, David Miranda. Assange acknowledges this in the affidavit. British authorities intercepted electronic devices from Miranda, which they believed to contain documents on NSA and GCHQ

operations from NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden. They used a terrorism law to detain Miranda for just under nine hours, the maximum amount of time the government is allowed to detain a person without charging them with a crime.

The material Assange claims was seized included a copy of the Garani air strike video, which showed evidence of a “serious war crime” by US forces where somewhere between 80-140 civilians, including women and children, were massacred in Afghanistan.

Manning was charged with communicating this video to WikiLeaks without authorization but was acquitted of this offense.

In June 2010, Assange announced WikiLeaks would be releasing video showing what happened in the air strike. He later accused former WikiLeaks spokesman Daniel Domscheit-Berg of destroying a copy of the video after absconding with thousands of unpublished leaks that had been submitted to the organization for publication, which he apparently chose to delete in 2011. (As Assange writes in the complaint, “Other copies of this material have been rendered inaccessible to me by separate incidents that do not form part of this complaint.”)

Assange also expresses concern over being under physical surveillance at the annual Chaos Communication Congress meeting in December 2009. He suggests the “US military used the results of this surveillance of me to convict Bradley Manning of ‘Wanton Publication.’” Also, fully aware that WikiLeaks remains under investigation by the US Justice Department, which empaneled a grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia, he adds, “I understand by my lawyers that this testimony may also be used in the ongoing US Department of Justice action against myself and my publishing organization.”

Military prosecutors had Sgt. Matthew Hosburgh, who attended the meeting and produced an intelligence report on what he witnessed, testify during the trial of Pfc. Bradley Manning (who now goes by Chelsea Manning).

Hosburgh stated that Assange was trying to elicit support from the audience to get anyone listening to “leak any type of information, not only classified information but proprietary trade secrets, anything of that nature.” He also said the open Internet “allows for terrorist communication.”

The affidavit further alleges that Jeremie Zimmerman, an Internet freedom activist and friend of Assange, was subjected to an intelligence gathering operation by Hosburgh. Hosburgh wrote a report, “CCC Here Be Dragons Trip Report,” that was disclosed to WikiLeaks (possibly by Manning).

Material on laptops that went missing in September 2010 contained information on the alleged US intelligence operation.

The criminal complaint highlights the FBI operation against WikiLeaks that was illegally conducted in Iceland. It presents a timeline of the extent to which WikiLeaks was targeted by the US government throughout 2010.

The alleged seizure of WikiLeaks material was obviously known to WikiLeaks for some time, but, as the press release indicates, the media organization decided to withhold details of what it believed happened “until the conclusion of the court martial of PFC Chelsea Manning.”

This was the first of four complaints the organization intends to submit in various jurisdictions in September. A second one is expected to be publicized later today.

Assange has now been living in the Ecuador embassy for well over a year. He was granted asylum from Ecuador on August 16, 2012.

WikiLeaks Files Second Criminal Complaint in Germany

WikiLeaks
3 September 2013

This afternoon the Federal Prosecutor of Germany (Generalbundesanwalt beim Bundesgerichtshof) registered a complaint filed by WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange. This is the second of four jurisdictions where WikiLeaks is filing a criminal complaint during the month of September against unlawful interference in journalistic activities. The first complaint was filed this morning in Sweden ahead of Obama's state visit on 4 and 5 September as persons in the US delegation may have knowledge of the US multi-agency response to WikiLeaks.

The complaint concerns the monitoring of Julian Assange in Berlin in 2009 and the seizure of WikiLeaks property on 27 September 2010.

WikiLeaks decided to withhold matters contained in this complaint until the conclusion of the court martial of PFC Chelsea Manning.

The US military used the results of intelligence action against WikiLeaks in Germany in 2009 to facilitate its prosecution of PFC Manning for charges of aiding the enemy and wanton publication. Julian Assange said: "The results of unlawful US spying against WikiLeaks in Germany in 2009 has ultimately been used to help put political prisoner PFC Chelsea Manning in prison for 35 years."

"Chancellor Merkel must answer two simple questions: Did she authorise the use of US military bases to spy on journalists in Germany? And did she authorise the export of the results of this spying to the United States prosecution of alleged WikiLeaks source Chelsea Manning?"

The property seized on the flight from Sweden to Berlin Tegel airport included evidence of a war crime perpetrated by US forces in Afghanistan in which more than sixty women and children were killed, known as the Garani massacre. The property seized also contained a report of the military intelligence monitoring in Berlin in 2009.

The actions that are the subject of this complaint occurred in the context of the publication of thousands of classified US intelligence documents in 2010. The unlawful FBI and US intelligence activities against WikiLeaks in Europe since 2009 have been forced onto the public record this year through a Parliamentary inquiry in Iceland and the Manning court martial.

The 186-page affidavit now made public details ongoing and illegal attempts by US authorities to interfere with WikiLeaks' publishing and journalistic activities. Attacks

such as those that WikiLeaks has endured have become a concerning trend, as exemplified by the recent abuse of the UK Terrorism Act to seize electronic devices and other materials belonging to those working on the Edward Snowden US mass surveillance revelations.

Julian Assange, WikiLeaks' publisher, said: "Now is the time for everyone to take a stand to put an end to Obama's war against national security journalism – at home and abroad. This filing, recent court victories, and our successful intervention in the case of Edward Snowden, represent the continuing reorientation of WikiLeaks from legal defence to legal attack."

Supporting documents at: <http://wikileaks.org/WikiLeaks-Files-Second-Criminal.html>

'The Fifth Estate' director Bill Condon says he found himself 'appalled' by WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange

Bob Thompson
Postmedia News
2013-09-04

Filmmaker Bill Condon knows a challenge when he's facing one. After all, he boldly agreed to direct the final film chapters of the hugely popular The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn — Part 1 and 2.

So, when he was presented with the opportunity to pull together The Fifth Estate, a movie biopic of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, he thought, "Why not?"

On more than a few occasions during filming last winter, and then editing this summer, he wondered, "Why me?"

"It was a constant puzzle to figure out how to tell the story and get across all the information but still keep it exciting and entertaining," said Condon after pulling together the finishing touches on the movie recently.

The director's proud to say he accomplished his goals with the film, which has its world premiere as the opening night Gala at the 38th annual Toronto International Film Festival on Sept. 5.

In the film, British actor Benedict Cumberbatch plays Assange who is depicted as an obsessive whistle blower, always on the move while compulsively editing WikiLeaks, the non-profit online service which posts classified government and corporate documents.

When the Australian meets up with a politically like-minded [???] Daniel Domscheit-Berg (Daniel Bruhl) in Germany, they become partners [*says Domscheit-Berg, but not WikiLeaks insiders --A.B.*] in the controversial digital service established by the former teen hacker in 2006.

It's only when Assange posts unedited secret reports from the Afghanistan war a few years later that their friendship is tested.

Co-starring is David Thewlis, who plays a British reporter caught in the middle of the Afghan controversy. Peter Capaldi (the new Dr. Who) plays his editor trying to make some difficult decisions about the WikiLeaks material, which could put lives in jeopardy if published unedited.

Laura Linney, Stanley Tucci and Anthony Mackie portray U. S. operatives tracking the Afghan implications if the uncensored information is made public by Assange.

"I was trying to offer a backstage look at events that most people already know about," said Condon, who worked closely with screenwriter Josh Singer. "There are many complicated points of view, so it was very tricky in that way."

A prime theme in *The Fifth Estate* "is the privacy-versus-transparency issue in the Internet age." But it is the Assange profile that drives the movie's narrative.

"The more I found out about Assange, the more my opinion changed," Condon said. "Just when you pin him down, and you are on his side, you find out something else and **you are appalled by what he's done. I hope that's reflected in the movie.**"

Obviously, the Assange casting was critical for artistic and commercial considerations. However, the director maintained that he decided on his lead for more reasons than hiring an actor who is on the rise after **Cumberbatch's high profile role as the villain Khan in last spring's *Star Trek Into Darkness*.**

And while Cumberbatch wore an assortment of white wigs, contacts and false teeth to look like Assange, the object of the exercise was not to do an impersonation. *[Then why the "white wigs, contacts and false teeth to look like Assange"? --A.B.]*

"It didn't take much imagination to hire him," said the director. "Benedict is a brilliant actor and I knew he would capture the supreme intelligence, strangeness and charisma of Assange."

Just as critical, noted the filmmaker, was the performance of German actor Bruhl as the more level-headed Domscheit-Berg. "His performance had to be real as the audience's way into the story — the audience sees Assange through his character's eyes."

Certainly, Assange has been critical of the Condon film, but only after reading an early draft of the script. It was partially based on Domscheit-Berg's 2011 book, *Inside WikiLeaks: My Time with Julian Assange at The World's Most Dangerous Website* and *WikiLeaks: Inside Julian Assange's War on Secrecy* by British journalists David Leigh and Luke Harding.

"Those are two of the books he disapproves of," said Condon of Assange. "And I have to say [Assange] is extraordinary, but one of his less attractive qualities is that he doesn't take criticism very well." *[That may depend on the nature and validity of the criticism. He objects to outright lies, for example. --A.B.]*

Whether Assange will ever screen *The Fifth Estate* is difficult to say, as he is currently taking refuge at the Ecuadorean Embassy in London to avoid extradition to Sweden where he faces sex assault accusations.

In the meantime, Condon said he believes Assange might be surprised by the film's honourable intentions. "I could be wrong, but I think if he watched the film alone, he might be surprised," Condon said. "He might not hate it as much as he thinks he should."

http://arts.nationalpost.com/2013/09/04/the-fifth-estate-director-bill-condon-says-he-found-himself-appalled-by-wikileaks-founder-julian-assange/?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter

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Here are the 5 Most Stark Places Where 'The Fifth Estate' Blurs the Facts about Wikileaks

*Bryce J. Renninger
Indie Wire
September 6, 2013*

The team behind Bill Condon's "The Fifth Estate" has been very clear that they do not want their own opinions on Wikileaks founder Julian Assange (played by Benedict Cumberbatch) or Wikileaks defector Daniel Domscheit-Berg (played by Daniel Brühl) known.

In a panel centering on "Fifth Estate" producers Participant Media, Dreamworks CEO Stacey Snider said that the fact that Wikileaks' fate was still developing (with Assange still in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, having sought asylum there) meant that the filmmakers needed to be balanced in their presentation of the situation. Introducing the film last night, **director Bill Condon emphasized the evenhandedness of the film's portrayal of particularly Assange.**

Talking to an industry audience, Snider fixed on the way the film used fictionalization to do the work of balancing out perspectives on the film's lead characters.

In truth, what happens is that the film features so many story lines and so many perspectives that the viewer is disoriented and doesn't have much to go on in evaluating what really happened.

The idea that their ambiguity in this fictionalization leads to balance results in facts being obscured in the service of giving everyone a fair shake. In a line that is replicated in a recreated interview in the film, **Assange says of "The Fifth Estate," "[It's] based on the two worst books" about Wikileaks.**

But still the film changes (or simplifies) more than its source material does. One glaring omission from the film is that it glosses over positive accomplishments that resulted from information being leaked by the organization (See, for instance, Greg Mitchell's list of things learned from the Private Manning leaks). Here's a list of five aspects of the film that obscured the truth behind Wikileaks:

There are two title cards at the end of the film implying that while Wikileaks' media partners (The New York Times, Der Spiegel, and The Guardian) published redacted documents from the Afghan (and Iraq) War Logs and the State Department cables. **Then, the film implies that the leaks were eventually released unredacted.**

The situation is complicated. According to Wikileaks, the Afghan War Logs were not released in full at first. As Glenn Greenwald reported when he was at Salon, the **Pentagon refused to cooperate with Wikileaks' requests for help with redacting 15,000 documents held back from the initial release.**

As for the unredacted State Department cables, various fingers have been pointed over who actually released the information needed for the unredacted documents to be released to the public. BoingBoing's Rob Beschizza covers the finger-pointing over the incident, with Wikileaks saying that The Guardian editor David Leigh revealed a password to a torrent file that held the unredacted cables. *[Leigh eventually admitted this. --A.B.]* Writing for the Guardian, James Ball, a journalist formerly associated with Wikileaks who is also interviewed in Alex Gibney's Wikileaks doc "We Steal Secrets," blamed (be patient, this is confusing) a number of leaks related to that password on the WikiLeaks Twitter feed, which cited a member of the team behind OpenLeaks (this is the site that Domscheit-Berg creates after leaving Wikileaks *[He said he would, but did not. --A.B.]*).

The film presents a State Department official under Hillary Clinton who fears her long-term Libyan informant, who had access to the Gaddafi government, will be targeted once the leaks are made public. **This is a fabrication that the film created** to make real the potential that many Wikileaks critics have made, saying that Wikileaks made no effort to minimize the harm the leaks could have and that it is possible the leaks could put people mentioned in them in danger.

The film does not treat Assange as if the US government is investigating him. There was potentially an allusion of this in Snider's response on the Participant Panel, and Cumberbatch made a comment at the film's press conference, saying of his opinion of Assange's current situation "It's very complicated, and I'm not a legal activist. What I'd like to see is the man able to carry on, able to do his work as the founder of Wikileaks. Beyond that, due process has to take place in whatever shape or form."

The film presents the sexual crimes that Assange is supposedly in hiding from as the only real threat to him by the world's criminal justice systems. This is obviously a contentious assumption, especially as we have seen the prosecution of Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden's asylum-seeking.

The film portrays Assange as a transparency absolutist, wanting to release all documents, unedited. In an interview with a Bulgarian investigative journalism site, Assange said, "I believe in the right to communicate and the inviolability of history, **privacy for the weak and transparency for the powerful.**"

There's a device in the film where Assange repeatedly explains his white hair by pointing out all of the parts of his life that stress him out. At the end of the film, Domscheit-Berg reveals that he knows Assange, influenced by a cultish boyfriend his mother had, dyes his hair white. **Cute, and it allows for a line along the lines of "Everyone has their secrets," but there's no mention of this accusation in the source material.**

Julian Assange happy with WikiLeaks Party's performance

ABC (Australia)
8 Sept. 2013

Julian Assange tells Barbara Miller he is pleased with his party's performance at the election and confirmed the WikiLeaks Party would again contest a Senate seat.

Video: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-09-08/julian-assange-happy-with-wikileaks-party-s-performance/4944396>

Swedish Police Open Investigation into Seizure of War Crime Evidence

WikiLeaks
6 September 2013

Swedish police have opened a formal preliminary investigation into the seizure of WikiLeaks property on 27 September 2010, which contained evidence of a war crime. Julian Assange filed a criminal complaint at Arlanda police on 3 September 2013 via his lawyer Per E. Samuelson.

Julian Assange said: "The Swedish police has decided to open an investigation. I hope this investigation is given the independence to go wherever it needs to, and no official is considered above the law. The police should be supported in their investigation. The WikiLeaks material that was seized contained evidence of a US war crime committed as part of the Afghan military campaign."

The criminal complaint is opened under case number 0201 K 268906-13.

The Man Who Came to Dinner

Julian Assange hasn't set foot outside Ecuador's London embassy in more than a year—avoiding extradition to Sweden, where he faces allegations of sexual assault. But physical confinement seems only to enhance his reach. The WikiLeaks founder has video-addressed the U.N., launched a Senate campaign in absentia in his native Australia, entertained Lady Gaga, and played a key role in the case of N.S.A. leaker Edward Snowden. As several movies depict aspects of Assange's story, Sarah Ellison focuses on the center of his web.

Sarah Ellison
Vanity Fair
October 2013

I. Dead End

Every afternoon, at four o'clock, a small group of demonstrators gathers outside 3 Hans Crescent, in London's Knightsbridge district, to protest the confinement of a man inside the embassy at that address. The man hasn't set foot beyond the embassy since June 19, 2012, the day he walked through its doors to avoid extradition from Britain to another country, where he is facing allegations that, he contends, are merely a first step in his eventual extradition to the United States.

The man is Julian Assange, the 42-year-old Australian who is best known as the founder (in 2006) and public face of WikiLeaks, the nonprofit Web site that publishes previously secret material. In April, the organization released its largest trove to date, a database of approximately 1.7 million declassified diplomatic records from the years 1973 to 1976 that WikiLeaks refers to as “the Kissinger Cables.”

In 2010, in partnership with The Guardian, Der Spiegel, The New York Times, and others, WikiLeaks began releasing more than 450,000 military documents relating to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan along with 250,000 U.S. diplomatic cables. The documents had been provided by Bradley Manning, an army private stationed in Iraq, who, when tried in military court, was found not guilty of “aiding the enemy” but guilty of espionage, theft, and computer fraud.

Despite Manning’s statement that he had first tried to get his information to both The Washington Post and The New York Times, the prosecution argued that it was “obvious that Manning pulled as much information as possible to please Julian Assange,” and said that Assange “had found the right insider” in Manning. WikiLeaks is under investigation by the Justice Department, and there are reports that a sealed indictment exists for Assange himself.

In the meantime, for the past year, he has been living in a small room— reportedly 15 feet by 13 feet— at the Ecuadoran Embassy, largely unseen by the public. He has most recently surfaced as a prominent adviser to Edward Snowden, a former “infrastructure analyst” at National Security Agency contractor Booz Allen Hamilton, who last June leaked details about top-secret U.S. surveillance programs to The Guardian and The Washington Post.

Assange’s living space, a former embassy office, is located on a ground-floor corner overlooking a small dead-end street. His window sits above one of the hundreds of thousands of security cameras that blanket London, and when I visited the embassy in June, two Metropolitan Police vans were parked just outside. **WikiLeaks says the building is watched by about a dozen British police officers at any one time.** According to Scotland Yard, the authorities have so far spent \$6 million to keep Assange under a watchful eye (and to keep him in place at the embassy).

Early on, officials from Britain’s Foreign Office were threatening to remove Assange from the embassy against his will. **In his first two months there, the Ecuadoran consul, Fidel Narváez, slept at the embassy to serve as a diplomatic presence at all times and thereby “protect” Assange** from the aggressive police attention. Narváez told *The Prisma*, a London-based newspaper published in both Spanish and English, that he got to know Assange well during that time. “It’s certainly true that we talked a lot over those months, especially at times when we were alone, at night,” Narváez said.

In July, Ecuadoran intelligence found a microphone hidden in the office of the ambassador, Ana Albán. The intelligence officials were doing a routine search in preparation for a visit from the country’s foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, who said that the device appeared to have been planted by a private investigation company, the Surveillance Group, Ltd., adding that the bugging represented “a loss of ethics at the international level in relations between governments.” The company has denied involvement.

Assange took refuge at the embassy in June 2012, shortly after he lost his bid in the British courts to prevent extradition to Sweden, where he is sought for questioning in relation to the alleged sexual assault of two women. (He has yet to be charged with a crime.) At first, Assange slept on an inflatable mattress on the floor that the ambassador brought from her own apartment nearby. Assange found that the noise from the street outside his window disturbed his sleep. After exploring the embassy for a quiet room, he settled on the women's bathroom, where the embassy staff reluctantly removed the toilet so he could sleep there. He has a lamp that mimics natural light, to enhance his psychological well-being, and he jogs every day on a treadmill, a gift from the film director Ken Loach.

The embassy has installed a shower for Assange's use. There is a fireplace with a Victorian white mantel in his room, and a small round table of blond wood, on which Assange keeps his computer. Several shelves line the walls. Assange eats a combination of take-out food—he keeps the restaurants from which he orders secret, for fear his food might be poisoned—and simple Ecuadoran dishes prepared by the embassy staff. He is able to receive visitors, including Sarah Harrison, the 31-year-old WikiLeaks researcher who met up with Edward Snowden in Hong Kong, where Snowden initially hid from the American authorities, and helped deliver to him a temporary Ecuadoran travel document that Assange and Fidel Narváez had reportedly secured.

The Ecuadoran Embassy itself is modest—a suite of 10 rooms on a single floor of a red-brick Victorian pile, with no bedrooms and no facilities except a small kitchenette. For atmospherics, imagine the offices of a private upscale medical practice that for some reason is partial to flags of yellow, red, and blue. Assange's diplomatic immunity does not extend to the lobby of the building, which is shared with the Colombian Embassy and some 15 well-appointed private apartments upstairs. The entrance to the Men's Fragrance department at Harrods department store is just half a block away. The door to the embassy is thick black metal and opens immediately onto a full-body metal detector. A portrait of the Ecuadoran president, Rafael Correa, hangs on the walls, along with paintings of tropical birds. The government of Ecuador has stated that Assange is welcome to stay in its London embassy for "centuries."

Last year, on July 3, the day he turned 41, Assange sent 12 pieces of birthday cake to the 12 protesters standing outside the embassy. On his birthday this year, people outside carried a sign noting that the number 42, in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, is "the answer to Life, the Universe and Everything." On ordinary days, protesters carry small signs with photos of Assange, his mouth taped shut by an American flag, and bearing slogans such as "Don't Shoot the Messenger." From time to time Assange appears in vaguely papal fashion at the front window, silver-haired and pale, and waves. He gives the occasional press conference from a small balcony. He recently showed up for an interview with Agence France-Presse wearing a coat and tie but no shoes, a gesture to underscore the fact that he has little need for them.

Even before the Snowden affair brought him back into the limelight, Assange had been busy. **During his year of confinement at the embassy, he has released a vast cache of documents, written a book, addressed the U.N., founded a political party in Australia and launched a bid for a Senate seat there, entertained socialites and celebrities, maintained contact with leakers and whistle-blowers all over the world, and worked behind the scenes to influence depictions of him that are now hitting movie screens** (the most high-profile being a DreamWorks production starring Benedict Cumberbatch).

As for the Snowden case, Assange and WikiLeaks have served, in effect, as Snowden's travel agents, publicists, and envoys; **it is still not clear how far back the Snowden connection goes, or precisely how it originated**, though the filmmaker Laura Poitras likely played the key role.

Assange cannot move from his quarters, but he is either at his computer or in conference, working in an impressive number of spheres. "He is like any other C.E.O.—plagued by constant meetings," WikiLeaks told me. He employs sophisticated encryption software, which anyone wishing to make contact with him or his circle is encouraged to use. To gain a sense of his life and work, during the past months I have spoken to Assange's lawyers and to many longtime or former friends, supporters, and professional associates. (Some have requested anonymity.) Daniel Ellsberg, the former U.S. military analyst who brought the Pentagon Papers to light, has met with Assange and speaks with personal knowledge about the lonely life of a leaker and whistle-blower. "We are exiles and émigrés," he told me.

But the fact that Assange has had to take himself physically out of circulation has had the effect, oddly, of keeping him more purely at the center of things than he was before. His legal perils have not receded, but his state of diplomatic limbo means that he is no longer being hauled out of black vans and in front of screaming reporters and whirring cameras. The U.S. government has tried to decapitate his organization, which has only made him a martyr. No one is talking, as they were when he was free to mingle with the outside world, about his thin skin, his argumentative nature, his paranoia, his self-absorption, his poor personal hygiene, his habit of using his laptop when dining in company, or his failure to flush the toilet. [*Unfortunately, many still are talking about such things.* --A.B.]

"If anything, I think he's stronger and more sophisticated than he used to be, and so is the organization," Jennifer Robinson, an Australian human-rights lawyer best known for her work defending Assange in London, told me. **"They've weathered three years of intense pressure and all forms of legal and political attacks, and they are still here and still publishing and still making headlines."** Today, Assange is alone and unbothered, but not isolated—the unquiet center of a web whose vibrations he can both detect and influence.

II. Work, Work, Work

Recently, on the occasion of a WikiLeaks-hosted conference call to mark his one-year anniversary in the embassy, Assange was asked by a reporter whether his ability to work had been hindered by his confinement. Assange said that **of course confinement made some things more difficult, but "that is contrasted by my complete inability to do anything else but work."**

And work he has. The physical Assange may be restricted to a few hundred square feet of real estate, but his avatar and his organization remain actively engaged with the world. It has been a very busy year. In September 2012, Assange addressed the United Nations via satellite, urging the U.S. to end what he calls its persecution of Bradley Manning and WikiLeaks. In November, he released a book, *Cypherpunks: Freedom and the Future of the Internet*, based on a lengthy conversation between himself and several Internet activists from around the world who, like Assange, consider themselves part

of the cypherpunk movement. (The movement grew out of hacker culture and advocates using strong encryption codes to ward off government surveillance; it has promoted civil disobedience to advance the cause of privacy.)

Cypherpunks opens with characteristic understatement: "This book is not a manifesto," Assange writes. "There is not time for that. This book is a warning." He and his three collaborators— Jacob Appelbaum, a vocal supporter of WikiLeaks; Andy Müller-Maguhn, a member of the hacker association Chaos Computer Club, in Berlin; and Jérémie Zimmermann, the spokesperson for and co-founder of the Paris-based La Quadrature du Net, a French Internet-advocacy group—discuss the importance of keeping the Internet free from government intrusion. **The book depicts Facebook and Google as part of "the greatest surveillance machine that ever existed" and describes a world spiraling toward a "new transnational dystopia."**

Assange has been meeting regularly with other activists and whistle-blowers. In December 2012, at Appelbaum's invitation, Thomas Drake, a former senior official at the N.S.A. who had been prosecuted for allegedly mishandling government documents (all felony charges were dropped; he pleaded out to the misdemeanor of "exceeding authorized use of a government computer"), and his attorney, Jesselyn Radack, of the Government Accountability Project, flew to Hamburg to appear at the Chaos Communication Congress, the annual meeting of the international hacker community. On the way, Radack and Drake took advantage of a layover in London to meet with Assange, who gave them tea at the embassy on the day after Christmas.

Radack had been initially skeptical about Assange, but over time, "whenever he would give a speech, he would always mention my clients," Radack told me, "and this is counter to the government meme that Julian is only about Julian." Radack came away from the meeting with a firsthand sense of the fishbowl claustrophobia that constitutes Assange's current life. At one point Radack went to use the restroom, and Assange deflected her. "He said, 'Don't go in there, because people can see you.' And, sure enough, I looked out the window and they could see inside from various angles. So he took me to an internal bathroom."

When Drake returned to London a month later, Assange hosted a potluck dinner for him. Drake, a registered Republican and an air-force and navy veteran, says that the government's prosecution of him "shredded my life" and that he feels "extraordinary affinity" for Assange. It should be noted that WikiLeaks itself is not a whistle-blower—it is a publisher—but because of its chosen subject matter, it has become the subject of one of the U.S. government's largest investigations ever of a publisher and its source. WikiLeaks no longer accepts new submissions on its site but says it works through "private networks." It adds, "N.S.A. mass spying changes the game for public online submissions of sensitive disclosures."

In July 2013, Assange formally launched his candidacy, *in absentia*, for a Senate seat in his home country, Australia. Speaking by videolink from his quarters in the embassy, Assange addressed supporters gathered in Melbourne's Fitzroy Library. He appeared in a white shirt and maroon tie against the backdrop of a white screen displaying the WikiLeaks logo: a cross between an hourglass and a lava lamp, with a globe on the top dripping into an unformed sphere at the bottom. Assange outlined the WikiLeaks Party's principal policies— transparency, accountability, and justice— and said that, if he is elected and can't make it to Australia to take his seat, another member of the party could replace him.

The secretary of the WikiLeaks Party is his biological father, John Shipton, who raises funds and recruits volunteers. Shipton has visited Assange at the Ecuadoran Embassy, and indeed spent Christmas Day with him there last year. The WikiLeaks Party is headquartered in Melbourne in a 40,000-square-foot building called Kindness House, where the environmental activist group Greenpeace also maintains an office. The party, which claims 2,000 members, has announced a platform that includes calling for greater transparency in Parliament, greater restrictions on the country's security agencies, and greater protection for whistleblowers. It is fielding a total of seven senatorial candidates in the states of New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia. They are accepting donations by credit card, PayPal, and Bitcoin, the digital currency.

WikiLeaks candidates have shown strong polling support among younger voters, and its chances are helped by the turmoil in Australian politics. The new prime minister, Kevin Rudd, is far less hostile to Assange than his predecessor (and rival), Julia Gillard, had been. (Several of the WikiLeaks cables showed Gillard plotting against Rudd, which proved deeply embarrassing to her.) An election in Australia is scheduled for September 7.

Even as he announced the formation of the WikiLeaks Party, in April, Assange was readying the release of another cache of government documents—this despite a massive drop-off in donations received by WikiLeaks in recent years, owing largely to a blockade by credit-card companies such as Visa and MasterCard, which stopped processing payments to WikiLeaks in 2010. (In July, following a court order in Europe, the companies quietly started processing payments again.) Critics say the falloff in donations coincided with the beginning of Assange's legal troubles in Sweden, after which WikiLeaks supporters could not be sure if their money was going to WikiLeaks or to Assange's lawyers.

The government documents published last April, the so-called Kissinger Cables, had been previously declassified and released by the American government, but **WikiLeaks for the first time made them easily searchable—and, the organization said, by putting them out independently ensured that they could never be reclassified**, as the George W. Bush administration had done with 55,000 U.S. National Archives document pages. One cable from 1975 reveals Secretary of State Henry Kissinger explaining to Turkish officials and the U.S. ambassador to Turkey how to circumvent a congressional arms embargo. According to the cable, Kissinger observes, "I used to say at meetings, 'The illegal we do immediately; the unconstitutional takes a little longer.' [laughter] But since the Freedom of Information Act, I'm afraid to say things like that."

Meanwhile, Assange and the actor Benedict Cumberbatch were e-mailing about the upcoming movie *The Fifth Estate*, which depicts the early years of WikiLeaks and also Assange's falling-out with his former colleague Daniel Domscheit-Berg. The film, directed by Bill Condon (*Gods and Monsters*, *Dreamgirls*) and due out in October, is based on two books: one written by WikiLeaks defector Domscheit-Berg, titled *Inside WikiLeaks*, and another by Guardian investigative journalists David Leigh and Luke Harding, titled *WikiLeaks: Inside Julian Assange's War on Secrecy*.

Assange was certain that the depiction of him in the movie would be damning, given its source material. (For instance, Leigh and Harding allege that, initially, Assange refused to redact the names of Afghan informants from the secret American documents he was releasing, saying that the informants would "deserve it" if they were killed. Assange has vehemently denied this charge.)

At one point, Assange pre-emptively called *The Fifth Estate* “a massive propaganda attack.” Assange contacted Cumberbatch late last year in the hope that he might persuade the actor to withdraw from the project. That did not happen. Cumberbatch had wished to meet with Assange in person, in order to inform his portrayal, but Assange refused: “He didn’t want to condone the film because he thought— hopefully erroneously when he sees the end product— that the project would castigate him and portray a negative side of his enterprise,” Cumberbatch told the *Telegraph*. “He didn’t want to meet me because he feels the source materials we’ve based the movie on were poisonous to his account of the events. When he sees it I hope he feels that it’s more balanced. I think he will. I hope he will.”

The Fifth Estate is not the only movie project Assange has had on his mind. There is also the documentary *We Steal Secrets*, by Alex Gibney, which Assange disliked before he even saw it, starting with its name. “An unethical and biased title in the context of pending criminal trials,” WikiLeaks tweeted in January when the film was screened at Sundance.

We Steal Secrets ultimately paints a dark portrait of Assange; in essence, as a Mother Jones writer succinctly put it, the movie is about “what happens when an admirable cause is headed by a thin-skinned, combative prick.” Gibney goes into the sexual-assault allegations against Assange and also the staff defections from WikiLeaks. He also notes Assange’s refusal to be interviewed for the documentary, and states that Assange told him that “the market rate for an interview with him was \$1 million.” (WikiLeaks has released an annotated script of the film, claiming it to be full of inaccuracies.)

Although he did not cooperate with Gibney, Assange granted an interview for a documentary made by Tarquin Ramsay, the 17-year-old grandson of Gavin MacFadyen, who runs London’s Centre for Investigative Journalism. Assange lived for a short time with MacFadyen and his wife, Susan Benn, at their apartment in Pimlico when he held his first meetings in London with editors of *The Guardian*, back in 2010. “Snowden and all the others came through a door that had been pried open” by WikiLeaks, MacFadyen says today. He and his wife remain some of Assange’s most steadfast supporters. Benn refers to herself, only half joking, as a “WikiLeaks mother.” **MacFadyen says the impression of Assange as difficult and an atrocious houseguest is wrong. “He played with our grandchildren and they loved him,” MacFadyen told me.**

Then there is a forthcoming documentary by the independent filmmaker, Academy Award nominee, and MacArthur “genius” Laura Poitras, who has been at the heart of the Snowden affair from the outset. The film will deal broadly with government surveillance in the aftermath of 9/11, and Poitras has spent many hours interviewing Assange. On April 8, 2012, Glenn Greenwald, a columnist and lawyer who was writing for *Salon*, wrote that Poitras had been repeatedly detained at the border when returning to the U.S.

In August 2012, *The New York Times* posted an eight-and-a-half-minute video by Poitras— adapted from the film’s footage— on its Web site. The video, called “The Program,” featured William Binney, a 32-year veteran of the National Security Agency, who had been dismayed that software he helped design to spy on the Soviet Union was now being used to “spy on everyone in this country.” Binney left the agency in 2001

and was the target of an F.B.I. investigation in 2007 into an alleged leak of N.S.A. secrets to a reporter. (The F.B.I. eventually dropped the effort.) Poitras filmed Binney in 2012 at a diner, sitting between Daniel Ellsberg and Jennifer Robinson. In the credits, Poitras thanks Assange.

This video would forever change the life of Edward Snowden. In January 2013, after seeing “The Program,” Snowden sent an anonymous message to Poitras, asking for her encryption key and suggesting that they find a secure channel through which they could communicate. A month before, he had attempted to contact Greenwald, who was now writing for The Guardian, but Snowden had received no response. He persisted with Poitras, sending a second e-mail, saying that he had some information about the intelligence community, and insisting that talking to him would not be a waste of her time. In an interview with Salon in June, Poitras said she had known how to communicate via encrypted channels because of her work with WikiLeaks.

In February 2013, Poitras contacted a number of people about the anonymous communication, to see if the source seemed legitimate. Among her contacts was Barton Gellman, a veteran national-security reporter who had worked for The Washington Post for most of his career but is currently a writer for Time. Gellman told Poitras that her anonymous source seemed legitimate. Poitras was also in touch with Greenwald, whom, according to The New York Times Magazine, Snowden had encouraged her to contact. In March, while in New York, she called Greenwald. “Laura helped in making Greenwald open the e-mails,” Alan Rusbridger, the editor of The Guardian, whose dealings with Assange date back to the extensive WikiLeaks document release in 2010, told me. In May, citing a medical issue, Snowden requested time off from his job as an N.S.A. contractor in Hawaii and flew to Hong Kong, where he would reveal himself to The Guardian and The Washington Post (telling his contacts to look for someone holding a Rubik’s Cube outside a restaurant near a certain hotel) and work with them to make public what he knew about secret U.S. surveillance programs.

III. Diplomatic Impasse

For much of his time at the embassy, an Assange caretaker and link to the outside world has been Sarah Harrison. She is a graduate of the prestigious Sevenoaks School, in Kent, and guards Assange with ferocious loyalty, a person who has seen them together told me, jumping to his defense at the mildest suggestion of criticism. Two of his supporters told me that a romantic relationship between Harrison and Assange began in 2010, but Assange and Harrison have never publicly acknowledged it. WikiLeaks says it won’t comment “as to staff personal lives except to say that all reportage so far is speculation.” The relationship’s status at the present time remains unknown, though the two are obviously close. Harrison is the WikiLeaks member whom Assange sent to accompany Edward Snowden out of Hong Kong.

Knowing that she was about to become a very public figure, and in an attempt to front-run any potentially negative information, WikiLeaks posted a profile and photographs of Harrison on its site on June 23, the day Snowden left Hong Kong for Moscow. The profile describes Harrison as a legal researcher for the organization. She is a young reporter who started working with WikiLeaks in August 2010, having been seconded from her position as an unpaid intern for MacFadyen’s Centre for Investigative Journalism. In addition to the photographs of Harrison on WikiLeaks’ site, she has

been photographed at various WikiLeaks events. She has an open, pretty face, with long, wavy blond hair, a ready smile, and a small gap between her two front teeth. One of the photos on the WikiLeaks site is a blurry shot of Harrison, dressed in a blazer, smiling into the camera. Two others are casual and candid and look like snapshots from a road trip. Assange's supporters are reluctant to talk about the relationship. "The Ecuadorians are very Catholic," one of them told me, meaning that they were put off by the idea of a woman staying with their guest. Assange may have been alluding to this when he stated in late 2012 that "security considerations" in the embassy had caused "severe difficulties to a relationship that was important to me."

Harrison has served as the public face of the connection among Assange, WikiLeaks, and Snowden. The connection was first revealed on June 19 in a WikiLeaks-hosted conference call with reporters. **Joining Assange were Daniel Ellsberg, Thomas Drake, and James Goodale, a former lawyer for The New York Times** and the author of a book on President Richard Nixon's secret effort to prosecute that newspaper for publishing the Pentagon Papers. On the call, Assange said, "We are in touch with Mr. Snowden's legal team and are involved in the process of brokering his asylum in Iceland."

On June 20, an Icelandic businessman linked to WikiLeaks announced that a jet had been chartered to transport Snowden from Hong Kong to Iceland. The Icelandic gambit did not work out, but Harrison duly arrived in Hong Kong. On June 21, U.S. federal prosecutors revealed that they had charged Snowden with violating the Espionage Act and stealing government property. On June 22, Washington revoked Snowden's U.S. passport, and the next day WikiLeaks announced that Snowden had departed Hong Kong, which maintained it had no legal basis to prevent him from doing so.

"He is bound for the Republic of Ecuador via a safe route for the purposes of asylum," the statement said, "and is being escorted by diplomats and legal advisors from WikiLeaks. Mr. Snowden requested that WikiLeaks use its legal expertise and experience to secure his safety. Once Mr Snowden arrives in Ecuador his request will be formally processed." WikiLeaks stated that it had paid for Snowden's flight out of Hong Kong. The organization also issued an anti-Washington statement purporting to be by Snowden, though various linguistic usages— such as employing the British plural for collective nouns, as in "the United States of America have ..."— suggested that it was in fact written by a non-American. The statement was subsequently edited to remove this Britishism. The suggestion that the statement wasn't authentic, WikiLeaks says, is "a conspiracy theory that reveals the unprofessional journalism of its proponents," adding that "Mr. Snowden spent time in many British English jurisdictions and WikiLeaks, like other publications, proofs statements into house style before publication." (Snowden's father initially told reporters he was worried that WikiLeaks may not have his son's best interests at heart, but has since backed away from that statement and said he was "thankful" to anyone helping his son.)

In a June 24 conference call, Assange said, "Mr. Snowden was supplied with a refugee document of passage by the Ecuadoran government." Before Snowden could continue his trip from Moscow to Quito, Ecuador's president, Rafael Correa, declared the document to be unauthorized. Correa, in his regular television address at the end of June, said that Consul Narváez's reported actions "were probably taken with Assange in desperation that Mr. Snowden was going to be captured" but were without the knowledge of the Ecuadoran government.

There were reports, based on diplomatic correspondence leaked to Univision and reviewed by The Wall Street Journal, that the embassy was concerned that Assange could be perceived as usurping the role of Ecuadoran diplomats—the suggestion, in effect, was that he was walking out of his embassy room and somehow arranging to conduct diplomatic business on Ecuador’s behalf. According to a message attributed to Assange, he apologized to the Ecuadoran foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, “if we have unwittingly [caused] Ecuador discomfort in the Snowden matter.” The message went on, “There is a fog of war due to the rapid nature of events. If similar events arise you can be assured that they do not originate in any lack of respect or concern for Ecuador or its government.”

For five weeks, Snowden was in the transit zone of Moscow’s Sheremetyevo airport, with Sarah Harrison hand-delivering his requests for asylum to a Russian official, who then passed them on to the embassies of Austria, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Cuba, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, and Venezuela. Requests had already been sent to Ecuador and Iceland. Most countries turned Snowden down immediately. It wasn’t until the official plane of Bolivian president Evo Morales was rerouted, at Washington’s behest, from Moscow to Austria, where it was searched on suspicion that it harbored Edward Snowden, that Bolivia, angered by this treatment, granted Snowden’s request for asylum (as had Nicaragua and Venezuela). Ecuador said it would consider Snowden’s request when and if he was on Ecuadoran soil. There remained the problem of how Snowden would ever get from Moscow to any of these destinations with a canceled U.S. passport.

On July 12, for the first time since his arrival in Moscow, Snowden appeared in public and held an airport conference for human-rights groups during which he declared that he had no regrets about leaking the information he did. During the conference, Harrison was seated to Snowden’s right; a translator was to his left. Despite heavy pressure from the U.S. government to deny his request, Russia has granted Snowden temporary asylum.

IV. His Own Worst Enemy

Assange remains at the center of a motley group of supporters. Some are transparency advocates or whistleblowers; some promote free speech; some are classic activist liberals; some are outright “America-phobes.”

He occasionally entertains visitors. In October 2012, the Evening Standard took note of “the Court of King Julian” and mentioned Caroline Michel, C.E.O. of the literary and talent agency Peters Fraser & Dunlop; the film director Ken Loach; the recording artist M.I.A.; and Lady Gaga. According to Daniel Ellsberg, WikiLeaks at that point was almost out of money. That was before donations from the Freedom of the Press Foundation, which was co-founded by John Perry Barlow, a retired cattle rancher and former lyricist for the Grateful Dead. (Its board includes Ellsberg, Poitras, Greenwald, and the actor John Cusack, who has also visited with Assange at the Ecuadoran Embassy.) The foundation has so far contributed about \$200,000 to WikiLeaks. In June, Barlow and Assange gave a joint interview from the embassy to Britain’s Sky News. The subject was the Snowden case and the N.S.A.’s surveillance of e-mail and other communications.

Some onetime supporters have put distance between themselves and Assange— or had it done for them. Jemima Khan, one of those who had put up funds to secure bail for Assange when the sexual-assault allegations first brought him into British custody, came to see him as someone who demanded “blinkered, cultish devotion” from his supporters. She is an executive producer of *We Steal Secrets*, the Gibney documentary (and the European editor-at-large for *Vanity Fair*).

Vaughan Smith, whose Frontline Club for journalists, in London, once served as a base of operations for Assange, and whose Ellingham Hall, in Norfolk, was Assange’s home in 2011 and 2012, while he was under house arrest, has recently fallen out slightly with Assange— Assange’s doing— because Smith had the temerity to screen *We Steal Secrets* at the Frontline Club. Smith told me he still has enormous respect for Assange and counts himself a WikiLeaks supporter. “What shocks me as much as anything,” he said, “is the American administration’s response to them.” Smith told me he had discovered relay stations that intercept phone calls between his house and nearby cell towers when Assange was living with him, and thinks that “people who stick their head above the parapet in the public interest are hugely valuable.”

The current Ecuadoran ambassador, Ana Albán, is due to conclude her tour of duty in London shortly. Albán’s departure could complicate Assange’s existence there, given the difficulties of having a new ambassador navigate the reality of a permanent houseguest, especially one as polarizing as Assange. But Patiño recently reiterated his support for Assange. “I was able to say face-to-face to him, for the first time, that the government of Ecuador remains firmly committed to protecting his human rights,” Patiño said, “and that we continue to seek cast-iron assurances to avoid any onward extradition to a third state.”

Britain has backed away from initial threats to enter the embassy and remove Assange by force. Tracy, Marchioness of Worcester, an activist who has hitherto been known mainly for her efforts against commercial pig farming, is planning a gala dinner this fall to raise money for WikiLeaks. “I think he is as important as Gandhi in bringing the truth and being willing to sacrifice his freedom for the truth,” Worcester told me.

Assange will be able to leave the Ecuadoran Embassy (most likely for Ecuador itself) only if Britain grants him safe passage, which his lawyers have been pushing for, to no avail. They are also trying to persuade Swedish authorities to conduct their interviews with Assange at the embassy, rather than continuing to demand that he come to Sweden. One of Assange’s lawyers, Michael Ratner, of the nonprofit Center for Constitutional Rights, pointed out to me that, if one counts his time under house arrest at Ellingham Hall, Assange has been in confinement for almost three years. **Even if he had been found guilty of what is alleged in Sweden, Ratner said, he could have served a shorter sentence than this.**

But it is not the allegations in Sweden that Assange fears. It is the grand jury in the Eastern District of Virginia, which, Ratner said, has been investigating him for possible violations of the Espionage Act and the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act. The Justice Department has acknowledged an investigation into WikiLeaks, and by all accounts it is extensive and aggressive. “I have almost no doubt that there is a sealed indictment against Julian Assange,” Ratner told me.

If Assange is extradited back to the U.S., Ratner said, he will likely receive no better treatment than that accorded to Bradley Manning, who was held in solitary confine-

ment for months and forced to sleep naked and with the lights on while awaiting trial. He would also be denied a computer and an Internet connection, and would likely be subject to special administrative measures that would prevent his lawyers from communicating anything Assange said to the outside world.

The assistance that WikiLeaks has given to Snowden has not helped its legal situation; **no traditional news outlet has offered Snowden anything near the support that WikiLeaks has, for fear of being prosecuted for “aiding the enemy.”** During a conference call, I asked Assange about WikiLeaks’ decision to assist Snowden, and he said, “We’re proud that we have the most aggressive policy on source protection and fighting for the defense of journalistic sources and whistleblowers. All media organizations should take our lead. Sources see which organizations are willing to defend them and which organizations are not.”

On the one-year anniversary of his arrival at the embassy, Assange told Reuters he wasn’t sure how much longer he would stay, but “we don’t intend to leave the situation to fate.” The message is that, despite Ecuadoran assurance of unending hospitality, Assange does not plan to follow the example of Cardinal József Mindszenty, who took refuge on the upper floors of the American Embassy in Budapest for 15 years.

That said, he has no obvious exit strategy, and the advantages of his predicament are considerable. For one thing, he is insulated from some of his own most damaging tendencies. “Julian is his own worst enemy,” a supporter told me. *[Many other supporters are more tolerant and understanding. --A.B.]* “He is a truly extraordinary individual who has a lot of problems due to his social skills. If you are prepared to suffer him, he does do good.”

But no one really has to suffer him now, except a handful of Ecuadorans. He is no longer a public spectacle. He and his work are safe from prosecution. He can serve as a clearinghouse for the whistle-blowers who coalesce around him. He can pick his battles. He has a megaphone whenever he needs one.

You can think of this as a stalemate, but it’s a stalemate with a winner.

<http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/2013/10/julian-assange-hideout-ecuador.print>

Julian Assange: WikiLeaks party will continue

WikiLeaks founder brushes off election loss, saying he will try again for a Senate position

*Australian Associated Press
8 September 2013*

Julian Assange says his WikiLeaks party will live on despite its poor showing in the Australian election. With about two-thirds of Senate first preferences counted, the party picked up 0.62% of the national vote.

Its best showing was in Victoria, where Assange was the lead candidate for the Senate and where it garnered 1.18% of the primary vote. In New South Wales it picked up 0.8% and in Western Australia 0.71%. But none of these numbers were good enough to get its candidates elected.

"We are the second largest vote count for the new parties after Clive Palmer's party, which had a billion bucks behind it," Assange told ABC TV on Sunday. "I think that's a pretty good outcome."

The WikiLeaks founder said it was "rather bizarre" that the Australian Motoring Enthusiast party was being projected to win a Victorian Senate spot when that party "has less than a third of the vote that we had". Projections are made according to preference flows from the tickets lodged by all parties before the election.

Asked if he would try again for a Senate seat in three or six years' time, Assange said: "I think so. The WikiLeaks Party will continue for sure," he said.

Julian Assange, the political outsider

Neither the Australian left or right are comfortable with Julian Assange's brand of libertarianism, and his party paid the price at the federal election, writes WikiLeaks campaign manager Greg Barns.

Greg Barns
ABC (Australia)
10 Sept. 2013

Working with Julian Assange's federal election campaign, one was struck by a profound sense of disconnect between what many of Mr Assange's supporters thought he was, or wanted him to be, and the reality of his political philosophy.

While many Assange supporters could be characterised as hard left or green left, the founder of WikiLeaks is a far more nuanced and intelligent thinker who **leans towards a small-government, freedom-maximising libertarian position.**

Assange is a political hero to many in Australia, and rightly so. His extraordinary courage in standing up to the US-led security establishment of which this little country is a supine follower, and his creation of a new media form that does not rely on the filtering of media organisations and their bias, make him one of the genuinely fine Australians of the past few years.

Assange's trailblazing work has won him a large following in this country, and many joined his newly minted WikiLeaks Party in March and supported its election campaign. It is also fair to say that a number of those who participated in this journey assumed, or wanted to believe, that Assange held political views similar to theirs—that is, at the left end of the Australian political spectrum, somewhere in the territory that is occupied by the Greens.

When the campaign got rough over the issue of preferences (no other party has had its preference arrangements and processes mulled over more than the WikiLeaks Party!), the gulf between what some supporters and party members thought was the Assange view of the world and what it is, and has been for some time, was made evident.

One of the reasons I admire Assange—and it was part of the reason I was keen to assist him in his election campaign—is that he represents a political philosophy which is sorely missing in this country. Having spent a few days with Assange in June this year, one is struck by two matters. **Firstly, he has a superbly supple and nuanced intellect, which places him above the concrete thinkers of the Australian body politic. Secondly, Assange has a fondness for libertarianism.**

The former quality was evident in the fallout over Assange's qualified endorsement of Rand Paul, the Kentucky senator. Rand Paul is the son of Ron Paul who wooed the younger crowd during the 2012 Republic nomination battle with his calls to decriminalise drugs, roll back the security state, and end American imperialism.

During a question and answer session organised with Deakin University last month, Assange praised both the Pauls. **"I'm a big admirer of Ron Paul and Rand Paul for their very principled positions in the US Congress on a number of issues... [and they have been] the strongest supporters of the fight against the US attack on WikiLeaks and on me,"** Assange told the audience.

Assange also noted that the libertarian wing of the Republican Party was the only one not 'co-opted' by the US war machine.

This **careful endorsement** of Ron and Rand Paul was too much for some in the WikiLeaks Party, one of whom complained that Rand Paul is a rabid anti-abortionist and therefore should not be spoken about again. But Assange wasn't focusing on Rand Paul's anti-choice message and just because a person has a view on one issue with which one violently disagrees shouldn't rule out endorsing them in relation to other matters.

Assange's endorsement of libertarian principles is not new. I told anyone who would listen that they ought to read Assange's November 29, 2010, interview with Forbes magazine where he eloquently set out the ideals and benefits of a genuinely free market.

Assange rightly opined that a perfect market is one in which all participants have all the information. "To put it simply, in order for there to be a market, there has to be information. A perfect market requires perfect information," he said, noting that the benefit of WikiLeaks is that it ensures information about companies and products is available to all.

Libertarianism is anathema to the hard left and the conservative establishment in Australia, both of whom believe, albeit for different reasons and to achieve different outcomes, that government should regulate and surveil individuals in order to keep the state strong, and because they do not trust people to make sensible choices for themselves.

The sum of things is something like this. Julian Assange has been misunderstood by some supporters in Australia who wanted him to be a hard left/green left hero. The WikiLeaks Party for them was a political home for their values and ideals. If these individuals had done their due diligence, they may have seen things differently.

The WikiLeaks Party, despite the pompous rhetoric from some in the media and Twitter, has not imploded. And it is important it does not. It can be the only political party in this country that is sceptical of the power of the state and which, in the spirit of John Stuart Mill, prizes the freedoms of individual from vulnerable groups, such as asylum seekers and Indigenous Australians.

The WikiLeaks Party is not left or right in the Australian context, and perhaps that is why some have struggled intellectually to support it and its founder.

- *Greg Barns is a barrister and managed the WikiLeaks Party 2013 federal election campaign. View his full profile [here](#).*

www.abc.net.au/news/2013-09-10/barns-assange-the-outsider-in-politics-as-in-life/4947168

SvD: 17 september 2013

Assange: Jag kommer jättegärna till Sverige

Bevis för det värsta krigsbrott som USA begått i Afghanistan har försvunnit efter att svenska flygplatsmyndigheter illegalt beslagit tre bärbara datorer. Det sade Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange till SvD på tisdagen. Samtidigt hävdade Assange att han "jättegärna" kommer till Sverige under vissa villkor.

Julian Assange deltog på tisdagen i en debatt om yttrandefrihet på FN i Genève. Han talade via Skype från Ecuadors ambassad i London, och såg trött och blek ut. Efter debatten förklarade Assange att han är mycket upprörd över att tre datorer försvunnit på Arlanda eller på en flygplats i Berlin 2010.

Han har nyligen lämnat in en polisanmälan om saken i Sverige och Tyskland. Enligt Assange ligger amerikansk underrättelsetjänst bakom beslaget.

– I Tyskland har en förundersökning öppnats medan man i Sverige öppnat en preliminär undersökning. Svenskarna har bett om mer detaljer vilket de fått, säger han.

I datorerna finns bevis för att USA begått krigsbrott i Afghanistan vid massakern i staden Garani i maj 2009 då över 80 kvinnor och barn dödades, uppger Assange.

– Det var nog det värsta krigsbrottet i Afghanistan, när amerikanska bombplan attackerade den afghanska byn och dödade dessa människor. Att beslagta bevis för ett krigsbrott är mycket allvarligt. Det borde gå under internationella brottmålsdomstolen, säger Assange till SvD.

Om sin egen situation på Ecuadors ambassad i London, där han fick politisk asyl i augusti förra året, säger han:

– Jag är mycket tacksam för stödet från Ecuadors regering och landets befolkning. Svenska myndigheter får gärna komma hit och förhöra mig, och jag ger dem gärna mer information.

– Jag skulle jättegärna resa till Sverige, om Sverige kan garantera Ecuador att jag inte utlämnas till USA.

• *Gunilla von Hall*

2013-09-17. The Brazilian Press Association honored Julian Assange, Edward Snowden, Chelsea Manning, Glenn Greenwald, Aaron Swartz, and Mordechai Vanunu with the International Human Rights Prize.

<http://www.thisdayinwikileaks.org>

Release of WikiLeaks internal memo on The Fifth Estate

WikiLeaks
September 18, 2013

WikiLeaks has decided to release this internal talking points memo to the public alongside the script, because it represents a frank internal appraisal of the Dreamworks film, THE FIFTH ESTATE, and what is wrong with it.

This document is now issued to media during publicity for the film, which is due for general release on 18 October, 2013.

The points below represent how WikiLeaks believes it should have been portrayed in the film, and why the film is, from WikiLeaks' perspective, irresponsible, counterproductive and harmful.

Talking Points on The Fifth Estate

- WikiLeaks has multiple versions of the script for THE FIFTH ESTATE from several different sources.
- The most recent script released to the public is a mature version, obtained at a late stage during the principal photography of 2013.
- Some of the attendees at the film premiere in Toronto on 5 September, 2013 are friends and supporters of WikiLeaks and were able to compare the final product to the most recently obtained script.
- In the finished film, the scripted scene set in Iran has been transplanted to Libya, but serves the same plot function.
- Besides this, there have been no significant changes.
- WikiLeaks' knowledge of the film is accurate and current, and our official position is well-founded and based in fact.
- Director Bill Condon is therefore mistaken when he says: "[Assange] got hold of a very, very early draft of the script, which he has commented on, which really bears little resemblance to the movie we made."

WikiLeaks caused no harm to anyone

- THE FIFTH ESTATE falsely implies that WikiLeaks harmed 2,000 US government informants.
- Not even the US government alleges that WikiLeaks caused harm to a single person.
- Apologists for US government misconduct tried to argue that WikiLeaks caused harm to distract attention from the serious stories coming out of WikiLeaks' disclosures.

- But despite spending millions of dollars over three years in preparation for the trial of Private Manning, the US government was unable to present any evidence of anyone coming to harm as a consequence of the WikiLeaks publications.
- US Brig. Gen. Robert Carr — who was tasked to investigate this matter by the Pentagon — in fact stated under oath when examined by the defense counsel that there was no harm whatsoever.
- As Defense Secretary Robert Gates said in 2010: “Is this embarrassing? Yes. Is it awkward? Yes. Consequences for U.S. foreign policy? I think fairly modest.”

The Fifth Estate is a work of fiction masquerading as fact

- The film is fictional. **Most of the events depicted never happened, or the people shown were not involved in them.** It has real names, real places, and looks like it is covering real events, but it is still a dramatic and cinematic work, and it invents or shapes the facts to fit its narrative goals.
- There are very high stakes involved in how WikiLeaks is perceived. **This film does not occur in a historical vacuum**, but appears in the context of ongoing efforts to bring a criminal prosecution against WikiLeaks and Julian Assange for exposing the activities of the Pentagon and the US State Department. The film also occurs in the context of Pvt. Manning's upcoming appeal and request for a presidential pardon.
- People should not in any way treat this film as an historical account of WikiLeaks, its activities or its personnel. Hopefully, they will be inspired to approach the topic with an open mind, and to support WikiLeaks.

Even those working on The Fifth Estate said it had an agenda

- The star of THE FIFTH ESTATE, Benedict Cumberbatch, stated that director Bill Condon wanted him to play Julian Assange as an "antisocial megalomaniac":
 Reading an early version of the script, which was partly adapted from Daniel Domscheit-Berg's memoir of working with Assange, Cumberbatch realized that some of Assange's fears were justified. "On a lot of the stage direction, we collided paths because Bill did seem to be setting him up as this antisocial megalomaniac."
 — *Vogue*
- Cumberbatch worried that there was an agenda to make Assange a "cartoon baddie":
 When Cumberbatch first read the script, he worried that it cast Assange as some kind of cartoon baddie. "I think I may get my head bitten off by Disney for saying so, but everyone agreed with that."
 — *The Guardian*

The Fifth Estate is only one side of the story

- THE FIFTH ESTATE is based on two books, both written by people who had personal and legal disputes with WikiLeaks.

- These are personally biased sources and are now outdated by three years. They tell only one side of the story.
- These authors had an interest in portraying Julian Assange as dishonest or manipulative for competitive, personal and legal reasons.
- It is hard to imagine how a film which aims to dramatise only their version of events could genuinely aspire to being fair or accurate.
- **The film does not tell the story Julian Assange or WikiLeaks staff such as Sarah Harrison, Joseph Farrell or Kristinn Hrafnsson would tell.** Hopefully, soon, their story too can be told.

This is not the first feature film about Julian Assange

- Underground: The Julian Assange Story, directed by Robert Connolly, and starring Rachel Griffith and Antony LaPaglia premiered at Toronto Film Festival 2012, twelve months before THE FIFTH ESTATE. (Trailer: www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ujDD2LpSRg)

The world has changed because of WikiLeaks

THE FIFTH ESTATE is careful to avoid most criticism of US foreign policy actually revealed by WikiLeaks. The film covers 2010, but almost none of the evidence WikiLeaks published that year of serious abuses within the US military and the State Department.

1. The Afghanistan War Diaries exposed the use of secret "kill lists" and assassination squads, and dramatically shifted perception of the occupation of Afghanistan and significantly reduced support for the war.
2. The Iraq War Logs showed direct US complicity in torture carried out by Iraqi authorities, enabling research and advocacy by human rights groups such as Amnesty International and efforts to obtain justice for the victims of torture and killing. They showed the true civilian death toll of the war, kept secret by the US military.
3. Cablegate has produced more news stories than any single leak in history. For years after Cablegate, the world has been awash with revelations. The BBC, the New York Times and Amnesty International, and even the US government during the trial of Private Manning, have all argued that the publication of Cablegate helped to trigger revolutions in Tunisia and across the Middle East. One cable showed US troops carrying out war crimes with impunity, triggering the Iraq government's decision to remove legal immunity from prosecution for US troops in Iraq, which directly led to the US withdrawal from Iraq and therefore helped end the Iraq War.

The character 'Anke' wasn't there

- Although the film shows several hostile interactions between Julian Assange and Anke Domscheit-Berg, in fact Julian Assange has never met or spoken with Anke.

The character 'Daniel' wasn't there

THE FIFTH ESTATE inserts a "Daniel Domscheit-Berg" into the story for the events of 2010, during which Collateral Murder, the two sets of War Logs and Cablegate were released. **The real Domscheit-Berg was not present for any of these. The character of "Daniel" in the film is almost entirely fictitious.**

- WikiLeaks was founded in 2006 by Julian Assange.
- Domscheit-Berg started as a part-time volunteer during the year 2008, based in Germany and helping remotely from there.
- He worked as a full-time volunteer only during the year 2009.
- He last saw Julian Assange in Iceland in February 2010, and was not significantly involved in Wikileaks after this point.
- All of the key releases of US government documents in 2010 happened after this point.
- Domscheit-Berg had no involvement in the production of the Collateral Murder film. He was not even in the same country as the Collateral Murder team.
- The Afghan War Diaries were published from London in July 2010. Domscheit-Berg was in Berlin.
- Domscheit-Berg was suspended in August 2010.
- He finalized his own departure from WikiLeaks in September 2010 with the acts of sabotage against WikiLeaks' servers that are hinted at (but perversely celebrated) in the film, making off with leaked documents which included evidence of more than 60 women and children being massacred in Afghanistan by US forces. He refused to return these materials to WikiLeaks and later claimed to have destroyed them.
- Within days he was promising to launch his own rival project, "OpenLeaks", which was subsequently abandoned without publishing a single document.
- The Iraq War Logs were published in October 2010. Domscheit-Berg was not there. Having been suspended back in August, he was at this point courting publicity for himself and speaking to Tina Klopp who ghostwrote the book on which THE FIFTH ESTATE is based. **Domscheit-Berg has received hundreds of thousands of dollars of profit from the sale of the film rights to Dreamworks.**
- Cablegate began publication in late November 2010 and the events following its launch went on throughout 2011. Domscheit-Berg was not there.
- Between them, Daniel Domscheit-Berg (who had been formally suspended a year prior) and the *Guardian* journalist David Leigh (now retired) brought about the unredacted publication of Cablegate in September 2011, but then falsely attempted to attribute the incident to WikiLeaks, a fiction the movie repeats.

A film about WikiLeaks without WikiLeaks

- Although THE FIFTH ESTATE purports to be about Julian Assange and WikiLeaks, the film was made without the involvement of WikiLeaks or any of its staff, including Julian Assange.
- However, parties to disputes with WikiLeaks were given consulting contracts to work on the script. These include Daniel Domscheit-Berg and Nick Davies.
- False statements were made in the closing text of the screenplay. WikiLeaks submitted via Jeff Skoll of Participant Media suggested corrections. **These corrections were ignored and the closing text of the finished film retains the falsehoods.**
- Although the film has premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and numerous other media organizations have been shown review copies, the studio continues to refuse to show the film to WikiLeaks staff.
- The multi-million dollar production, produced by Dreamworks and distributed by Disney, has not financially contributed to WikiLeaks or any of its defence funds.

The fourth wall in The Fifth Estate

- The conclusion of THE FIFTH ESTATE breaks the dramatic “fourth wall”, depicting the fictional Julian Assange speaking about the film itself from the Embassy of Ecuador in London.
- The fictional Assange recites lines paraphrased from the real Julian Assange in public statements: “The Wikileaks movie? Which one. That one? It's based on the worst two books. Full of lies and distortion, like all bad propaganda.”
- This attempts to make the film immune to criticism by WikiLeaks or by Assange himself.
- It contaminates any future act of criticism by the real Julian Assange with the stigma of the fictional one.

The cult narrative is completely made up

- Julian Assange was never in a cult, but THE FIFTH ESTATE claims that he was.
- Julian Assange does not dye or bleach his hair white, as claimed in the film.
- While these interpolations may serve to enhance the dramatic narrative of the film, or to build an enigmatic or interesting central character, they have the effect of further falsely mythologizing a living person as sinister and duplicitous.

Julian Assange has not been charged in Sweden

- The film falsely states that Julian Assange has been charged (with 'rape') and makes a number of other related false imputations.

- Julian Assange has not been charged at any stage in any country.
- That he has been detained in the United Kingdom for three years without charge is one of the reasons he has been granted political asylum.
- For more information, see <http://justice4assange.com>

WikiLeaks really was being surveilled in 2009 and 2010

- WikiLeaks and Julian Assange were subject to a series of surveillance events in late 2009 and during 2010.
- The film portrays this as fanciful but this is naïve.
- A few months ago it emerged that the FBI had sent undercover agents to Iceland to attempt to infiltrate WikiLeaks.
- A recent criminal complaint submitted to German authorities details these surveillance events fully. (<http://wikileaks.org/WikiLeaks-Files-Second-Criminal.html>)

Government transparency and personal privacy go together

- THE FIFTH ESTATE presents Julian Assange as a transparency zealot who believes everything should be made public, but this is wrong.
- Julian Assange believes transparency should be in proportion to power.
- For example, when the police are investigating the mafia, their operations should be kept secret as long as they need to be. But when they are using secrecy to cover up police brutality or other abuses, there is a need for transparency.
- The press should work hard to keep the identity of its sources secret, and WikiLeaks was built to do exactly this.
- The population has a right to privacy: the right not to be subject to mass surveillance by their governments. Without this, each of us is vulnerable to the abuse of power, as happened in East Germany under the Stasi.
- Working to make governments more transparent and accountable is part of the same cause as safeguarding the privacy of ordinary people.
- "I believe in the right to communicate and the inviolability of history, privacy for the weak, transparency for the powerful." – Julian Assange

WikiLeaks protects people, not reputations

- WikiLeaks implemented rigorous harm-minimization procedures in order to ensure that no person would come to harm, and it was successful. Nobody has ever been put in danger of harm.

- WikiLeaks held back 15,000 Afghan field reports for harm minimization, but the film argues that there was no harm minimization in place.
- WikiLeaks adopted a policy of maximum disclosure, subject to the demands of protecting human life.
- The Guardian and the New York Times were more concerned with appearing to be “responsible” than with protecting human life.
- WikiLeaks published the original source material for the Iraq and Afghanistan War Diaries and for Cablegate, **while the Guardian and the New York Times abused redaction in order to distort stories in line with their institutional interests and biases.**
- **The mainstream media partners published a tiny fraction of the State Department cables and stopped publishing them in early 2011, while WikiLeaks went on to collaborate with over 120 media organizations all over the world, bringing the full set of cables into the historical record.**

WikiLeaks modernized the press

WikiLeaks media collaborations in 2010 were a pioneering form of journalism. In large part, WikiLeaks dragged traditional news organizations into the 21st century:

- by organizing a powerful and effective international collaboration between hundreds of media organizations,
- by pioneering the use of large datasets in journalism,
- by demonstrating the importance of tough source protection to combat surveillance of journalists,
- by taking aggressive action against censorship, and
- by reasserting the importance of strong adversarial journalism.

The innovations of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks have since formed a "WikiLeaks model" for how journalism can be done, and this has been copied by media organizations all over the world.

Even parties hostile to WikiLeaks have acknowledged this. See New York Times' Bill Keller, "On The Media" 2013. (www.onthemedias.org/2013/mar/15/bradley-manning-alternate-history/transcript)

Exposing wrongdoing is what journalists are supposed to do

- US government officials responded negatively to WikiLeaks because they were embarrassed.
- They should be embarrassed. WikiLeaks' publications showed that they were doing something wrong.

- It is not the job of journalists to rescue government officials from embarrassment.
- It is also not the job of journalists to protect governments from the diplomatic or political consequences of their own wrongdoing.
- When powerful wrongdoers fear being found out, they are forced to behave more acceptably. That is a good thing.

Chelsea Manning must be supported

Chelsea Manning's case is extremely important, and everyone should campaign for her.

- Her case is on appeal, and she has just issued a plea for a pardon from US President Barack Obama.
- This process is happening right now. Public opinion is crucial.
- A film which falsely portrays the publications of 2010 in an ambivalent light, alleging non-existent harm, risks undercutting public opinion and playing into the hands of the US government.
- Emphasize that THE FIFTH ESTATE is fictional and there is a distinction between what it portrays and reality.
- Emphasize that Chelsea Manning should be considered to be a classic whistleblower.
- Quote from her recent statement
- Urge people to support and campaign for her.

Chelsea Manning's case is an LGBT issue

- It is also important to note that Chelsea Manning's treatment in US military detention has acquired a new human rights dimension.
- Chelsea Manning has now publicly and voluntarily announced her status as a transgendered individual. This is no longer ambiguous.
- In 2011, she was subjected to treatment which UN Rapporteur Juan Mendez formally found to be "cruel, inhumane and degrading".
- Even former State Department spokesman PJ Crowley said that her treatment was "ridiculous, counterproductive and stupid".
- This involved prolonged solitary confinement, forced nudity and misogynistic and homophobic verbal abuse.
- In the context of her declared gender identification, this treatment acquires a new dimension and should be of concern to everyone.

This story is not over yet

The story of WikiLeaks does not end with THE FIFTH ESTATE. The film makes it look like WikiLeaks was finished in 2010. Three years later, WikiLeaks is still here, has been going from strength to strength, and the issues raised in 2010 are more urgent and relevant than ever.

- The US and UK governments are in the middle of a crackdown on whistleblowers and national security journalism. A confrontation between the free press and the secret state is currently playing out.
- The scope of the crackdown on journalism has been expanded to include the Guardian, the New York Times, the Washington Post, Associated Press and FOX News. Recent months have seen the world's press slowly wake up to this fact.
- In the past year, we have seen the Department of Justice ordering dragnet surveillance operations against Associated Press.
- In 2012, Julian Assange published a book showing how the world was being spied on by US and UK intelligence agencies, and calling for the mobilization of a mass movement against bulk surveillance.
- Just recently, WikiLeaks published "SpyFiles 3" — 249 documents from 92 global intelligence contractors. These documents reveal how, as the intelligence world has privatized, US, EU and other nations' intelligence agencies have rushed into spending millions on next-generation mass surveillance technology to target communities, groups and whole populations.
- Edward Snowden revealed that the US and UK governments are violating the privacy rights of the world's population en-masse.
- The UK government is engaging in prior restraint actions against the press. It has issued so-called "Defence Advisory" notices to dissuade newspapers in the UK from reporting on NSA and GCHQ spying. It has intimidated the Guardian UK into destroying hard drives and ceasing to report on leaked documents about GCHQ surveillance.
- The most significant journalists and whistleblowers in the world are either political exiles, political prisoners, or the targets of criminal investigations by an overreaching security state.
- The US government has just convicted Chelsea Manning and sentenced her to 35 years in prison.
- The journalist Barrett Brown is in prison, facing trial. The charges he faces carry a maximum sentence of 105 years in prison. His pretrial detention has lasted for longer than a year so far. There is a gag order in place to prevent reportage on his trial.
- NSA whistleblowers Thomas Drake, William Binney and Kirk J. Wiebe have been subjected to a vicious persecution effort over the last six years.

- New York Times reporter James Risen is facing imprisonment because he refuses to reveal a journalistic source of a national security story.
- FOX News reporter James Rosen was named as an “unindicted co-conspirator” in the prosecution of a State Department leaker. His phone records were taken, his emails were read, and his movements were tracked by the FBI.
- A grand jury investigation into WikiLeaks has been active and ongoing for over three years.
- An unlawful blockade against WikiLeaks carried out by private financial firms and instigated by US government officials has been in effect for three years.
- Julian Assange has been granted asylum by the government of Ecuador. In anticipation of this, the UK government threatened to raid the Embassy of Ecuador in London in violation of the Vienna Conventions. The threat was withdrawn after global political fallout and public outcry.
- Edward Snowden is in exile in Russia having been forced to ask Russia for asylum. The US government and the governments of Europe prevented him from travelling to Latin America to seek asylum by applying diplomatic pressure, forcing down the plane of president Evo Morales of Bolivia — in violation of the Vienna Conventions, ironically in Vienna — and issuing pre-emptive extradition requests to most countries in the Western Hemisphere.
- Glenn Greenwald, a US citizen, is in effective exile in Brazil.
- Laura Poitras, the other US journalist working on the Snowden revelations, is in effective exile in Germany.
- Sarah Harrison, the WikiLeaks journalist who accompanied Edward Snowden from Hong Kong and assisted his successful asylum bid, is in effective exile in Russia.
- The UK government has abused terrorism legislation to detain David Miranda, the partner of Glenn Greenwald, in Heathrow airport and confiscate his property.
- Despite all of this, WikiLeaks has kept strong. WikiLeaks has continued publishing throughout the last three years. WikiLeaks has fought the unlawful banking blockade, and has partially defeated it in a significant Supreme Court victory in Iceland.
- In 2011, WikiLeaks released the Guantánamo Files — thousands of pages of documents from the Guantánamo Bay detention facility dating from 2002 to 2008.
- Later in 2011, in collaboration with Privacy International, Bugged Planet, ARD, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, The Hindu, OWINI, L'Espresso and the Washington Post, WikiLeaks released the "SpyFiles 1" and "SpyFiles2" — hundreds of documents from as many as 160 intelligence contractors in the mass surveillance industry.
- In early 2012, in conjunction with over 30 media partners, WikiLeaks began publishing The Global Intelligence Files — more than five million emails from the Texas-headquartered "global intelligence" company Stratfor. The emails date from between July 2004 and late December 2011. They reveal the inner workings of a company that fronts as an intelligence publisher, but provides confidential intelligence services to large corporations, such as Bhopal's Dow Chemical Co., Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon and government agencies, including the US

Department of Homeland Security, the US Marines and the US Defense Intelligence Agency. The Global Intelligence Files publication is an ongoing project.

- In mid 2012, along with over ten media partners, WikiLeaks began publishing the Syria Files — more than two million emails from Syrian political figures, ministries and associated companies, dating from August 2006 to March 2012. The Syria Files publication is ongoing.

- In late 2012, WikiLeaks began releasing the 'Detainee Policies': more than 100 classified or otherwise restricted files from the United States Department of Defense covering the rules and procedures for detainees in U.S. military custody.

- In early 2013, along with over ten media partners, WikiLeaks released the Kissinger Cables — more than 1.7 million US diplomatic records for the period 1973 to 1976, including 205,901 records relating to former US Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger. The cables were released along with the State Department cables from Cablegate, as part of the Public Library of US Diplomacy (PlusD) — the world's largest searchable collection of United States confidential, or formerly confidential, diplomatic communications.

- Just recently, WikiLeaks published “SpyFiles 3” — 249 documents from 92 global intelligence contractors. These documents reveal how, as the intelligence world has privatized, US, EU and other nations' intelligence agencies have rushed into spending millions on next-generation mass surveillance technology to target communities, groups and whole populations.

- In June 2013, WikiLeaks made an intervention in the case of Edward Snowden in order to assist his exit from Hong Kong, and escort him to a safe haven where he was able to successfully avail of his universal human right to apply for asylum from US persecution. **The success of this action, under the noses of intelligence agencies, shows WikiLeaks' expertise and efficiency as a source-protection organization.**

- WikiLeaks has remained true to its principles, has supported the strong journalism of the Snowden stories, and has committed significant resources to ensuring that Edward Snowden's rights are protected.

<http://wikileaks.org/IMG/html/wikileaks-dreamworks-memo.html#top>

Read the Dreamworks script:

<http://wikileaks.org/IMG/html/wikileaks-dreamworks-memo.html-script>

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Öppet brev till Dorotea Bromberg och Hanne Kjöllner

SR-Ekot

2013-09-26

Journalistik är svårt, och ofta ska det gå fort. Vi har stor makt. Vi välkomnar en granskning av alla de val vi gör, av våra arbetsmetoder och av våra publiceringar. En sådan granskning är viktig. Men boken “En halv sanning är också en lögn” gör oss bara besvikna och utgör tyvärr exempel på vad författaren själv kritiserar.

Vi har tillsammans med de granskade reportrarna gått igenom några av de fall Hanne Kjöllers berör i sin bok. Vi har funnit exempel på sakfel och slarv. Vissa felaktiga påståenden hade enk4

Vi vet att alla kan göra fel och vi försöker stå för våra. Frågan är nu om Hanne Kjöllers står för sina?

Anne Lagercrantz, chef och utgivare Ekot, Sveriges Radio

Louise Welanders, chef och utgivare Sveriges Radios samhällsredaktion

- - - - -

AB: 2013-09-26

Ny kritik mot Hanne Kjöllers bok

Sveriges Radio listar ännu flera faktafel i boken

Nu riktas ännu mera kritik mot Dagens Nyheters omdebatterade ledarskribent Hanne Kjöllers. I ett öppet brev listar Sveriges Radio ytterligare faktafel i hennes bok "En halv sanning är också en lögn".

– Det är grova anklagelser mot reportrar och då måste man ha på fötterna, säger Anne Lagercrantz, chef och utgivare på Ekot.

Hanne Kjöllers bok har kritiserats kraftigt från flera håll. I boken försöker hon visa att journalister utelämnar avgörande uppgifter i medierapporteringen och på så vis kommer med en felaktig bild av sanningen. Men hennes egen bok har avslöjats komma med just halvsanningar.

Förra veckan avslöjades att hon förväxlat en hyresrätt med en bostadsrätt. SVT:s Janne Josefsson har kritiserat henne för felaktiga uppgifter om Uppdrag Granskning. På Aftonbladets Kultursida listade Gellert Tamas i går flera felaktigheter i hennes ledarartiklar i Dagens Nyheter. Och nu kommer också Sveriges Radio med kritik.

– Jag har stor respekt för henne som debattör. Men det är grova anklagelser mot reportrar och då måste man ha på fötterna. Det är viktiga frågor hon tar upp i boken men när hon inte får fakta rätt så blir jag besviken, säger Anne Lagercrantz, chef och utgivare på Ekot.

I ett öppet brev listar Anne Lagercrantz och Louise Welanders, chef och utgivare på Sveriges Radios samhällsredaktion, ytterligare felaktigheter i boken. "...boken "En halv sanning är också en lögn" gör oss bara besvikna och utgör tyvärr exempel på vad författaren själv kritiserar", skriver de.

Kjöllers skriver bland annat om SR:s rapportering om William Hemberg. Efter en hjärnhinneinflammation fick Hemberg kronisk huvudvärk men ändå utförsäkrades han från sjukförsäkringen. **I boken påstår Kjöllers att Hemberg, som hon kallar för Stefan i boken, inte alls haft hjärnhinneinflammation. Hon hänvisar till sin egen bakgrund som sjuksköterska.**

"Hanne Kjoöllers har i tre års tid påstått att Stefan inte har haft hjärnhinneinflammation. Detta trots att två specialister i neurologi bedömt att han har haft just hjärnhinneinflammation. Varken läkare, specialister eller försäkringskassan har ifrågasatt Stefans diagnos. Den enda som ifrågasätter är Hanne Kjöllers", skriver SR.

– Jag tycker hennes bok är jätte viktig och jag tycker att alla ska läsa den. Men den här gången blev det fel och då är det viktigt att ta det i beaktande, säger Louise Welanders, chef och utgivare på Sveriges Radios samhällsredaktion.

I boken kritiserar Kjoller också SR:s dokumentär om Nora som spändes fast och våldtogs av polischefen Göran Lindberg. Enligt Kjoller har SR utelämnat uppgiften om att Nora har diagnosen "emotionellt instabil personlighetsstörning". Problemet är att Nora inte har den diagnosen, enligt SR.

"Hur kan du basera din kritik på en gissning? Vad tror du att Nora tycker om att du skriver i en bok som alla kan läsa att hon har en diagnos som hon inte har? Och detta för att du felaktigt gissar det?", skriver SR:s reporter Daniel Velasco.

• *Andreas Söderlund*

[Obs! Jämför Kjollers behandling av Göran Lindberg med denna av Assange. --A.B.]



Hanne Kjoller debatterade tidigare på fredagen sin bok med Nils Hansson, ansvarig utgivare på SVT:s Uppdrag granskning.

Pressad Hanne Kjoller besökte mässan

Vill inte kommentera ny kritik Det var en pressad Hanne Kjoller som dök upp i Brombergs monter på Bokmässan. Kritiken har varit hård mot hennes bok "En halv sanning är också en lögn" där hon vill visa på hur journalister hårdvinklar och förtiger fakta i jakten på en bra historia — kritikerna menar att Hanne Kjoller själv gjort just det.

*Hedvig Weibull
SVT
27 september 2013*

I går skrev flera chefer på Sveriges Radio ett öppet brev till förlagschefen Dorotea Bromberg och Hanne Kjoller med en rad punkter där de menar att Kjoller felaktigt beskrivit radiodokumentärer.

- Vissa exempel skulle hon kunnat göra väldigt enkla faktakollar på och då hade inte de här problemen uppstått, säger Louise Welanders, chef på Sveriges Radios samhällsredaktion.

- Det är viktigt för oss att sätta in det här i sitt sammanhang. Hanne Kjoller skriver en bok om att journalister manipulerar verkligheten. Då måste det också bli rätt, säger Welanders till Kulturnyheter.

Hanne Kjoller och Dorotea Bromberg intog under fredagen scenen i Bromsgergs monter på mässgolvet i Göteborg.

- Vi är här för att prata om en bok som kom ut för ganska exakt två veckor sedan och som blivit till en mediastorm, men kanske inte den som jag hade tänkt mig, säger Dorotea Bromberg.

Hanne Kjoller beklagar samtidigt att hon blandat ihop hyresrätt och bostadsrätt i sin bok och säger att det är något som hon gärna pratar om:

- Jag kommer att tacka ja till alla intervjuer om detta.

Den kritik som Sveriges Radio riktar mot boken vill hon däremot inte prata om. Kulturnyheter bad om att få en intervju, men Kjoller vill helst diskutera kritiken i ett längre direktsänt sammanhang, som i radions program Studio Ett.

Dorotea Bromberg tycker samtidigt att förlaget gjort det de kunnat för att säkerställa innehållet i boken:

- Det har varit en jurist som varit med oss hela vägen. Det har varit en ytterst kompetent journalist som har varit bollplank för Hanne och vi har haft en rättspsykiatrisk expert som gått igenom materia som handlar om sjukskrivningar, säger Bromberg till Kulturnyheter.

På Sveriges Radio väntar man fortfarande på ett svar från Hanne Kjoller och förlaget.

- Jag har inte sett några reaktioner alls från Bromsbergs eller Kjoller. Det ska bli intressant, konstaterar Louise Welanders.

[Obs! Kjoller har skrivit några av de elakaste angreppen på Assange i svenska medier, och det vill säga mycket. --A.B.]

The Fifth Estate: WikiLeaks at its worst

Compared with The Social Network, The Fifth Estate is craven and cartoonish.

Ryan Gilbey
The New Statesman
4 October 2013

One of the keenest pleasures of watching David Fincher's film *The Social Network*, scripted by Aaron Sorkin, came from realising how badly the whole enterprise could have turned out and feeling grateful that it ended up being something close to a masterpiece. A pair of old-media dudes cocking a snook at this Facebook tomfoolery—how enlightening or entertaining could that be? Well, now we know the answer: infinitely. Part of that film's brilliance lies in its detachment: Fincher and Sorkin are

palpably suspicious of our voluntary surrender to the gods of social networking, but they still recognise that at its heart the story is one which rests on timeless themes (ambition, betrayal, conformity, loneliness).

Most of my pre-release fears surrounding *The Social Network* have now been helpfully embodied in *The Fifth Estate*, Bill Condon's film about Julian Assange and WikiLeaks. I come not to review the film today but merely to remark on the infinitesimal differences in tone and perspective which can decide a movie's fate.

That said, I'm not going to take the fifth on *The Fifth Estate*: I think it's bogus. The problem is not Benedict Cumberbatch as Assange or Daniel Brühl as his WikiLeaks co-conspirator [???] Daniel Domscheit-Berg. Both work small miracles with the cartoonish characterisation they have been given. (Though Cumberbatch is called upon to give a terrible "Over to you..." straight-to-camera address at the end in a last-ditch attempt to make the film seem amorphous and self-reflexive.)

Whereas *The Social Network* had a mature, sane outlook on a youthful phenomenon, *The Fifth Estate* is craven: it's so superficially thrilled by the unknown potential of the internet that it goes into a spin. Graphics that would have been rejected as too absurd by *The Day Today* are thrown in alongside dubious visualisations of WikiLeaks' online world—an unending office floor like the one in *The Apartment*, only with the sky where the ceiling should be, and an Assange clone seated at every desk. The sensation that someone is trying to explain the internet to you is hard to suppress.

The film's fogeyish approach to technology probably wouldn't matter so much if it had grasped the bare bones of drama. The verbal clichés pile up ("We changed the world!" "This is huge" "Welcome to the revolution!"). Motivation and back-story are smuggled into casual conversation with all the elegance of an elephant being sneaked through passport control. Even if the real Assange has a habit of cramming his conversation with one-line biographical anecdotes ("I have a son..." "When I was 13..."), the writer-director Bill Condon (*Gods and Monsters*) should know that this doesn't fly in film—it stops the drama dead while we wait for the significance to pass like a storm cloud.

Condon also betrays a serious lack of faith in his material whenever he sets the cameras whizzing around the characters or cuts frantically between scenes and time-zones. This is the filmmaking style of a director who suddenly realises that most of his dramatic high-points involve men staring at laptop screens. While it may be unfair to use *The Social Network* as a stick with which to beat *The Fifth Estate*, this is another area in which Fincher and Sorkin excelled: rather than getting hung up on the computer-screen problem, they simply circumnavigated it for the most part and coaxed the drama out into the physical. If we felt any claustrophobia from that movie, it was entirely intentional. With the exception of some taut scenes involving Laura Linney (she serves much the same acerbic function that Joan Allen did in the Bourne series), *The Fifth Estate* feels desk-bound even when its characters are whizzing across the world, or glancing over their shoulders at enemy agents.

In some of the scenes set in the *Guardian* offices, Dan Stevens turns up as the paper's former assistant editor, Ian Katz, who recently decamped to the BBC's Newsnight. What he said rather ungallantly last month about one of his show's guests, Labour MP Rachel Reeves, goes double for *The Fifth Estate*: it's boring snoring.]

- *Ryan Gilbey is the New Statesman's film critic.*

<http://www.newstatesman.com/culture/2013/10/fifth-estate-wikileaks-its-worst>

WikiLeaks 7th Birthday on 4th October

Wise Up Action
October 3, 2013

7th October 2013 marks the 7th anniversary of the launch of WikiLeaks. It will also be 472 days since Julian Assange, the organization's founder has been trapped inside the embassy building. And it will be 44 days since Chelsea (Bradley) Manning was sentenced to 35 years in prison— expected to be first up for parole in 7 years. And it will be 137 days since Edward Snowden fled from the US....

THIS YEAR IN WIKILEAKS

It's been an amazing year in the WikiLeaks World! The organisation has continued to be at the heart of the struggle for truth, justice and freedom in the resistance to corrupt governance and the marked (and in some ways, extraordinary) erosion of civil liberties that we are facing in our time.

Publishing

On the publishing side, WikiLeaks releases over the past year included the following:

The Detainee Policies, more than 100 classified or otherwise restricted files from the United States Department of Defense covering the rules and procedures for detainees in U.S. military custody, were released in October last year.

In April this year they published the excellent resource PLUS D by collating the Kissinger Cables, which, although already declassified, were pretty inaccessible in their original release, with Cablegate into a fully searchable Public Library of US Diplomacy.

In May they released the prosecution and prison documents for Pirate Bay founder Gottfrid Svartholm Warg (Anakata), to assist in his defence.

In September they released more Spy Files — Spy Files #3, showing us how, as the intelligence world has privatised, US, EU and developing world intelligence agencies have rushed into spending millions on next-generation mass surveillance technology to target communities, groups and whole populations.

CYPHERPUNKS

Back in November of last year, Cypherpunks was published; a book on freedom, the future of the internet, and the role of cryptography as the means of achieving privacy for the weak and transparency for the powerful instead of the dystopian world of the reverse that the internet could make equally possible. The book is drawn from a series of discussions on this critical subject between Julian Assange, Jacob Applebaum, Andy Muller-Maghn and Jeremie Zimmermann.

FUNDRAISING & US ELECTION

In October of last year, WikiLeaks was busy launching a fundraising campaign focusing on the run up to the US Presidential Elections. The progressive release (some each day) of another set of documents from the Stratfor emails accompanied this campaign— the Presidential Campaign releases from the Global Intelligence Files (GI Files or Stratfor emails) — 200,000 documents giving behind the scenes insights into both Republican and Democrat campaigns during US presidential elections. WikiLeaks said:

EUROPE

In November of 2012, the European Parliament voted to protect WikiLeaks, donations become tax deductible EU wide, and WikiLeaks released European Commission documents showing that it facilitated the financial blockade of WikiLeaks by U.S. hard-right Lieberman/King, contrary to the European Parliament's wishes.

In December Julian Assange made a Presentation to the European Parliament on Corruption Revealed in Cablegate. And WikiLeaks declared war on the banking blockade by actively pursuing all legal avenues to reverse it and enable supporters' donations once more. This resulted in a partial victory later in the year.

On the 20th of December Julian gave an inspiring speech from the Ecuadorian Embassy balcony coining the phrase 'Learn, Challenge, Act, Now', and announced the formation of the WikiLeaks Party with a view to making an impact for transparency in the cause of justice in the Australian Senate.

THE FBI MOLE

In February 2013 WikiLeaks revealed that eight FBI agents conducted an interrogation in Iceland in relation to the ongoing U.S. investigation of WikiLeaks, targeting a young man who later in the year told the press he became a paid informer within the organisation for the F.B.I.

THE 'GOOGLE' TRANSCRIPT

In April they released a transcript of a secret meeting between Julian Assange and Google CEO Eric Schmidt.

WE STEAL SECRETS

And in May a blow by blow critique of Alex Gibney's entire script for We Steal Secrets— the Story of WikiLeaks (not!), the duplicity of which begins with the very title, was published by WikiLeaks ahead of the film's release date, as an annotated transcript of an audio recording.

PVT MANNING'S TRIAL

In June we held our breath as Chelsea (then Bradley) Manning's formal trial began after 15 months of pretrial hearings in the Court Martial, and over three years pretrial imprisonment— the longest known in US courts martial. WikiLeaks issued a statement calling it a show trial, saying that in truth, it was the US government and the US military that were on trial, rather than Pfc Manning:

EDWARD SNOWDEN— THE NSA/GCHQ SURVEILLANCE REVELATIONS

As the first anniversary of Julian's entering the Ecuadorian Embassy to seek asylum from Ecuador came around, WikiLeaks was rushing to assist another whistleblower in trouble— Edward Snowden, whose NSA/GCHQ revelations confirmed the statements on the reach of govt surveillance made by Assange in a series of interviews promoting the Cypherpunks book back in Nov 2012.

Details of the extent and scale of the US/UK global system of surveillance hitting the headlines caused shock waves not least amongst those whose wrongdoing was being revealed and United States government, hell bent on getting their hands on Snowden, responded with incredible and implacable aggression, apparently not caring who they offended or what the repercussions of their obsessive pursuit might be.

All of which availed them zilch, as, with the strategic assistance of WikiLeaks, Snowden gave them the slip accompanied by the immensely courageous Sarah

Harrison (who went out to support him in person putting her own safety in jeopardy), and the public debate which WikiLeaks was urgently promoting with the publication of Cypherpunks and previously the Spy Files releases, was now well under way.

ON THE LEGAL OFFENSIVE

In September, after David Miranda, the partner of Glenn Greenwald, was disgracefully detained under terrorism legislation in connection with the Edward Snowden leaks, and had property seized (and still not returned) under the allegation that it threatened national security, WikiLeaks launched a criminal investigation in several jurisdictions regarding events in Sweden and Germany back in 2010, in which WikiLeaks property was seized and not returned. Julian Assange said:

WIKILEAKS PARTY

The WikiLeaks Party, only first announced in December 2012, made a decisive entrance into Australian Politics by registering Candidates for the Senate elections in three states. Although it did not succeed in securing a senate seat for any of its candidates and internal strife had us holding on to our seats, it was, despite this, remarkably successful in attracting thousands of votes, carrying a promise for the future.

THE FIFTH ESTATE

The upcoming release of Hollywood Film The Fifth Estate has been described as an anti-WikiLeaks propaganda effort against the organization and its staff, creating cultural bias against it to undermine its support base. A mature edition of the script as well as a 4000 word essay addressing the inconsistencies and falsities in it was released by WikiLeaks and has been widely reported in the press.

SPEAKING OUT FOR FREE SPEECH, FREE PRESS & AN END TO INJUSTICE

And throughout the year WikiLeaks has continued its support to other journalists who find themselves in difficulties like Jeremy Hammond and Barrett Brown, whose prosecutions are in part connected to the Stratfor Files. And Swedish Pirate Bay founder Gottfrid Svartholm Warg (Anakata), who many believe is being prosecuted so relentlessly in part because of his connection to WikiLeaks and in any case at the behest of the US govt, was also recently assisted by the appearance as a defence witness of Jacob Applebaum. The text of the speech (you can listen to it in the video below from Katia) which Julian Assange (owing to the Snowden crisis) never actually gave on the first anniversary of his asylum bid, included reference to these political prisoners (and others), as have previous speeches.

And WikiLeaks continues to actively promote Free Speech and a Free Press to stand against the corruption of those in power, as they participate on all manner of platforms in speaking out and taking action in support of these values.

<http://wiseupaction.info/2013/10/03/wikileaks-7th-birthday-is-on-fri-4th-october-come-to-the-ecuadorian-embassy/>

Julian Assange & Benedict Cumberbatch: 1st Letter

WL Central
2013-10-09

Date: Tue, 15 Jan 2013
From: Julian Assange
To: Benedict Cumberbatch
Subject: Message from Assange

Dear Benedict,

Thank you for trying to contact me. It is the first approach by anyone from the DreamWorks production to me or WikiLeaks.

My assistants communicated your request to me, and I have given it a lot of thought and examined your previous work, which I am fond of.

I think I would enjoy meeting you.

The bond that develops between an actor and a living subject is significant.

If the film reaches distribution we will forever be correlated in the public imagination. Our paths will be forever entwined. Each of us will be granted standing to comment on the other for many years to come and others will compare our characters and trajectories.

But I must speak directly.

I hope that you will take such directness as a mark of respect, and not as an unkindness.

I believe you are a good person, but I do not believe that this film is a good film.

I do not believe it is going to be positive for me or the people I care about.

I believe that it is going to be overwhelmingly negative for me and the people I care about.

It is based on a deceitful book by someone who has a vendetta against me and my organisation.

In other circumstances this vendetta may have gone away, but our conflict with the United States government and the establishment press has created a patronage and commissioning market— powerful, if unpopular— for works and comments that are harmful to us.

There are dozens of positive books about WikiLeaks, but DreamWorks decided to base its script only on the most toxic. So toxic is the first book selected by DreamWorks that it is distributed to US military bases as a mechanism to discourage military personnel from communicating with us. Its author is publicly known to be involved in the DreamWorks production in an ongoing capacity.

DreamWorks' second rights purchase is the next most toxic, biased book. Published and written by people we have had a bitter contractual dispute with for years, whose hostility is well known. Neither of these two books were the first to be published and there are many independent authors who have written positive or neutral books, all of whom DreamWorks ignored.

DreamWorks has based its entire production on the two most discredited books on the market.

I know the film intends to depict me and my work in a negative light.

I believe it will distort events and subtract from public understanding.

It does not seek to simplify, clarify or distil the truth, but rather it seeks to bury it.

It will resurrect and amplify defamatory stories which were long ago shown to be false.

My organisation and I are the targets of political adversary from the United States government and its closest allies.

The United States government has engaged almost every instrument of its justice and intelligence system **to pursue— in its own words— a ‘whole of government’ investigation of ‘unprecedented scale and nature’** into WikiLeaks under draconian espionage laws. Our alleged sources are facing their entire lives in the US prison system. Two are already in it. Another one is detained in Sweden.

Feature films are the most powerful and insidious shapers of public perception, **because they fly under the radar of conscious exclusion.**

This film is going to bury good people doing good work, at exactly the time that the state is coming down on their heads.

It is going to smother the truthful version of events, at a time when the truth is most in demand.

As justification it will claim to be fiction, but it is not fiction. It is distorted truth about living people doing battle with titanic opponents. It is a work of political opportunism, influence, revenge **and, above all, cowardice.**

It seeks to ride on the back of our work, our reputation and our struggles.

It seeks to cut our strength with weakness. To cut affection with exploitation. To cut diligence with paranoia. To cut loyalty with naivety. To cut principle with hypocrisy. And above all, to cut the truth with lies.

The film's many distortions buttress what the prosecution will argue. Has argued. Is arguing. In my case, and in that of others. These cases will continue for years.

The studio that is producing the film is not a vulnerable or weak party.

DreamWorks' free speech rights are not in jeopardy— ours are.

DreamWorks is an extremely wealthy organisation, with ties to powerful interests in the US government.

I must therefore question the choices and motives behind it: the opportunism, fears and mundanity; the unwritten rules of film financing and distribution in the United States; the cringe against doing something useful and brave.

I believe that you are a decent person, who would not naturally wish to harm good people in dire situations.

You will be used, as a hired gun, to assume the appearance of the truth in order to assassinate it. To present me as someone morally compromised and to place me in a falsified history. To create a work, not of fiction, but of debased truth.

Not because you want to, of course you don't, but because, in the end, you are a jobbing actor who gets paid to follow the script, no matter how debauched.

Your skills play into the hands of people who are out to remove me and WikiLeaks from the world.

I believe that you should reconsider your involvement in this enterprise.

Consider the consequences of your cooperation with a project that vilifies and marginalises a living political refugee to the benefit of an entrenched, corrupt and dangerous state.

Consider the consequences to people who may fall into harm because of this film.

Many will fight against history being blackwashed in this way. It is a collective history now, involving millions of people, because millions have opened their eyes as a result of our work and the attempts to destroy us.

I believe you are well intentioned but surely you can see why it is a bad idea for me to meet with you.

By meeting with you, I would validate this wretched film, and endorse the talented, but debauched, performance that the script will force you to give.

I cannot permit this film any claim to authenticity or truthfulness. In its current form it has neither, and doing so would only further aid the campaign against me.

It is contrary to my interests, and to those of my organisation, and I thank you for your offer, and what I am sure is your genuine intent, but I must, with inexpressible regret, turn it down.

Julian Assange

Review: The Fifth Estate

Benedict Cumberbatch aces Assange — but the WikiLeaks chief goes unchallenged in an otherwise watchable film

Peter Bradshaw
The Guardian
10 October 2013

Is he Woodward'n'Bernstein— or Deep Throat? Might he even be Tricky Dicky himself? This movie's ambivalence towards its protagonist, WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, sometimes looks like complexity, but also an odd sort of fence-sitting. Biopics of this kind are usually conceived when their subjects' careers and reputations are at rest, and the consensus of liberal opinion securely established. But Assange is still holed up in London's Ecuadorian embassy, and the debate about the sexual charges he faces in Sweden [*he has not been "charged" with anything --A.B.*] is far from over. The film acknowledges that issue in the closing credits, but there is certainly no dramatisation of the disputed events, and the film sometimes behaves as if the difficulties in Assange's personality are structural problems in the story to be smoothed away.

Aside from the evasiveness and occasional hammy redundancy, however, there's no doubt that Benedict Cumberbatch does a very good job as the impassioned, imperious [???] and mercurial Assange, the campaigner whose website — in concert with a number of papers, including the Guardian — exposed military brutality in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is [portrayed as] difficult, driven, emotionally damaged in some unlocatable way, manipulative and with the tense manner of someone forever suppressing an anxiety attack: his leadership talents are hampered by a control-freaky resistance to dealing with other people.

Is it an entirely fair portrayal? I suspect not. But it's highly watchable, and there is a star-crossed bromance, of sorts, with German colleague Daniel Berg, played by Daniel Brühl. Peter Capaldi and Dan Stevens gamely if quaintly impersonate the stern editor and stern deputy editor of the Guardian. (In real life, these people do actually smile.) And with its portrayal of investigative reporter Nick Davies (David Thewlis), the film sticks to the ancient movie tradition of depicting journalists as untamed, quasi-bohemian wild men, showing up late, gruff and unshaven in the office. Cumberbatch has a very good scene as Assange walks out of Berg's family home during an abortive supper with his parents, furious, stifled and scared by the bourgeois comfort. His contemptuous "interview", repudiating this very movie, is a nice touch.

Comment

This is a work of fiction, about a man who is still very much alive and is still very much at odds with the US government and newspapers such as the Guardian. As such, no one would expect it to portray the real Julian Assange in any way. But many people will watch this film and think otherwise, think it to be a close depiction of the events that have taken place. It is shocking to see to what lengths people will go to obscure the truth. This does not at all mean that Assange should not have to answer to the accusations levelled against him. But it is to recognise that he is one of the US government's main targets, and, as such, little of what you read in the press is going to be about bringing truth to the matter. Julian Assange's letter to Benedict Cumberbatch

shows how little he thinks of the film. **What other living person would be defamed in this way** other than someone who represents a threat to the mass killing, torture and pillaging going on in the name of our fake democracies?

— *GiulioSica*

Benedict Cumberbatch says Julian Assange's letter affected his portrayal

WikiLeaks founder's request gave Cumberbatch 'real cause for concern' as he addressed his role in The Fifth Estate

Reuters

The Guardian

12 October 2013

British actor Benedict Cumberbatch says a letter from WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange asking him not to do a film about the emergence of the anti-secrecy website affected his portrayal of him in *The Fifth Estate*.

Cumberbatch, 37, said in an "ask me anything" interview on content-sharing site Reddit on Friday that he was concerned with playing the part after Assange sent him a letter in January declining an invitation to meet in person and urging him to rethink his involvement in the film.

"To have the man you are about to portray ask you intelligently and politely not to do it gave me real cause for concern, however, it galvanised me into addressing why I was doing this movie," Cumberbatch said in response to a user asking him whether Assange's letter affected his role in the film.

Assange's letter, dated 15 January and published on the WikiLeaks website on Wednesday, called the actor a "hired gun" and criticised Walt Disney's DreamWorks studio for using "toxic" source material as a foundation for the film, based partly on the 2011 book *Inside WikiLeaks* by Assange's former lieutenant Daniel Domscheit-Berg....

Cumberbatch rejected Assange's comment, saying: "He accuses me of being a 'hired gun' as if I am an easily bought cypher for right-wing propaganda. Not only do I not operate in a moral vacuum but this was not a pay day for me at all."

Cumberbatch, who plays the WikiLeaks founder as rude, awkward and unkempt, said he believed the film focused on the success of WikiLeaks and celebrated "its extraordinary founder", Assange, while exploring the impact the website had on the people at the core of it.

He said he hoped *The Fifth Estate* would start a conversation. "I wanted to create a three-dimensional portrait of a man far more maligned in the tabloid press than he is in our film to remind people that he is not just the weird, white haired Australian dude wanted in Sweden, hiding in an embassy behind Harrods," the actor added.

Julian Assange: my life in the embassy

As the Fifth Estate starring Benedict Cumberbatch as Julian Assange is released, the WikiLeaks founder talks about his life in the Ecuadorian Embassy and how the staff there have become 'like family'

John Hiscock, Film Writer
The Telegraph
14 Oct. 2013

The WikiLeaks founder and editor-in-chief, talking via Skype, said: "We've gone through a lot together and we understand we are all in this together. Some staff have been here nearly 20 years. We have lunch together, celebrate people's birthdays and other details I don't want to go into because of the security situation. Of course, the working environment has changed a lot because there are still police surrounding the embassy and it's a difficult situation for the staff."

He lives in a small office room converted into living quarters, equipped with a bed, telephone, sun lamp, computer with internet connections, shower, treadmill and a small kitchenette. He declined to say whether he had learned to speak Spanish during his stay: "I found in investigative journalism it is always best, if you have any language skills, not to admit them."

Assange says he receives frequent visits from celebrity supporters including musician Graham Nash, whom he describes as "an unexpected supporter but a good one. Nash stopped by on Friday and who wrote a song about Bradley Manning. Among other visitors have been Yoko Ono, Sean Lennon, actors Peter Sarsgaard, Maggie Gyllenhaal and John Cusack, along with the rapper MIA. "There's been a wide range," Assange said. "It's interesting to go through this experience and see who walks the walk and who just talks the talk."

To relax, he watches the Australian television series *Rake* about a brilliant but self-destructive Sydney barrister and he also enjoyed the movie *There Will Be Blood*. He watches movies such as *Argo* and *Zero Dark Thirty*, he said, mainly to see how they affect WikiLeaks.

Looking thin and pale and wearing a blue tracksuit with a WikiLeaks logo, he talked in a wide-ranging 90-minute interview, adding: "Of course it's difficult to wake up for 500 days and see the same walls but on the other hand I am doing good work and I have no time for anything else so it's a bit counter-productive to trap me here, because what else can I do but work?" he asked.

"I have my heart and soul in this work. I have a very capable and loyal staff and we have a lot of supporters around the world and people who believe in what we do and want to see if it continues. So although I am trapped in these walls, intellectually I am outside with our people today and that to me is important. **While I am imprisoned here there is a developing prison where you are living as well. It would be pretty bad if when I finally get out of here I find it's actually better here than outside. At least in here there are no sudden raids by police, there is a rule of law and not an arbitrary breakdown as there is in many countries now.**"

He did admit concerns for the safety of his family. "I have a family and that situation is difficult," he said. **"My family has had to move and change their name and have been subject to threats from right-wing blogs calling for my son, for example, to be killed to get at me.** We take security precautions to deal with it and it is dealt with. I'm not scared about it."

The 42-year-old has been living in the Ecuadorian Embassy in Knightsbridge since June 2012 when he was granted diplomatic asylum. The British government wants to extradite him to Sweden under a European Arrest Warrant for questioning in relation to a sexual assault investigation. Metropolitan police officers have been stationed outside the embassy since Assange entered the building and have been ordered to arrest him if he attempts to leave.

The statute of limitations on the sexual case in Sweden expires in August 2020 but Assange is more concerned about the problems he faces in the US. Assange added: "My focus of attention is on the U.S. case—the continuing grand jury investigation," he said. "That is what I have received full political asylum in relation to. **I assume the Swedish case will disappear of its own accord in due course.**"

The Australian-born Assange burst into public consciousness in 2010 with WikiLeaks' release of the video of the July 12, 2007 Apache helicopter attack on Baghdad which showed U.S. military killing Iraqi civilians and journalists.

Since then WikiLeaks has been involved in the publication of material documenting extrajudicial killings in Kenya, the Afghan war diaries, a report on toxic waste dumping on the Ivory Coast, Church of Scientology manuals, Guantanamo Bay detention camp procedures and material involving large banks such as Kaupthing and Julius Baer, among other documents.

Hollywood has been intrigued by the saga and at one time there were five major films about Assange in development with only the documentary *We Steal Secrets* and the feature film *The Fifth Estate*, starring Benedict Cumberbatch as Assange, eventually being produced. Assange has described *The Fifth Estate* as "opportunistic and hostile....a geriatric snooze fest doomed for failure."

And as for *We Steal Secrets*, he said: **"The bias is right there in the title because no one claims in the entire documentary that we steal secrets, not even our critics.** Fortunately it is not being taken seriously as a historical or intellectual work. Underground, a feature film that was produced in Australia about me as a teenager is extremely positive and similarly, documentaries out of Germany and France have been overwhelmingly positive. It appears that there is an aspect coming out of the United States that reflects the wounded feelings— for want of better words— of the security establishment in the US."

Assange insists he has no regrets about the actions which led to his present situation. "Small tactical decisions go one way or another but I wouldn't have done any of the major decisions differently," he said. "All the major decisions I believe were correct and I cannot see any way I could have done things differently."

• *John Hiscock writes about film for the Telegraph and on his own blog*

The UK has withdrawn from a bilateral commission which was created by Ecuador in order to resolve Julian Assange's situation.

Source: This Day in WikiLeaks, 2013-10-23

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MPs condemn European Arrest Warrant

London Evening Standard
1 November 2013

The European Arrest Warrant (EAW) is "fundamentally flawed" and the Government needs to go further with its reforms of the system, a group of influential MPs has warned.

The EAW, introduced in 2004, allows a national judicial authority, such as a court, to get a suspect extradited between European Union (EU) member states. The fast-track arrest warrant is among 35 EU criminal justice measures the Government wants to retain— but Home Secretary Theresa May has promised to change British law to prevent it being used to extradite UK nationals on trivial or dubious charges.

However, the Home Affairs Select Committee has said it is concerned the reforms do not go far enough and has called for an urgent vote in the House of Commons on continued UK membership of the EAW.

Committee chair Keith Vaz said: "The European Arrest Warrant, in its existing form, is fundamentally flawed and has led to a number of miscarriages of justice with devastating consequences for those concerned. We welcome the Government's proposed reforms, but are concerned that they do not go far enough.

"The House should be given the opportunity to vote separately on continued UK membership of the EAW as early as possible in order to provide a parliamentary mandate for any future negotiations."

In its report, the committee said some countries use the EAW simply to expedite their investigations, whereas others do so in pursuit of relatively minor crimes. It added that for these reasons the UK receives disproportionately more warrants than it issues.

The committee argued the EAW has also facilitated miscarriages of justice in a number of cases.

Under the terms of the Lisbon Treaty, if the Government wishes to claw back criminal justice measures from Brussels it first has to opt out of all 133 on the list and then negotiate to opt back in to those it wishes to retain.

Announcing her decision to retain 35 earlier this year, Mrs May said she would amend the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Bill to ensure that an arrest warrant could be refused for minor crimes.

In its report, the committee argues that if the Government proceeds with the opt-in as proposed, it will not result in any repatriation of powers to the UK— and may even result in a net flow of powers in the opposite direction.

Yvette Cooper MP, Labour's shadow home secretary, said: " Labour supports the European Arrest Warrant and the other crucial measures of EU cooperation that tackle serious crime, bring criminals to justice and protect victims.

"While the Government's U-turn on the arrest warrant has been welcome, the Home Secretary has been foolish in putting EU cooperation at risk in a big game of phoney hokey-cokey. As the Home Affairs Select Committee rightly points out, there is no repatriation of powers in the Government's package. The measures being lost are either defunct or happening already."

Fair Trials International, a human rights charity that provides assistance to people arrested in a country other than their own, said the 'opt-out decision' is a key opportunity for the Government to take action to address long-standing concerns about the EAW.

Fair Trials' head of law reform Libby McVeigh said: " We hope this report persuades the UK Government and politicians in Brussels to reform the arrest warrant to prevent future cases of injustice. The arrest warrant is an important crime-fighting tool but, without reform, will continue to be used inappropriately with devastating human consequences."

A Home Office spokesman said: "European Arrest Warrants provide the police with an important mechanism for returning criminals to the UK to face justice. **"But they need to be used proportionately and requests shouldn't be made prematurely.** That's why we are incorporating important safeguards into our law governing requests received from other EU countries."

The refugee

*Geoffrey Robertson
Sydney Morning Herald
November 2, 2013*

London has a new tourist attraction. The Ecuadorian embassy is just beside Harrods, the famous Knightsbridge department store. This elevated ground floor of an Edwardian mansion block is staked out around the clock by some very bored British bobbies who seem to know that they will do nothing for the next few years other than tell tourists the time. Unless, of course, Julian Assange leans so far over the balcony while addressing supporters that he topples into their outstretched arms, thereby leaving South America and landing, instantaneously, in the United Kingdom.

International law produces such miracles: embassy premises are "inviolable" sovereign territory under the Vienna Convention, and one of Britain's best qualities is that it actually abides by international law. So across the threshold of this *pied-à-terre* in Ecuador neither SAS unit nor navy SEAL may enter. When Scotland Yard picked up a

rumour that Assange would ascend to the roof to smoke Cuban cigars on dark nights, they prepared a snatch squad, only to be told that Ecuadorian sovereignty might extend skywards.

Inside the embassy, there are some reminders of Ecuador: a travel magazine on the front desk, a few toy llamas, a portrait of the incumbent president, a smattering of conversational Spanish from the ambassador, a strikingly attractive woman who insists on being called "Anna" and not "Your Excellency". The large front room from which Assange addresses the outside world is her office; there is a function room that operates as a party space. And a corridor, at the end of which is the asylum-seeker's lair, well stocked with books, computers, a sun lamp and an exercise machine. His bedroom is a converted toilet, a space that would rival in size the prison cell to which the governments of Sweden and the United States would wish him consigned. But he is free to do portentous things that keep his name in the headlines, like channelling Edward Snowden when he was holed up in a hotel near Moscow Airport, and promoting, long-distance, his unsuccessful candidacy for the Australian Senate.

For all his workaholism, Assange has time for parties—for birthdays and celebrations of Ecuadorian national days, attended by friends and journalists and beautiful young people who often turn out to be human-rights lawyers; the brilliant Jen Robinson; his loyal WikiLeaks associates Joseph Farrell and Sarah Harrison; a few peers of the realm; admirers such as Yoko Ono and Bianca Jagger.

Sarah Harrison disappeared for a while, and his detractors put about rumours that she must have defected from her "manipulative" and "megalomaniac" boss, before she broke cover at a press conference in Moscow as Snowden's shepherd. Assange is not, as everyone says, a "control freak" (he has no one to control) and he is certainly not in line to become "Australia's L. Ron Hubbard", another snarky headline that makes no sense because he has no brainwashed followers and—the most obvious difference—no money.

That lack of material wealth was an attractive feature of the international man of mystery whose baby-face first glowed from the news wires in mid-2010, after he produced the "collateral murder" tape showing a US helicopter gunship killing two reporters, along with other men, and wounding two children, in Baghdad in 2007. His was no shoulder-slumped mugshot, but the visage of a dangerous cherub, beaming beneath a halo of blond hair, which hid a cranium that could outwit the most powerful country in the world. He had no money nor interest in acquiring any. Among the internet generation in Europe, this gave him a rock-star image, as he sang his siren song of political transparency, justice and human rights. Just how mesmeric Assange had become by mid-August of that year may be measured by the front-page reporting, throughout the world, of the allegation that he had raped a woman in Stockholm. Within a few hours, seven million people had clicked on the website of Expressen, the Swedish newspaper to which the story had been leaked. **There was much less publicity a day or so later, when the senior prosecutor in Stockholm dropped the charge and said there was virtually nothing else to investigate.**

Then, a week later, the charge was reinstated by a "gender prosecutor" in another Swedish city, after a secret appeal by a lawyer-politician acting for the complainant. Irrespective of the merit of the complaints, this was no way to run a legal system: **prosecuting authorities should not be in the business of giving "scoops" to tabloids and should not allow secret appeals to another prosecutor in a hearing from which the suspect's lawyer is excluded.**

I said as much to a journalist from *Crikey*, and in October received a call from Assange, now back in London and in hiding as the threats from America and Sweden mounted. I invited him for lunch and he came with Sarah Harrison. He was charming (save for a moment of pique when he lost an argument with my wife, Kathy Lette, over the merits of Jane Austen) and when it turned out he had nowhere to stay for the next few nights, it seemed only compatriotic to put him up.

Offering Julian Assange a bed for the night might have been hospitable, but it soon became clear that he was not going to sleep in it, or at all. He took up residence in the kitchen, computer on lap, curled over it like a question mark.

The only way I could get him to sleep— at 5 am— was to indicate the kitchen's glass ceiling and to point out that any police helicopter could spot him a mile away. He instantly folded his computer and went off to bed. He was paranoid, of course, but he had every reason for paranoia, given the threats emanating from American politicians (Sarah Palin said he should be "hunted down like bin Laden") and now from Swedish prosecutors, who vowed to issue a European Arrest Warrant (EAW) if he did not return to Stockholm for questioning.

The next day I took him for a walk in the autumnal serenity of Regents Park (its gnarled tree-trunks had been favourite "dead letter" drops for British spies during the Cold War). He seemed genuinely horrified by the sex allegations— it was "excruciating" for him even to talk about them. His mind was on higher things, but two women who announced that they "wanted to teach him a lesson" had enlisted for this purpose the power of the Swedish state. He had gone to bed, separately, with both of them, at their initiative, but they later found out about each other and presented him with an ultimatum to have a blood test to prove he did not have HIV / AIDS, or else they would go to the police.

He refused to be "blackmailed" (as he put it) and the very next day they had gone to the police. Immediately the prosecutor's office told a tabloid that it was issuing a warrant for his arrest for rape. The hunt was now on: he had waited in Stockholm for six weeks before returning to London in October, but now the Swedish prosecutors wanted him back and were pressing for his arrest. They would have succeeded, had they filled in the EAWs correctly. While they corrected their mistake, Assange was allowed his moment of glory with the launch of "Cablegate", hundreds of thousands of diplomatic messages exposing US diplomacy to a fascinated world.

In early December 2010, the inevitable happened: Assange presented himself for arrest to the UK police and was taken to Wandsworth Prison, the first stage in his extradition to Sweden. By this time I was in Sydney, having been invited by the federal attorney-general to conduct a Hypothetical at an international conference on child pornography. There had been an uncomprehending reaction to Cablegate by Australian politicians: **Julia Gillard had immediately declared that Assange should be prosecuted under the Crimes Act, despite a famous decision of the Australian High Court in 1983 that declared that obtaining diplomatic cables could not be made subject to a prosecution under this Act.** So I was providently placed to advise the government (and did) both on how Australia might protect children from porn and how Assange should be protected from knee-jerk defamation by his own prime minister.

Back in Britain, my client did not enjoy the petty restrictions of prison. My wife had sent him a Jane Austen novel, but he was not allowed access to the internet, and an issue of Time magazine was banned from the prison because it had his picture on the cover. I was prevailed upon to return from a Christmas holiday at Bondi in order to make a new bail application in London. **What did surprise and slightly humble me was the number of "ordinary" Australians— Qantas crew, customs officials and the like— who had heard the reason for my departure and wished me success.** They seemed proud that Australia had produced this wild-spirited genius, and certainly felt it unfair that he should suffer for revealing American secrets that mattered to the world. At present, however, he was suffering for allegedly molesting two women. But he was entitled to freedom until the Swedish extradition claim could be assessed by a UK court.

For his bail application, I had to refute some false allegations— for example that he had refused to be interviewed in Sweden (he had voluntarily attended a police interview at which he denied the allegations). But the central fact that affected the judge's mind was that the charges facing Assange were "very serious".

Rape always sounds very serious, and the Swedish prosecutors (in breach of their duty under European law) had refused to make available in English their dossier of evidence. Because of this, WikiLeaks had been forced to spend £10,000 translating it. So I was able to put before the court some facts about the case that had gone unmentioned in the media, and still tend to be overlooked.

It turns out that Sweden has three classes of rape— extreme, serious and minor. Assange was charged with "minor rape"— a contradiction in terms, but that is what the Swedes actually call the allegation against him. It amounted to allegations of having consensual sex without a condom, the use of which had been an implied condition of the consent. The maximum sentence for "minor rape" is four years, and an expert in Swedish sentencing law declared that given the circumstances of the offences the likely penalty for Assange, if he were convicted, would be non-custodial, or no more than a few months in prison.

In the case of both complainants, the police dossier confirmed that the sexual engagements were not merely consensual, but actively desired. Assange had come to Sweden at the invitation of a fringe political party to deliver a lecture on Saturday, August 14, 2010. The first complainant, a 33-year-old Social Democrat politician, told the lecture's organisers that Assange could stay in her tiny one-room, one-bed flat, giving them an assurance that she would be out of Stockholm electioneering on the Friday evening. She returned, however, for no apparent reason, and took him to dinner and to bed— supplying a condom that she requested him to use, which he did.

One week later she alleged to police that at some point that evening he had torn it, or had torn it off. Oddly, given that this event is the basis of the molestation charges, she made no complaint the next morning, Saturday, when a colleague called to take Assange to his lecture. By that time she was proudly describing herself as his "personal assistant" and tweeting to the world about how "cool" and clever he was— tweets she later removed. On Saturday afternoon, she volunteered to be his hostess at a crayfish party and arranged it for that evening in his honour. Witnesses confirm that she insisted he stay with her, despite others offering to put him up.

She did not complain to the police until one week later, *[she did not initiate a complaint, but “merely” accompanied the other woman to the police station with the intent of seeking advice and assistance --A.B.]* after learning that he had spent the next Monday night in bed with the second complainant, a 26-year-old self-confessed "groupie" *[she does not appear to have used that term --A.B.]*, who told police she had attended Assange's lecture in the hope of attracting him— an objective in which she succeeded all too well.

This second complainant took him by train to her flat in the suburbs on the Monday night, and then to bed, where he fell asleep and began to snore— to her annoyance, as she tweeted at the time to her rather voyeuristic friends. However, during the course of that night they had intercourse three or four times. On one occasion, when she was "half asleep", as she put it, she asked whether he was wearing anything and he laconically replied, "I'm wearing you." She did not object at the time but later inferred that he was not wearing a condom.

Her friends had read that he had spent some time in Africa so they advised her to have him take a test for HIV / AIDS. Her only way of contacting Assange was to call his "personal assistant"— the aforesaid first complainant. That's when this "personal assistant" called a journalist friend of Assange's to make a menacing demand: unless he took a blood test for HIV / AIDS, both women would go to the police.

The journalist told police he called Assange, who reacted with shock and said he was willing to take a blood test but did not want to do it as a result of blackmail. The next day (Friday, August 20), the first complainant directed the second to a police officer, who just happened to be her political colleague and "Facebook friend".

In the course of the interview that ensued between this policewoman and the second complainant, the policewoman informed her that Assange would be charged with rape. The complainant reacted to this news by fainting [???]. Nonetheless, a few minutes later an acting prosecutor, without further investigation, issued the warrant, and in breach of the rules revealed the fact to Expressen. Its scoop the next day— "Assange Wanted for Rape"— went live to millions throughout the world. Two days later, Stockholm's senior prosecutor cancelled the arrest warrant and publicly stated that there was no basis to pursue a charge of rape.

I have given but a cursory summary of the 98-page police dossier— it can be read in full on the internet. It includes some eerie photographs of what looked like a jellyfish but was in fact a condom, supplied to the police by the first complainant, who said she had found it on the floor of her flat, two weeks after Assange had stayed overnight, and it might have been the one he ripped, or ripped off....

But this was not "rape" as that term is normally understood. Whether it was an offence did not matter for the purposes of EAW extradition (that Sweden had ticked the "rape" box on the warrant was enough) but the very use of the word rape gives a false impression of malice and violence.

I should make clear that I believe that it should be a sexual offence for a man to deliberately deceive a partner whose consent has been conditional upon his use of a condom. That is the real allegation Julian Assange has an obligation to answer in Sweden, if (but only if) he can receive a fair trial.

But in Sweden, all rape trials, including allegations of "minor rape", are held in secret. This, so the "gender prosecutor" explained to the court in a written statement, is so that "the complainants may give evidence in confidence" — i.e. confident that their testimony, and any cross-examination that may undercut or demolish it, will never be revealed to the public.

This means, to those familiar with the Anglo-American tradition of open courts, that justice will not be seen to be done, and may therefore not be done at all. It means that if lies are told, members of the public who know the truth will not come forward, because they will not know that those lies are being told. In Sweden, only the verdict is published, and sometimes the judge's reasoning, but where the evidence has not been heard or published, it will be impossible to know whether the reasoning is reasonable. **"Publicity," in the words of British philosopher and jurist Jeremy Bentham, "is the very soul of justice: it keeps the judge, while trying, under trial."**

To deny open justice to Assange would not only be unprincipled, but absurd: statements by his accusers concerning his sexual behaviour, made in intimate detail, had been leaked to the media from the prosecution, **published in skewed and selective detail by newspapers**, and placed on the internet for anyone to access. No trial could be "fair" unless it permitted the public to observe how Assange challenged that evidence.

There is another curiosity of Swedish criminal justice that will render Assange's trial unfair. There is no jury— only a judge and three part-time "lay judges", who participate in and vote on the verdict. Astonishingly, they are selected not at random but by the main political parties and are, for that reason, very often retired politicians. As it happens, the major opposition party— the Social Democrats— has among its active members the first complainant and her lawyer and the policewoman who decided to issue the warrant. How could a member of that party judge him fairly? *[By being fair and unbiased, which is far from unlikely. --A.B.]*

As for the government, the prime minister, the chancellor and other ministers in the coalition government all launched quite outrageous public attacks on Assange for criticising Swedish legal procedure. The very notion that he will be tried by super-annuated politicians *[a label that certainly does not apply to all lay judges --A.B.]* is unacceptable— all the more so as they will try him in secret, so any bias they actually show will be undetectable.

Swedish legal practice presents a further problem for Assange: he will not be allowed bail. Are Swedish prisons inhumane? Yes, says the European Committee on Torture, which should know: in 2009 it issued a report drawing the Council of Europe's attention to Sweden's ill-treatment of foreign prisoners, particularly in Gothenburg, the prison where Assange is likely to be held.

The reality of Swedish justice belies the country's squeaky-clean image of a nice, neutral nation that has given the world such treats as Ikea and Abba. A closer look— for example, through the eyes of the novelist Stieg Larsson *[an absurd reference for an unbiased view of Sweden --A.B.]* — shows a different side to this small country, or at least a hidden underbelly. It has the highest reported level of violent rape in Europe, for example (a statistic that Amnesty International has deplored), and allowing complainants to give evidence in secret has not produced more convictions.

Should the Australian government be doing more to cut the Gordian knot that keeps Assange in Ecuador indefinitely? It has a duty to help its nationals in difficulty, without necessarily supporting the conduct that has led them into that difficulty. The failure of the Howard government, over five years, to utter a squeak about the unfairness of the proceedings against David Hicks was deplorable, and although the two cases are different, the failure for almost three years to seek a fair trial for Assange in Sweden does begin to look like indifference.

Our new foreign minister should summon the Swedish ambassador and make four requests:

1. That on Assange's return to Sweden, arrangements should be made that would leave him at liberty (in the Australian embassy, if necessary) until any custodial sentence imposed at the end of his trial.
2. That his trial must be held in open court.
3. That he should be tried by a judge alone, or at least without "lay judges" recruited from political parties.
4. That when found not guilty, or at the end of any prison sentence served on conviction, he should be permitted to leave Sweden and return directly to Australia irrespective of any extradition request from any other state.

This would remove the prospect that Assange would receive an unfair trial and would give Ecuador no basis for continuing its protection— so long as the US was prepared to stay its hand **(e.g. by not having him arrested in Dubai or Singapore, the Qantas stops on his way back home)**. That would require a foreign minister with the gumption to ask our great ally to put up or shut up.

The US grand jury has been sitting since October 2010: the prosecutors should either discharge it, or else bring down an indictment. If they do want to put this Australian on trial, **will they please wait until he returns to Australia and then make their extradition request, so that Australian courts can consider whether to extradite an Australian?**

This would be an entirely appropriate way for an independent country to act in relation to one of its nationals accused by prosecutors in a friendly nation of spilling its secrets. As well as consular assistance, it can and should express concern when Assange's treatment falls short of the minimum values Australia itself promotes, certainly when they are in any case **universal minimum standards: open trial, impartial judges and the opportunity for bail in the case of Sweden; due process and freedom of information in the case of the United States.**

Just as the Howard government should have spoken out for Hicks when his detention at Guantanamo became indefinite, so an Abbott government should be capable of asking the US to decide whether it wants to prosecute Assange as a spy, and, if so, produce its evidence to an Australian court once he returns home.

Meanwhile, Julian Assange cools his heels at the embassy, a prisoner of his own conscience. He suffers the slings and arrows of outrageous libels— enemies know that

he has no money to sue for defamation and could not turn up in court if he did. But he still receives accolades, the highest of which was the decision of the producers of The Simpsons to make him— and not Nelson Mandela or Madonna— the honoured guest on the 500th episode of the program. (Kathy Lette was asked to contribute dialogue, so when Assange cooks a barbecue for Homer and Marge and they ask the recipe for his delicious marinade, he replies, "I'm sorry, but I never reveal my sauces.")

If the Australian government fails to negotiate a solution then **his pursuers may have to await a change of government in Ecuador, in 2018 at the earliest, before flushing him out.** For now, he has plenty of visitors who leave their bicycles leaning on the embassy railings (it's the only place in London where you don't need to chain your bike) and take treats from the Harrods food hall to add to his menu. Although deathly white from lack of sun, there is little chance that this maverick Australian will pale into insignificance.

- An edited extract from *Dreaming Too Loud: Reflections on a Race Apart*, by Geoffrey Robertson, published this week by Vintage Australia.

www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/the-refugee-20131028-2waew.html

Statement by Sarah Harrison

Submitted by JohnSmith

W.L. Central

2013-11-06

As a journalist I have spent the last four months with NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden and arrived in Germany over the weekend. I worked in Hong Kong as part of the WikiLeaks team that brokered a number of asylum offers for Snowden and negotiated his safe exit from Hong Kong to take up his legal right to seek asylum. I was travelling with him on our way to Latin America when the United States revoked his passport, stranding him in Russia.

For the next 39 days I remained with him in the transit zone of Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport, where I assisted in his legal application to 21 countries for asylum, including Germany, successfully securing his asylum in Russia despite substantial pressure by the United States. I then remained with him until our team was confident that he had established himself and was free from the interference of any government.

Whilst Edward Snowden is safe and protected until his asylum visa is due to be renewed in nine months' time, there is still much work to be done. The battle Snowden joined against state surveillance and for government transparency is one that WikiLeaks— and many others— have been fighting, and will continue to fight.

WikiLeaks' battles are many: we fight against unaccountable power and government secrecy, publishing analysis and documents for all affected and to forever provide the public with the history that is theirs. For this, we are fighting legal cases in many jurisdictions and face an unprecedented Grand Jury investigation in the United States. WikiLeaks continues to fight for the protection of sources. We have won the battle for Snowden's immediate future, but the broader war continues.

I hope I have shown a counter example: with the right assistance whistleblowers can speak the truth and keep their liberty.

Already, in the few days I have spent in Germany, it is heartening to see the people joining together and calling for their government to do what must be done—to investigate NSA spying revelations, and to offer Edward Snowden asylum. The United States should no longer be able to continue spying on every person around the globe, or persecuting those that speak the truth.

Snowden is currently safe in Russia, but there are whistleblowers and sources to whom this does not apply. Chelsea Manning has been subject to abusive treatment by the United States government and is currently serving a 35-year sentence for exposing the true nature of war. Jeremy Hammond is facing a decade in a New York jail for allegedly providing journalists with documents that exposed corporate surveillance. I hope I have shown a counter example: with the right assistance whistleblowers can speak the truth and keep their liberty.

Aggressive tactics are being used against journalists, publishers and experts who work so courageously to bring truth to the world. Glenn Greenwald, Laura Poitras and Jacob Appelbaum are all in effective exile. Barrett Brown is indicted for reporting on unethical surveillance practices. My editor Julian Assange has asylum over US threats, but the United Kingdom refuses to allow him to fully exercise this right, violating the law. The UK government also detained David Miranda under the UK Terrorism Act for collaborating with Laura Poitras and Glenn Greenwald.

The UK Terrorism Act defines terrorism as the action or threat of action "designed to influence" any government "for the purpose of promoting a political or ideological cause". It prescribes actions that interfere with the functioning of an "electronic system" (i.e. the NSA's bulk spying program) or which the government alleges create a "risk" to a section of the public. It should be fanciful to suggest that national security journalism which has the purpose of producing honest government or enforcing basic privacy rights should be called "terrorism", but that is how the UK is choosing to interpret this law. Almost every story published on the GCHQ and NSA bulk spying programs falls under the UK government's interpretation of the word "terrorism". In response, our lawyers have advised me that it is not safe to return home.

The job of the press is to speak truth to power. And yet for doing our job we are persecuted. I say that these aggressive and illegal tactics to silence us—inventing arbitrary legal interpretations, over-zealous charges and disproportionate sentences—must not be permitted to succeed. I stand in solidarity with all those intimidated and persecuted for bringing the truth to the public.

In these times of secrecy and abuse of power there is only one solution—transparency. If our governments are so compromised that they will not tell us the truth, then we must step forward to grasp it. Provided with the unequivocal proof of primary source documents people can fight back. If our governments will not give this information to us, then we must take it for ourselves.

When whistleblowers come forward we need to fight for them, so others will be encouraged. When they are gagged, we must be their voice. When they are hunted, we must be their shield. When they are locked away, we must free them. Giving us the truth is not a crime. This is our data, our information, our history. We must fight to own it.

Courage is contagious.

Sarah Harrison
6 November 2013
Berlin

Britain 'violating' Assange's human rights: Ecuador

Maria Carmona
AFP
2013-11-08

Paris — Britain is "violating" the human rights of Wikileaks founder Julian Assange by its continued refusal to allow him to leave London, Ecuador's President Rafael Correa told AFP in an interview Friday.

Speaking during a visit to Paris, Correa said Assange's future was "in Britain's hands" as the Australian-born activist marks almost a year-and-a-half spent holed up in the Ecuadoran embassy in London.

"If (they) want to keep him there for 30 years, he'll stay there 30 years, but that would violate his human rights," Correa said.

Correa maintained that the offer of asylum he first made to Assange in August 2012 remained open, and added that he had the right "to demand asylum in the country of his choice".

Correa suggested Assange could answer prosecutors' questions by video link, and said he believed "the case would then be closed".

Ecuador has threatened to sue Britain in an unspecified international court over the status of Julian Assange if it rejects a proposal to submit the matter to a bilateral commission....

Assange not under sealed indictment, U.S. officials say

Sari Horwitz
Washington Post
November 18, 2013

Federal prosecutors have not filed a sealed indictment against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, despite persistent rumors that a nearly three-year-old grand jury investigation of him and his organization had secretly led to charges, according to senior law enforcement sources.

"Nothing has occurred so far," said one law enforcement official with knowledge of the case. **"But it's subject to change. I can't predict what's going to happen. The investigation is ongoing."**

The Justice Department, at least for now, appears to be drawing a distinction between those who were government employees or contractors and were required by law to protect classified information and those who received and published the material.

The Justice Department has unsealed an indictment charging former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden under the Espionage Act. Snowden, who fled to Hong Kong and then Russia, leaked tens of thousands of documents about U.S. surveillance programs that have led to reports in The Washington Post and Britain's Guardian newspaper, among other publications around the world.

"Snowden was a person who swore an oath, an employee of the National Security Agency," said a second senior U.S. official, drawing a line between Snowden's legal obligations and responsibility and someone like Assange.

Federal officials said the grand jury investigation has not been closed, and a spokesman for WikiLeaks said the organization drew no comfort from the fact that there was no sealed indictment.

"We will treat this news with skepticism short of an open, official, formal confirmation that the U.S. government is not going to prosecute WikiLeaks," said Kristinn Hrafnsson, the spokesman. "It is quite obvious that you can shake up an indictment in a very short period of time."

Hrafnsson added, "Unfortunately, the U.S. government has a track record of being deceptive and of choosing its words carefully on this issue and other issues as well."

Assange, who published documents from one of the largest leaks of classified U.S. military and diplomatic documents, has been living in the Ecuadoran Embassy in London since June 2012, when he was granted political asylum.

The Australian national sought asylum after he lost a series of court battles in Britain to avoid extradition to Sweden to face questioning over allegations of sexual assault. There is still a warrant in Sweden for his arrest. A small office at the Ecuadoran Embassy, which is under constant watch by British police, has been converted into his private living area.

Assange and his associates have maintained that he was unwilling to travel to Sweden because he feared that he would ultimately be extradited to the United States to face possible charges under the Espionage Act.

"My focus of attention is on the U.S. case — the continuing grand jury investigation," Assange told Britain's Telegraph newspaper last month. "That is what I have received full political asylum in relation to. I assume the Swedish case will disappear of its own accord in due course."

A Justice Department spokesman declined to comment on the case....

Electrified Thought Fences — Narcissism: Real And Imagined

David Edwards
Media Lens
November 21, 2013

One of the great tasks of the state-corporate commentariat is to install electrified thought fences between the public and rare voices attempting to challenge the status quo.

Dissidents are attacked from ostensibly noble positions opposing fascism, genocide, sexism and selfishness. The smears are empowered by the fact that they target an opponent's reputation with ugly-looking labels that nobody really understands.

For example, no-one in fact knows at what point (if any) honest disagreement morphs into the Thought Crime 'genocide denial'. But if enough pundits shriek with sufficient conviction and disgust that they know, many will believe them.

The mix of feigned outrage and genuine confusion deters neutrals from challenging the smear for fear of appearing foolish, or of being tarred with the same brush. They may instead step back from supporting, or even mentioning, the work of someone that 'everyone knows' is a 'genocide denier', a 'sexist', or a 'narcissist'....

The focus on the 'narcissism' of leading dissidents is a recurring theme across the corporate media. Bloomberg Businessweek featured an article entitled, 'The Unbearable Narcissism of Edward Snowden.'

Jeffrey Toobin condemned Snowden in the New Yorker as 'a grandiose narcissist who deserves to be in prison'.

On CBS, Bob Schieffer commented: 'I think what we have in Edward Snowden is just a narcissistic young man who has decided he is smarter than the rest of us.'

Richard Cohen in the Washington Post: 'Everything about Edward Snowden is ridiculously cinematic. He is not paranoid; he is merely narcissistic. He jettisoned a girlfriend, a career and, undoubtedly, his personal freedom to expose programs...'

Cohen detected no cognitive dissonance in the idea that a narcissist would be willing to sacrifice his girlfriend, career and personal freedom to expose political corruption. **In reality, this is exactly what narcissists are not inclined to do.**

Similarly, Seumas Milne protested in the Guardian that, despite not having been charged, let alone convicted, of any crime: 'as far as the bulk of the press is concerned, Assange is nothing but a "monstrous narcissist", a bail-jumping "sex pest" and an exhibitionist maniac'.

Sir Harold Evans commented in the Observer: 'I have not been impressed by the blather about "freedom of the press" surrounding the narcissistic Edward Snowden...'

Glenn Greenwald who, unlike most of the above critics, has met Snowden and worked closely with him, observed: 'One of the most darkly hilarious things to watch is how

government apologists and media servants are driven by total herd behavior: they all mindlessly adopt the same script and then just keep repeating it because they see others doing so and, like parrots, just mimic what they hear... **Hordes of people who had no idea what 'narcissism' even means— and who did not know the first thing about Snowden— kept repeating this word over and over because that became the cliché used to demonize him.**

'The reason this was darkly hilarious is because there is almost no attack on him more patently invalid than this one. When he came to us, he said: "after I identify myself as the source and explain why I did this, I intend to disappear from media sight, because I know they will want to personalize the story about me, and I want the focus to remain on the substance of NSA disclosures."

'He has been 100% true to his word. Almost every day for four months, I've had the biggest TV shows and most influential media stars calling and emailing me, begging to interview Snowden for TV. He has refused every request because he does not want the attention to be on him, but rather on the disclosures that he risked his liberty and even his life to bring to the world.'

But according to the Daily Banter blog, none of this should be taken seriously. Why? 'Glenn Greenwald has been looking to take down Obama and feed his own depthless narcissism for years now. He just managed to accomplish one of these goals in spades...'

Further ironies afflict these many casual denunciations of Assange, Brand, Snowden and Greenwald as 'sexists' and/or 'narcissists'. Most commentators— including many on the left— appear to have little or no understanding of what these terms actually mean....

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Julian Assange: Three Years Detained

Illustration at: <https://pbs.twimg.com/media/Ba0GSM4CEAAWgkj.png:large>

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Assange Marks 3 Years in Custody: Still in Great Jeopardy from US

Michael Ratner, lawyer of Wikileaks founder, says his client wants to clear any allegations of sexual misconduct in Sweden but the fear of extradition to U.S. keeps him in Ecuadorian embassy in Britain.

Real News Network
2013-12-08

JESSICA DESVARIEUX: Welcome to The Real News Network. I'm Jessica Desvarieux in Baltimore. And welcome to this edition of The Ratner Report. Now joining us is the man behind the report, Michael Ratner. He's the president emeritus of the Center for Constitutional Rights, and he's a regular contributor to The Real News.... So, Michael, what's brewing this week? What are you working on?

RATNER: Well, this week--you know, the unexpected always occurs. This week I'm dealing with one of my clients, Julian Assange, who, as I'm sure your listeners or viewers know, is in the Ecuador Embassy. He's there because, at least ostensibly, he's--doesn't want to go to Sweden, and he doesn't want to go to Sweden because he's very fearful that he will then be sent on to the United States, where he may well be facing serious charges of espionage, computer theft, etc.

Yet, there are no charges against him in Sweden. There's allegations of sexual misconduct. He's willing to answer those questions, except he can't go to Sweden right now because of that fear of the United States. And the Swedes have so far refused to guarantee that he would not get sent to the United States. The British have refused to do that. And so he's really stuck in the embassy.

The news that happened in the last ten days are really two articles in The Washington Post, one on November 18, one on November 25. The November 18 article says anonymous U.S. officials say Assange is not under sealed indictment in the US. The other one most recently said Julian Assange unlikely to face U.S. charges over publishing classified material. **Both by anonymous sources**, both in The Washington Post.

It's caused a huge amount of publicity and PR against Julian Assange, particularly in Sweden, Australia, his home country, and some here in the United States. People are asserting, well, he's really just sitting in that embassy because he's afraid to go to Sweden, not because he's afraid to go to the United States.

What's happened is those newspapers, those lawyers, those commentators have really picked up only part of the article. They don't understand what's really going on here. And in my view as one of Julian's lawyers, at this point he should not walk out of that embassy. He should not go to Sweden. There is still a very high risk of him being prosecuted in the United States.

When those articles are read carefully-- and not even that carefully, but those people who accuse Julian Assange of a fantasy by saying he'll be arrested and be sent to the United States, had they read them at all, what they actually say is that he won't be prosecuted, according to this source, for publishing the classified material, but that the grand jury investigating WikiLeaks remains empaneled, and that the investigation is continuing.

The other thing it says in those articles, and it was very narrow, that he wouldn't be prosecuted for publishing classified materials, because The New York Times would have to be prosecuted then as well. But it doesn't say-- and it actually says--on the other hand, if there was other criminal activity, he could be prosecuted [incompr.] somehow he was in a conspiracy or aiding and abetting Bradley Manning, who was one of--Chelsea Manning, one of the sources of the documents for WikiLeaks, then he could be prosecuted for that.

So the articles are really very narrow. They were misread- -purposely, I think-- by both a Swedish lawyer who commented on them, as well as Australian papers who have commented on them. And, in fact, he is in great jeopardy.

So what you have here is the omission of evidence in a way of trying to paint Julian's personality and destroy his personality and say he's only hiding out to not go to Sweden. As again I said, the articles say it's continuing. They're continuing a criminal investigation.

And the other thing is, we have written to the Justice Department many times, talked to them myself, as well as other lawyers, and they have never been willing to say anything about the ending of investigation of Julian Assange.

What it seems to me that people ought to be arguing for in Sweden, as well as in Australia and other places, is for the Swedes to guarantee that Julian Assange won't be

sent to the United States or the British to guarantee that-- or arguing that the Swedes should come to the Ecuadoran Embassy in London and interview Julian Assange to just put an end to this really is what our Department of Justice or, really, our prosecutors said just a few days ago, on November 26. The prosecutor issued a statement about the status of Julian Assange's case. Here's the quote. Fay Brundage, a spokeswoman for the attorneys office for the Eastern District of Virginia, which is where the grand jury is sitting, which is responsible for the WikiLeaks investigation, said it, quote, "was still ongoing". That's really the last word on it. As that's the last word on it, Julian Assange cannot leave that embassy until he gets the guarantees.

To be frank, as his lawyer, he's been there for 20 months. You know, I'm sick and tired of hearing people say that he is not leaving that embassy because he is afraid to go and answer questions in Sweden. What I want to see people say, everyone, whether they love Julian Assange or don't like him or whether they think he should be facing something in Sweden or not, is let the Swedes come and question Julian, or let him get safe guarantees that he won't get sent to the United States. That's what we need for Julian Assange. He shouldn't be in that embassy any longer. WikiLeaks is still a strong functioning organization despite it. But 20 months in the embassy is long enough.

http://therealnews.com/t2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumival=11149

Julian Assange gives "Thought for the Day" on BBC Radio 4 Today programme

January 2, 2014

"All men by nature desire to know." Aristotle, when he wrote this, was saying that the thing that makes human beings different from other creatures, the thing that defines us, is the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. This is not just to say that we human beings are curious creatures; it is to say that our ability to think about and to act on the world around us is bound up with our ability to know it. To be alive as a human being is to know in the same way as it is to have a heart that beats.

We all understand this in mundane ways. We understand, for instance, that part of being a fully independent adult, making choices about life, is learning about the world around us and informing our choices with that learning.

In the Book of Proverbs it says, "By wisdom a house is built and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures." But there is something more to all of this. The very next saying in Proverbs is, "The wise are mightier than the strong." This is the earliest occurrence known to me of the now well-known idea: knowledge is power. To keep a person ignorant is to place them in a cage.

So it follows that the powerful, if they want to keep their power, will try to know as much about us as they can and they will try to make sure that we know as little about them as is possible. I see this inside everywhere: both in religious writings, which promised emancipation from political repression, and in the revolutionary works promising liberation from the repressive dogmas of the church and the state.

The powerful throughout history have understood this. The invention of the printing press was opposed by the old powers of Europe because it spelled the end of their control of knowledge and therefore the end of their tenure as power brokers. The Protestant Reformation was not just a religious movement, but a political struggle: the fight to liberate hoarded knowledge through translation and dissemination. Through the confessional system, the Catholic Church spied upon the lives of its congregants, while Latin mass excluded most people who could not speak Latin from an understanding of the very system of thought that bound them.

Knowledge has always flowed upwards to bishops and kings, not downward to serfs and slaves. The principle remains the same in the present era. Documents disclosed by NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden show that governments dare to aspire—through their intelligence agencies—to a God-like knowledge about each and every one of us. But at the same time they hide their actions behind official secrecy. **As our governments and corporations know more and more about us, we know less and less about them. The policy, as always, is to channel the decisive information upwards, never downwards.**

Today remember that it is good to seek to empower the powerless through knowledge and to drag the machinations of the powerful into the daylight. We must be unapologetic about that most basic of humanities: the desire to know.

The powerful would do well to remember the words of one of history's great activists as recorded in the Book of Matthew: "There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed or hidden that will not be made known. What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed at last from rooftop to rooftop."

Transcribed from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-25573643>

Former Swedish Prosecutor Urges Termination of Julian Assange Case

*Kevin Gosztola
Firedog Lake
January 12, 2014*

A former Swedish prosecutor has written an op-ed for the newspaper Svenska Dagbladet, where he suggests the country's office in charge of pursuing the case against WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange terminate it entirely.

Rolf Hillegren urges the Prosecutor General to reverse the decision to reopen the investigation, revoke the detention order and withdraw the arrest warrant.

For three years, Sweden has been trying to have him extradited so he can be questioned on sexual allegations made by two women. He sought and obtained asylum from Ecuador and has been living in the Ecuadorean embassy in the United Kingdom since June 2012.

Hillegren's op-ed is in Swedish, but he does not think Sweden needs to extradite Assange to question him. The evidence for the case leaked, and it is unlikely that an interview will yield anything that would make it possible to prosecute him.

“Is it reasonable that someone in an embassy in London has no way for the next 27 years to leave the building, whilst the Swedes could remedy the situation without significant disadvantage to anyone?” Hillegren asks.

He summarizes: “Julian Assange visited Sweden in 2010 as a celebrated hero. But the visit had repercussions he hadn’t counted on. Two women he’d spent time with were worried they’d contracted HIV and therefore went to the police, the one to support the other. The police decided to open a criminal complaint, so Assange was arraigned, arrested, and interrogated. The prosecutor closed the investigation as far as the more serious allegation; what was left was an accusation of molestation, even that one very questionable. Assange stayed in the country awhile after the warrant was rescinded. So no, he did not try to evade ‘Swedish justice.’”

Hillegren adds, “The situation between Assange and the women mostly involves disagreements about the use of condoms— a type of litigation that is not usually decided in our courts.”

He does not fail to recognize that the women, who have made allegations against Assange, have suffered. Yet, for them, Hillegren suggests that Sweden do what it should have done a long time ago and take responsibility with an unconventional solution.”

Pay the damages that would have been awarded if Assange had been “convicted of crimes” for which he was detained. This will avoid a end scenario where the women are “sidelined by the judiciary.”

“This solution is appealing, not least in view of the State’s responsibility for the situation and the fact that women undeservedly suffered a well publicized injury,” according to Hillegren.

The case was closed in 2010 and then reopened. Hillegren asserts that this decision to close the case was reasonable.

The op-ed is significant, obviously, because of the background of the author. Hillegren has some authority to express an opinion that Sweden should have terminated the case long ago. But will this have any effect on Swedish authorities?

What would it mean for Assange if the case were terminated by Swedish authorities? One would think that after all the time he has spent in the Ecuadorean embassy, he would want to take advantage of asylum and go to Ecuador.

Even if the Swedish case was terminated, it is unlikely that Assange would believe he had the freedom to move without being targeted by the United States. His lawyers are still advising him that the US may indict him on charges.

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Dags för Sverige att avsluta fallet Assange

Är det rimligt att en person som befinner sig på en ambassad i London saknar möjlighet att under de närmaste 27 åren lämna byggnaden samtidigt som man från svensk sida skulle kunna häva denna situation utan avsevärd nackdel för någon? Den frågan ställer fd kammaråklagare Rolf Hillegren.

Som beskrivningen ovan kan man utan större tillspetsning sammanfatta läget i fallet Assange. Och jag är fullständigt övertygad om att denna situation besvärar åtminstone statsministern, justitieministern och riksåklagaren. Till råga på allt är denna situation inte enbart chikanerande för svenska myndigheter utan även för brittiska som bidragit till att den blivit möjlig.

Vad krävs då för att lösa detta dilemma? Jo, det handlar om att bita i ett mycket surt äpple, men det obehaget borde vara uthärdligt då alternativet är så mycket värre.

En kort tillbakablick: Som en firad stjärna besökte Julian Assange Sverige 2010. Men vistelsen fick ett efterspel som han inte räknat med. Två kvinnor som han umgåtts med blev oroliga för att ha blivit hiv-smittade och uppsökte därför polisen, den ena som stöd för den andra. Polisen valde att upprätta en anmälan om brott mot båda, vilket resulterade i att Assange anhölls, greps och förhördes. Åklagaren lade sedan ned förundersökningen avseende de allvarligast rubricerade brotten, däribland våldtäkt. Kvar blev endast brottet ofredande, men även där är bevisläget tveksamt. Sedan Assange frigetts stannade han kvar i landet ytterligare någon tid. Han har alltså inte flytt från den svenska rättvisan.

För de båda kvinnornas räkning begärde sedan deras målsägandebiträde överprövning av avskrivningsbeslutet hos högre åklagare. Denna beslutade att förundersökningen skulle återupptas och att Assange skulle förhöras och delges misstanke om våldtäkt, sexuellt ofredande och olaga tvång. Vid den tidpunkten hade Assange lämnat Sverige och var ovillig att återvända, då han blivit rädd för att bli utlämnad till USA på grund av de brott han misstänks för där. Och oavsett om denna rädsla är välgrundad är det uppenbart att Assange är övertygad om att risken för utlämning finns.

Åklagaren begärde i detta läge Assange häktad i sin frånvaro och sedan häkttningsbeslutet fattats utfärdade åklagaren en internationell arresteringsorder för att kunna få Assange utlämnad till Sverige. I hovrätten ändrades sedan häkttningsbeslutet på så sätt att misstanken om våldtäkt skulle avse den mindre grova varianten av brottet. Assange greps i London och efter uppmärksammade rättsliga turer där beslutade brittisk domstol till slut att han skulle utlämnas till Sverige. Därefter lyckades Assange fly till Ecuadors ambassad i London, varefter han beviljades politisk asyl i Ecuador. På ambassaden lär han bli kvar till 2040, då preskription inträder, om inte svenska myndigheter är intresserade av en lösning på detta delikata problem, som för länge sedan passerat gränsen för anständighet och rimliga proportioner.

Hur kunde det bli så här? Nedläggningsbeslutet var mycket välgrundat och fattat av en erfaren chefsåklagare. Beslutet att återuppta förundersökningen var däremot mindre väl övervägt, vilket är extra beklagligt mot bakgrund av allt som därefter inträffat. Till saken hör dessutom att avskrivningsbeslut vid misstanke om sexualbrott ändras extra

flitigt beroende på all debatt som varit kring dessa brott. Devisen har varit att alla stenar ska vändas, vilket fått till följd att även stenar under vilka inget intressant kan förväntas dölja sig blir vända — enbart för att minimera risken för kritik från media.

Genom att förundersökningen har läckt ut och finns på nätet har vem som helst möjlighet att bilda sig en uppfattning om bevisläget. Och jag tror att få med hyfsade kunskaper i bevisvärdering ser fallet som annat än ett avskrivningsärende. Kvinnorna är hörda och inga ytterligare utredningsåtgärder återstår. Det är högst osannolikt att Assange vid ett nytt förhör kommer att säga något som gör det möjligt att åtala honom. Det är därför obegripligt vad åklagaren förväntar sig att han ska säga. Förhöret är alltså helt onödigt. Situationen mellan Assange och kvinnorna handlar huvudsakligen om meningsskiljaktigheter kring användningen av kondom — en typ av tvist som inte brukar avgöras vid våra domstolar.

Om nu fallet gällt en man bosatt i Sverige hade ingen större skada varit skedd. Han hade blivit förhörd en gång till och därefter skulle förundersökningen åter ha lagts ned. Men nu var det inte vem som helst som var misstänkt och ingen kunde ana hur fortsättningen skulle komma att gestalta sig. Från och med nu började cirkusen, prestige gjorde sin entré och åklagaren målade in sig i ett hörn. Där befinner hon sig fortfarande och olyckligtvis tog hon med sig en stor del av det svenska rättsväsendet som nu fått skämmas i drygt tre år.

Så fort det stod klart att Assange inte var beredd att frivilligt bege sig till Sverige borde åklagaren ha sett till att han blev förhörd i London. Om så skett hade den internationella prestigeförlusten för Sverige blivit begränsad om hon omedelbart efter förhöret lagt ned förundersökningen. Ingen utanför den juridiska sfären hade då anat att förhöret varit helt onödigt. Men i stället för denna lösning har åklagaren valt att hävda att förhöret måste hållas i Sverige för den händelse det skulle bli aktuellt med åtal. Detta hade varit en riktig hållning om bevisläget varit annorlunda.

På grund av alla ytterst osannolika turer i ärendet har det utvecklats till att bli något alldeles exceptionellt och vill man häva det tillståndet så krävs att man också gör något alldeles exceptionellt. Och allt talar för att det kan vara värt priset. Endast halsstarrighet och fortsatt prestigetänkande kan utgöra hinder.

Vad kan då göras? Jo, riksåklagaren bör på eget initiativ (ex officio) upphäva beslutet om återupptagande av förundersökningen, häva häktningsbeslutet och återkalla arresteringsordern.

Nu kanske någon invänder att ett så radikalt förfarande skulle göra det omöjligt för de båda kvinnorna att få sin sak som målsägande prövad. Även på den punkten får man tänka sig en okonventionell lösning. Staten bör därför av nåd (ex gratia) betala ut det skadestånd som kunde blivit aktuellt om Assange åtalats och dömts för de brott han varit häktad. Därmed borde man rimligen kunna undvika eventuella påståenden om att kvinnorna blivit åsidosatta av rättsväsendet. Denna lösning är tilltalande inte minst med tanke på statens ansvar för den uppkomna situationen och det faktum att kvinnorna oförskyllt lidit en stor publicitetsskada.

Vilken blir effekten? Det svenska rättsväsendet kommer visserligen åter att kritiseras skarpt. Men sedan kritiken lagt sig är det troligt att röster kommer att höras som framhåller att Sverige till slut fattat ett klokt beslut — inte minst när man beaktar hur alternativet kunde ha sett ut.

Dessutom skulle Sverige genom ett sådant agerande rädda ansiktet på Storbritannien som i viss mån bidragit till den bisarra situationen genom att göra det möjligt för Assange att fly till Ecuadors ambassad. Och Assange skulle kunna lämna ambassaden som en fri man och slippa att tillbringa de närmaste 27 åren där.

ROLF HILLEGREN, *fd kammaråklagare*

http://www.svd.se/opinion/brannpunkt/dags-for-sverige-att-avsluta-fallet-assange_8887418.svd

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Swedish Prosecutor Asks for Assange Case to be Closed

Assange in Sweden
January 14, 2014

Retired Swedish district prosecutor Rolf Hillegren wrote a powerful op-ed for conservative daily SvD (Svenska Dagbladet) asking for the Assange case to be closed. Hillegren makes some valid points.

The way Swedes conducted the case has brought shame on the country.

The decision to close the case was well founded and was made by one of the country's most respected prosecutors.

The decision to reopen the case, following a petition by Claes Borgström (involved in the Quick scandal) was not well founded, and has caused the country great damage.

Everyone can today read the case files. Anyone can see there's no case there.

When the case is too weak to stand on its own before interrogating the suspect, there's no procedural justification in continuing. Thus the stalemate with Julian Assange in the Ecuadorean embassy is a chimera— the Swedish authorities don't need his testimony.

Sweden's prosecutor-general can on his own initiative (*ex officio*) rescind the decision to reopen the investigation, rescind the arraignment ruling, and rescind the arrest warrant.

If this had been about a man resident in Sweden, no major damage would have occurred. He'd have been questioned one more time and then the investigation would have been closed again.

Julian Assange's fear of surrender from Sweden to the US is tangible, but it doesn't matter as it's obvious Assange himself is convinced there is a real threat.

Today the case is a circus with prestige featured in the main ring, with the prosecutor painting herself into a corner, and with her dragging down and shaming the country's judicial system for over three years.

As those who've read the police files know, there is no case to bring to court. The one girl claims only that she wished she'd said 'no' to sex without a condom (but never actually said 'no' or the equivalent) and the other, who claimed Assange may have intentionally broken a condom during sex, later provided the police with false evidence, further corrupting the case.

Hillegren suggests the girls be given restitution so they can't later complain they were ignored by the system; it remains to be seen how deep Sweden will have to dig into her coffers to bring up the money needed to compensate Julian Assange for his terrible ordeal.

SvD featured at least three other articles on Assange at the same time, some new and some updated to accompany the Hillegren op-ed. They also announced an online discussion for the following day at 10:00 [see below].

Strangely, they chose this over opening the Hillegren article for comments.

Some people have tried to judge the overall climate in Sweden based on the number of negative and positive comments, but the moderator Carina Stensson had the following to say.

We posted several hundred comments, but not all of them. On the other hand, I think the proportionality of opinions is well represented. Many were critical even of Assange and the suggestion the case be closed. Even if all comments can't be posted, I try to bring in all the various opinions in a good way. I have no interest in misrepresenting what people think.

Cordially,
Carina Stensson, editor Brännpunkt

But Stensson did her part in the introduction to the discussion to skew things her own way: "Since 19 June 2012, WikiLeaks activist Julian Assange is at the Ecaudorean [sic] embassy in London, fleeing Swedish justice."

And one year ago she was interviewed by Dagens Media (Today's Media) and had this to say. "If I could advise him, I'd tell him to come back and let himself be questioned. The risk of really being indicted is minimal. And then he'd perhaps clarify the issues with the Swedish judicial system. It might hurt a bit. His more creative variants of accusations and smears will be only ridiculous and won't harm Swedish pride."

'Another Swedish woman who hates the man Assange', sighs 'outoftheblue' at Flashback. 'And of course not a word about the threat of surrender to the US, or how imprudent it would be to abandon one's asylum only to give one's own version of events. There's a linguistic rule somewhere that says you can't speak openly about such things. Just ignore them and they no longer exist. Swedish journalism in a nutshell.'

'It's also interesting that she assesses the risk of indictment as small, when it was precisely the intent to indict that helped Marianne Ny get her way with the British courts. **If the risk of indictment is so small, then the EAW (European Arrest Warrant) is unmotivated and belongs in a circular file.'**

It's also been suggested that the Reinfeldt government are using the Hillegren op-ed and the subsequent online discussion to survey the Swedish political climate, with the objective of trying to solve the Assange standoff in time to win the national elections in September.

Reinfeldt's government are losing badly in the polls, with massive failures in the financial sector, healthcare, care for the elderly, the collapse of the Swedish educational system, and recently further embarrassments courtesy minister for justice Beatrice Ask, and they need something to win voters back again....

<http://assangeinswedenbook.com>

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BRÄNNPUNKT DIREKT: 13 januari 2014

Bör Sverige lägga ned fallet Assange?

Sedan den 19 juni 2012 befinner sig Wikileaks-aktivisten Julian Assange på Ecaudors ambassad i London, på flykt undan den svenska rättvisan. I en debattartikel skriver nu fd kammaråklagare Rolf Hillegren att Sverige kan och bör avsluta fallet. Är det en bra väg ur situationen? Eller är det Assanges eget problem att han håller sig gömd? Vad tycker du? Posta ditt inlägg!

11:00

Carina Stensson:

Tack för dagens diskussion! Vi hoppas kunna återkomma i frågan. Följ oss gärna på Twitter, Facebook och www.svd.se/opinion.

11:00

Kalle:

Någonstans måste det väl ändå handla om att bringa klarhet i vad som hänt. Om så är fallet borde ett förhör i London duga alldeles utmärkt. Svälj stoltheten och pallra er dit.

10:59

Kjell Strand:

Tack alla Ni som fortfarande tror på och kämpar för det fria ordet. Förhoppningsvis kan vi i framtiden reparera den skada som Sveriges anseende fått internationellt med denna skandalösa personförföljelse. Lagg ner fallet Assange omgående och låt Sverige bli en röst för förföljda och utsatta människor.

10:58

Sven:

Antingen flyger vi dit och förhör honom, eller så garanterar vi hans säkerhet och plockar hit honom. Eller också gör vi det som är mest rätt: lägger ned hela karusellen om påstådda våltäkter och andra myter. Nu ser det snarast ut som att Assange är den som utsätts för övergrepp av rättslig typ. Men det är väl så den nya tiden är i Sverige.

10:56

Lars:

En fegis som inte törs möta en rättslig prövning ska man inte ge efter för. Sådant sänder fel signaler. Speciellt i fall med övergrepp mot kvinnor.

10:56

Göte Borg:

Att vika sig för Assange skulle vara en katastrof. Hans naiva beteende saknar motstycke.

10:56

Martin:

Lägg ner eller åk dit och få det överstökat! Vilket som. Visa att Sverige har lite integritet och inte enbart gör det USA önskar. (Så uppfattas situationen nu)

10:55

Johan:

Kanske en idé att kritikerna läser Hillgrens artikel innan de tar ställning mot Assange. Hade de inte varit för att en åklagare ville ta politiska poäng på en redan nedlagd utredning och på grund av politikernas flathet, så hade fallet varit avskrivet för längesedan. Hillgren föreslår en bra kompromisslösning. Det bäst vore dock om ett förhör kunde hållas i UK och sedan lägger man ner larvet.

10:52

Carina Stensson:

Många har postat inlägg. Vi hinner med några till, men inte alla, före Brännpunkt Direkt avslutas kl 11.

10:50

Per:

Låt honom sona sina brott innanför lås och bom. Varför skulle han slippa undan.

10:49

HannaG:

Man kan uppenbarligen inte behandla Assange-ärendet som vilket fall som helst. Assange har avslöjat att USA begått krigsbrott i Irak och hotas därför att straffas i USA. Assange vill ha garantin att inte bli utlämnad till USA för att komma till Sverige för att bli förhörd. Sverige har vägrat att ge honom denna garanti. Assange har då erbjudit den svenska polisen att förhöra honom på ambassaden i London, men polisen har ännu inte gjort detta. För mig ser det ut som att det från första början funnits en enkel lösning i denna situation: Sverige borde ha skickat polis och jurister till London för att genomföra förhöret där för länge sedan! Varför ska det vara så otroligt svårt att göra det?

10:45

Oscar S:

För de som säger att det inte finns någon risk för att Assange skulle utvisas till USA om han kommer till Sverige — titta då på avvisningarna av egyptierna Ahmed Agiza och Mohamed Alzery till Egypten 2001. USA och CIA var den part som under hot satte press på regeringen Persson att utvisa egyptierna (som sedan visade sig vara oskyldiga till brott), och som sedan förde ut de ur landet till Egypten där de torterades och förhördes. Varför skulle inte USA kunna göra om detta, speciellt med en allierad som de har erfarenhet av att jobba med?

10:42

Kalle:

Sverige har ju redan utvisat folk till USA i skydd av mörker. Assange har alltså belägg för sin rädsla. Acceptera detta och håll förhöret i London. Att vägra det stärker bara bilden om att Sverige går USAs ärenden.

10:42

Elisabeth:

I Sverige bör man kunna ha rättssäkerhet även om man råkar heta Assange. Assangefallet särbehandlades redan från början. HD:s Stefan Lindskog har sagt att han inte förstår varför den svenska åklagaren vägrar att förhöra Assange i London. Det brukar man göra i liknande fall.

10:42

Micke:

Lägg inte ner! Det skickar fel signaler, nolltolerans ska råda när det gäller våldtäkt och sexuellt ofredande! Man ska inte kunna fulgömma sig undan rättvisan bara för att man har ett känt ansikte.

10:39

Jimmy:

Har man läst på om fallet inser man hur korrumperat det svenska rättsväsendet har blivit. Sverige blir utnyttjat av USA och skämmer ut oss internationellt. Han har ju uppenbarligen inte gjort något brottsligt och om det faktiskt bara är en intervju som är aktuell finns inget som hindrar att göra en video-intervju som Herr Assange har erbjudit hela tiden. Eftersom åklagaren fullständigt vägrar detta logiska alternativ är det bortom tvivel att det bara är omskrivningar för att utlämna honom eller på annat sätt hindra honom i sitt arbete.

10:39

Birgit Nilsson:

Utmärkt förslag av Hillegren. Nuvarande låsta läge inte bra för någondera part.

10:38

Felicia Brehmer:

Lägg ned och be Assange om ursäkt. Svenskt "rätts"väsende har på senare år ballat ur på många fronter.

10:38

Max:

Självklart ska fallet läggas ned. Fallet har från början varit ett skämt. USA använder "neutrala Sverige" för att komma åt sina fiender.

10:38

Annat pers:

Jag tror inte folk förstår vilken bild av Sverige vi förmedlat. Den annars så professionella pressen har ju också spritt helt rätt information om våra lagar o principer så alla vet ju exakt hur svenska rätten fungerar (not!!). Folk utomlands tror vi är rabiata extremister...vilket vi kanske är vad vet jag. Men en sak vet jag. Vi har mycket mer att vinna på att lägga ner fallet än att vidhålla våra principer.

10:33

klas:

Jag har läst förundersökningen på nätet, den ligger ju där. Fallet är ju i praktiken redan avslutat, en formalitet återstår, att åklagaren lägger ned fallet. Skicka en åklagare till London och förhör Assange i en timme, sedan kan vi lägga detta bakom oss.

10:33

Anna:

Man kan ju förhöra honom under rättegången via videolänk, hur svårt kan det vara? Eller ge garantier att han inte utlämnas till USA. Varför tjuvar Sverige? Som fallet har beskrivits i Sverige tror jag inte att han döms heller. Sverige borde skydda människor som Assange och Snowden istället för att samarbeta med USA och spionera själva

10:33

Gunnar:

Det verkar ju vara helt omöjligt att åka dit för våldtäkt i det här landet. Så varför framhärdat åklagaren? Men samtidigt vägrar att åka till London och utföra sitt jobb?

10:31

Kristofer:

Det finns tillräckligt mycket skumt på gång på båda sidor av fallet. Därför är det bästa att handla pragmatiskt. Åk till England och förhör honom (som vi gjort i andra fall), vilket inte kränker kvinnornas rättigheter i det minsta, eller utsätter Assange för risken att bli utlämnad till USA där flera politiker uttryckt att dom gärna vill se honom död. Att lägga ner fallet bara för att det är opraktiskt är en skymf mot lagen och kvinnorna. Men att inte vara pragmatisk och ta på allvar det faktum att Assange är *också* politisk fånge med dödshot från USA är ren idioti. Ha hela rättegången i ambassaden, om det krävs.

10:30

Hugo:

Låt Assange sitta där på ambassaden! Han visade sitt rätta jag när han struntade i att inställa sig till förhör här i Sverige. Dessutom, varför åka till UK, USA:s närmaste allierade, om man inte vill bli utlämnad till USA? Assange har inte rent mjöl i påsen och hans främsta och viktigaste projekt är han själv.

10:29

LW:

Nej, fallet bör absolut inte läggas ned. Däremot bör man i denna situation utlämna garanti att han inte kommer bli utlämnad till USA.

10:29

Göran Wahlström:

Sverige kunde skicka en hel delegation till Rwanda när en numera svensk rwandier åtalades. I detta fall kan man inte skicka EN person att höra Assange. Detta visar att ngt är fel. Anklagelserna har redan prövats och F.ö lades ner. Varför Marianne Ny återupptog ärendet lär vi aldrig få klarhet i.

10:28

Tomas:

Sverige håller en hjälte gisslan. Efter all denna tid borde vi ge Assange asyl i Sverige. Vi ger folk asyl i Sverige på lösare grunder idag.

10:28

Emily:

Hela denna soppa är pinsam för Sverige. Anklagelserna mot Assange förefaller från första början vara väldigt tveksamma. Och åklagarnas och polisens hantering av ärendet är generande inkompetent. De borde lägga ner fallet och låta det falla i glömska.

10:28

Sigvard.:

Självklart ! Sverige har skämt ut sig själva och gjort oss till åtlöje i omvärldens ögon. Vad jag förstår så har han en gång blivit friad av åklagare för ett brott som inte går att bevisa. Skärpning Sverige !

10:27

Carina Stensson:

Som alltid i diskussioner där det finns väldigt starka åsikter, som går åt olika håll, får vi väldigt många inlägg. Vi försöker posta så många som möjligt men alla kommer inte att komma med.

10:27

Erik:

Till alla er som inte tycker att fallet skall läggas ner, är ni ens insatta i situationen? Rolf Hillegren gav igår en kort summering av fallet, läs den först. Kort och gott handlar det inte om att Assange skulle särbehandlas om ärendet läggs ner, mer att han redan har särbehandlats eftersom ärendet INTE lagts ner och istället renderat en internationell häktningsorder. Så, läs debattartikeln av Rolf Hillegren.

10:27

Niklas:

Varför ska vi signalera att vi inte bryr oss om vår lag. Klart han ska ställas till svars, om han är oskyldig bör en domstolsprövning visa det. Och som det här landet är, kommer han bli frikänd tyvärr, men provas ska han.

10:27

Svea:

Nej, man ska inte kunna feg-gömma sig undan rättvisan. Vore han oskyldig så har han ju inget att frukta..

10:25

Catharina Hyltén-Cavalliu:

Låt honom ta ansvar för sina eventuella felsteg, men ta hänsyn till hans situation och respektera samtidigt hans mänskliga rättigheter; Skicka en åklagare-domare till London och låt honom stå till svars i exil.

10:25

Olle:

Avsluta inte fallet. Varför ska assange få speciell behandling bara för att han blivit känd som skrupellös journalist?

10:22

Nisse:

Enligt mig så är det Assange som gör sig till åtlöje. Han vägrar åka till Sverige för att bli förhörd under förevändning att han inte har fått några politiska garantier att han inte skall bli utlämnad. Men missat helt att vi har ett rättsamhälle, där politikerna inte kan eller får sätta sig över domstolarna, vilka är de som prövar utlämningsärenden. Så han vill att rättstaten skall frånga sina principer för att skydda honom mot en inbillad fara. Om inte beteendet var så naivt så skulle jag säga att det är en dålig ursäkt för att slippa bli förhörd.

10:20

Jonas E.:

Är det inte dags för Assange att avsluta fallet Sverige? Första planet Heathrow-Arlanda lyfter tidigt.

10:20

Torbjörn:

Baserat på den information som är offentligt tillgänglig tycks fallet mot Assange vara ganska tunt. Intrycket är att Assange varit oseriös i relationer med ett par kvinnor. Eventuellt har han slarvat med kondom med en kvinna. Utan att veta mer än allmän tillgänglig information så är min bild att det inte föreligger något egentligt brott (att vara en skitstövel är inte ett brott). Alltså: Spara skattemedel och onödigt lidande för de inblandade och lägg ner.

10:18

Daniel:

Sverige borde ha lagt ner hela baletten, men allt började handla om prestige och att myndighetspersoner inte kunde erkänna att de handlat fel. Polisen läckte ut nyheten i media innan Assange ens meddelats, och tjejernas historier delades också. Förfarandet var orimligt, även om Assange är skyldig till anklagelserna. Medlen som använts står inte i proportion till det påstådda brottet, och kostnaden uppgår väl i hundra tusentals kronor. Allt för prestigens skull, och knappast för tjejernas heder och hälsa. Svenska rättsväsendet bör skämmas.

10:18

Stefan:

Hela historien är en fars och skadan blir bara större för Sverige ju längre tiden går. Om nu bevisläget är sådant att det inte är rimligt att förvänta sig ett åtal efter ett förhör med Assange så är det enda rimliga att lägga ner såsom Rolf Hillegren föreslagit.

10:17

Tobias Forsnacke:

Trams! Sverige och svenska myndigheter förlorar ingenting på Assanges självpåtagna husarrest. Det finns ingen anledning att kompromissa en millimeter. Om han vill sitta bredvid Harrods i 27 år så låt honom.

10:17

Carl Lindstrom:

Vi måste få snabbt slut på spionaget på privatpersoner ... gör en politisk fråga av att ge asyl åt Assange och Snowden ... visa ryggrad något parti !

10:17

Ingrid:

Lysande skrivet av Hillergren. Håller helt med! Sällan någon i en debattartikel lyckas formulera en så klockren och konstruktiv lösning.

10:17

Hammare:

Tvärtemot borde preskriptionstiden förlängas så pass att det blir omöjligt att gömma sig för att komma undan åtal.

10:16

Ulf:

Självklart skall han utlämnas till Sverige och ställas till svars för vad han ev. har gjort. Är det så att han är oskyldig skall han släppas om inte skall han dömas som vilken annan person som helst. Rolf Hillegren vill att ärendet skall avslutas och ev ge kvinnorna ett skadestånd som står i proportion till brottet varefter åtalet mot Assange läggs ner. Det enklaste är ju att han kommer till Sverige och får sin sak prövad. I annat fall har vi ju ett perfekt sätt att minska trängseln i våra fängelser. Betala offren en summa pengar och låt brottslingarna gå.

10:16

Joachim:

Assangehistorien är otroligt pinsam för Sverige. Det senast året har vi sett ett antal "riktiga" våldtäkter där förövaren har friats, den senaste i Lund säger ju ett och annat om hur liten möjlighet åklagaren har att få Assange fälld. Lägg ned fallet.

10:16

Oskar:

Helt vansinnigt! vi har folk som flytt utomlands efter att ha mördat och dem låter vi vara. Mannen är bara misstänkt och han ska in till varje pris. De som tror han är skyldig är dummare än ett tåg! Assange kommer inte att lämna ambasaderna oavsett om Sverige inte vill ha honom för han redan dömd i USA.

10:11

Fredrik:

Att han 'är på flykt undan den svenska rättvisan' är knappast en korrekt beskrivning av situationen. Han vågar inte åka till Sverige av rädsla att bli utlämnad till USA, där han närmast är betraktad som en terrorist av myndigheterna. Svensk åklagare har erbjudits att hålla förhör på ambasaderna flera gånger men vägrat att åka. Och regeringen har inte lämnat några garantier till Assange, man kan undra varför? FRA/NSA-avslöjandena nyligen tyder ytterligare på USA's inflytande över svensk myndighetsutövning, vilket vidare stärker utlämningstesens. Avsluta fallet!

10:11

BULL:

Vi behöver väl inte göra något. Vill han sitta där, så är det ju hans eget ansvar.

10:11

Rob:

Ja, verkar ju inte ha förekommit något tvång och jag tror att många inblandade personer skulle kunna göra något mer värdefullt av sin tid. Eftersom varken kvinnorna eller rättsväsendet reagerade tidigare var det nog inte så allvarligt. Förståligt att Assange inte vill åka till Sverige och försvara sig om han tror att det finns en liten risk att bli utvisad till USA. Jag tror inte att han bryr sig så mycket om ett flumåtal i Sverige om det finns risk att åtalas i USA för att ha hjälpt terrorister.

10:10

Erik Johansson:

Om man läser igenom de dokument som läckt ut, och de övriga fakta som kommit fram, så framstår Assange-fallet som helt absurt. Utomlands skrattar man, med rätta, åt Sverige och den svenska lagen. Några enstaka jurister gör Sverige till internationellt åtlöje... varför? Speciellt med tanke på alla konstiga turer i detta fall så börjar man ju undra... kanske Assange gör rätt i att vara paranoid?

10:08

Karin Wallin:

Avsluta fallet. Andra våldtäkter tas ej på allvar o detta fall är ju verkligen tveksamt om ett brott begåtts. Lägg resurser på andra mer angelägna ärenden o se till att domarkåren tar offren på allvar

10:08

Thomas Forsberg:

Assange bör rimligen inte få någon särbehandling. Ska de två kvinnor som enligt misstankarna har utsatts för brott verkligen sättas i en sämre ställning bara för att "deras gärningsman" råkar vara den världskände Assange? Lika inför lagen är en regel man inte tummar på. Det går inte att kompromissa med kärnan i de värden som vårt moderna rättssystem bygger på och ändå hävda dess överlägsenhet.

10:04

Åke Sandström:

Lägg ner! Juridik i all ära med detta skämmer ut Sverige. Har hållit på tillräckligt länge nu och innehåller både tjurighet, prestige och dumphet. Lägg ner! Hur svårt kan det vara?

10:03

Klas:

Hela denna sak har skadat Sveriges anseende internationellt. Som ett pyttelitet land i världen så måste vi värna om det relativt stora inflytande vi har haft inom visa frågor. Istället frågar sig nu många om Sverige egentligen är någon förebild och man hör istället om radikal statsfeminism, hemliga domstolar, och att vi är knähund till USA och har integritetskränkande lagar när det kommer till kommunikation (som nu EU aviserar att vi måste ändra på). Hur kan man från tillåta en tjänsteman ha så stort inflytande över Sveriges anseende och varför tillåter man det gro in, istället för att vara pragmatisk och ta det där förhöret i London. Det är intressant hur lite man har diskuterat Marianne Nys skuld i denna cirkus. Jag tycker det är hög tid journalister och politiker vågar ställa ansvariga mot väggen, och kräva riktiga svar och ett avslut, genast.

10:03

Nisken:

Självklart bör Assange garanteras att INTE lämnas ut till USA och sedan tas till Sverige för fortsatt förundersökning och evt rättegång. Finns ingen anledning alls att vika ner det svenska rättssamhället för att "det blir mest praktiskt så".

10:03

Gustav andersson:

Aldrig!!!!!!

10:02

Sören:

Lägga ner fallet Assange? Under inga omständigheter! Assange har uppträtt på ett sådant sätt att en rättslig prövning är starkt befogad. Det finns inget skäl att tillgripa specialtillämpning av svensk lag, om det som nu föreslagits överhuvud taget är lagligt. Dessutom, det tillvägagångssätt som föreslås är en grov skymf mot de utsatta kvinnorna.

10:02

Maritha Gustafsson:

Problemet har ju varit att Assange inte vill åka till Sverige och bli förhörd här av rädsla för att bli utlämnad till USA. Jag tycker åklagaren ska åka till London och förhöra honom på plats där. Beroende vad det leder till kan man gå vidare med fallet.

Fallet Julian Assange drivs av prestige

Svante Thorsell

Göteborgs-Posten

26 januari 2014

Julian Assange har häktats för att han inte inställt sig i Sverige för förhör. Ingenting annat. Han har aldrig vägrat att bli förhörd, tvärtom välkomnat att det sker i England. Åklagaren vägrar av prestige att göra honom detta besök. Det tillhör rutinerna att sådana förhör äger rum där den misstänkte finns. Så skedde beträffande Lord Moyne i Trustorhärvan och så skedde i Prosolviamålet, skriver advokat Svante Thorsell.

Fallet Julian Assange borde ha avslutats där det började, 2010. Tillsammans med Quickmålen och regeringens laglösa kidnappning av egyptierna Ahmed Agiza och Mohammed Alzeri 2001 är detta grund för en aktuell rättsrötedebatt som inte ligger långt efter Wilhelm Mobergs på 1950-talet, skriver advokat Svante Thorsell.

Reglerna om due process of law åsidosattes när regeringen med CIA:s hjälp lät hämta egyptierna 2001. I Quickmålen är det inte rättsväsendet som hittar felen och frågetecknen kring de åtta morderna. De inbyggda rättsäkerhetsverktygen till inbördes kontroll och balans fungerade inte. Det är beklagligt att det är journalistiken, inte juridiken som hittar vad som felats i seriedomarna om den förment seriemördaren.

Den som läst förundersökningen beträffande Assange— kanske lika många som ryms i en stadium av olympiska mått— blir förvånad. En av kvinnorna berättar själv hur hon efter samlaget gett sig ut på stan för att köpa frukost till sig och Assange, ringt till sin bror och berättat vem hon har hos sig. I efterspelet spekulerade de två om vad de skulle göra om hon just blivit med barn. De skämtade om att i sådant fall skulle barnet få namnet Afghanistan. Deras möte avslutas med att hon, tydligen under muntra former, skjutsat Assange på sin cykel till stationen och till och med betalat hans tågbiljett till Stockholm.

Här beskrivs fester på Söders innegårdar och möten med IT-nördar, Broderskapare, andra socialdemokrater, journalister och feminister. **Stämningarna är mycket goda. Intrycket av kvinnornas berättelser i utredningen är en annan än åklagarens hypotes.** Den kan knappast ändras till Assange nackdel ens om åklagaren slår honom en signal på Ecuadors ambassad i London.

Det första förhørsprotokollet fanns inte ens nedtecknat när Expressen trumpetade ut att Assange är misstänkt för våldtäkt. Anklagelsen gick som en löpeld genom världspressen, strax var det förmedlat av CNN som "rape". Utomlands är våldtäkt ett brott där någon med fysiskt våld tilltvingar sig ett samlag. I Sverige kan också annat, som inte är fysiskt våld, vara ett våldtäktsbrott enligt lag.

I det aktuella fallet är frågan om kondom varit av eller på. Om aktivt eller tyst samtycke funnits. Misstankarna mot Assange är som en krock mellan bomull. Cirkus Assange rids därefter av prestige. Rättens tjänare betjänar här sig själva, inte rättsväsendet. Hur skall utredningen kunna avslutas utan en förnedrande reträtt? Åklagarens heder får dominera handlandet på bekostnad av Assange och andra. Kan det verkligen vara så svårt? Det gör kollegorna dagligen, men inte här. Exemplet Assange är obehagligt— "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere".

Att Assange upplever stor fara för sitt liv och sin säkerhet är uppenbart. Man behöver inte ha paranoidea drag för att Assange skall kunna anses vara utsatt för en komplott. Nästlad av två älskarinnor, kanske anlitade av CIA kan den förföljde Assange felaktigt tro? Uthängd på löpsedlar i varje gathörn och utpekad av CNN som våldtäktsman.

Med ledning av detta och vad som hänt Wikileaks läcka Bradley Manning är Assange farhågor för det svenska rättsväsendet befogade. Lägg därtill hur de båda egypterna hämtades av CIA. När justitierådet Stefan Lindskog så åker till Australien och försöker övertyga om att Assange aldrig kan komma att utlämnas [*Det gjorde han inte. --A.B.*] till USA är det inte betryggande. Enligt juridiken ja, men den gällde inte för egyptierna. Assange har anledning känna fruktan för sin rättssäkerhet i Sverige.

Före detta kammaråklagaren Rolf Hillegren argumenterar på SvD Brännpunkt (12/1) för att Assangemålet bör läggas ned. Ett utmärkt inlägg: Om än med goda avsikter föreslår Hillegren dock att de båda kvinnorna av nåd bör få ett skadestånd av regeringen. Utomordentligt olämpligt. Varför skall den som påstår sig ha varit utsatt för en kränkande våldtäkt tvingas till ytterligare en underkastelse av nåd? Kvinnorna har rätt att enligt skadeståndslagen i civilmål begära ersättning för kränkning vid allmän domstol om de tror på sin sak. **Men också Assanges skada skall ersättas av Sverige.**

Assange har häktats för att han inte inställt sig i Sverige för förhör. Ingenting annat. Han har aldrig vägrat att bli förhörd, tvärtom välkomnat att det sker i England. Åklagaren vägrar av prestige att göra honom detta besök. Det tillhör rutinerna att sådana förhör äger rum där den misstänkte finns. Så skedde beträffande Lord Moynes i Trustorhärvan, så skedde i Prosolviamålet. Ingenting märkligt. Det är rimligt att Assange hörs där han är inlåst på Ecuadors ambassad i London, där han i praktiken är frihetsberövad av Sverige.

Assangefrågan, Quickmålen och de kidnappade egyptierna har likartade egenskaper. De präglas av prestige, främst av jurister. Jurister som ifrågasatts och försöker rädda sig från nederlag på bekostnad av den rätt de är satta att tjäna snarare än härska över. Ibland till och med i juristlivets slutskede med pensionen inför dörren. Rättsstatens styrka är att den just tål att det felas, men kräver att det rättas där så har skett.

Det vore en framgång för Sverige och rättsväsendet den dag åklagaren skriver: "Jag har talat med Assange och funnit skäl att i dag lägga ner förundersökningen".

<http://www.gp.se/nyheter/debatt/1.2256088-fallet-julian-assange-drivs-av-prestige>

Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa commented that Julian Assange's case is in the hands of the Europeans, but Ecuador is willing to meet with them at any point. He said that Mr Assange is welcome to stay in the Embassy as long as necessary and that the UK is attempting to violate his human rights by preventing his safe passage to Ecuador. He also noted the fact that Sweden can question Mr Assange in London.

This Day in WikiLeaks
2014-01-22

- - - - -

Både rätts- och medieröta

Göteborgs-Posten
2014-01-31

Fallet Julian Assange är ett utmärkt exempel på hur en del journalister åsidosätter de etiska regler som den svenska journalistiken lyder under, skriver journalist Helene Bergman.

I sin artikel "Fallet Julian Assange, drivs av prestige" på GP Debatt (26/1) talar advokat Svante Thorsell om rättsröta. Men det handlar inte bara om juridiken, det handlar också till stor del om journalistiken.

Fallet Julian Assange är ett utmärkt exempel på hur en del journalister åsidosätter de etiska regler som den svenska journalistiken lyder under.

Tar också upp fallet

Jag har skrivit en rad debattartiklar i ämnet, bland annat i Dagens Nyheter. I min aktuella bok "Med svärtad ögonskugga — en feministisk memoar" tar jag också upp fallet Julian Assange:

"Assangeaffären startade ett veritabelt kollektivt medieraseri med Expressen i spetsen". Och som advokat Svante Thorsell också skriver:

"Det första förhörsprotokollet fanns inte ens nedtecknat när Expressen trumpetar ut att Julian Assange är misstänkt för våldtäkt. Anklagelserna gick som en löpeld genom världspressen."

Kvällspressen "glömde" att vi har domstolar för att döma i brottmål.

Aldrig så mycket hat som då

Från att ha varit de manliga journalisternas hjälte måste nu Assange som misstänkt våldtäktsman med alla medel störtas i den svenska feminismens namn. Jag tror aldrig att jag har läst så mycket hat från journalister som då.

Mediedrevet är en oerhört stark kraft som till och med borde kunna skrämman en åklagare till handlingsförklaring. Jag tror faktiskt att så kan vara fallet när det gäller Julian Assange.

Svenska medier har ett stor ansvar för att Julian Assange nu är inlåst på Ecuadors ambassad i London sedan drygt ett år tillbaka utan rättegång. Det handlar inte om att "skylla" på media. Det handlar om att journalister inte kollat fakta och inte heller följt de etiska reglerna och behandlat Assange som oskyldig tills dom fallit.

Då kan vi tala om att det råder såväl rätts- som medieröta i Sverige.

• *Helene Bergman, journalist*

SVT: 2014-02-02

Kravet: Förhör Assange nu

Nu ökar trycket på åklagaren i fallet med den våldtäktsanklagade Julian Assange. Från höga jurister, och även från politiskt håll, kommer nu krav på att åklagaren driver fallet framåt.

Julian Assange, den våldtäktsmisstänkte grundaren av Wikileaks, har nu befunnit sig drygt ett och ett halvt år inne på Ecuadors ambassad i London.

Assange kan tvingas vara kvar på ambassaden ytterligare drygt sex år om han måste vänta tills preskriptionstiden gått ut för den våldtäkt han misstänks ha begått.

Samtidigt vill inte den svenska åklagaren åka till London och förhöra Assange där. Åklagarmyndigheten har hittills sagt att Assange av utredningstekniska skäl behöver vara i Sverige under förundersökningen.

Assange vägrar lämna ambassaden eftersom han tror att Sverige kommer att utlämna honom till USA där han riskerar ett långt fängelsestraff efter Wikileaks avslöjanden av bland annat olika amerikanska militära övergrepp och diplomatiska aktiviteter.

Men nu börjar tålamodet tryta med att inget verkar hända i fallet. **För första gången kräver en riksdagspolitiker att åklagaren gör något för att bryta dödläget. Johan Pehrson, rättspolitisk talesperson för Folkpartiet och ledamot i justitieutskottet, tycker att något borde göras för att föra fallet framåt.**

– Det här är ett exceptionellt fall. Därför kan man fundera på om inte åklagaren borde vända på stenarna ytterligare en gång för att se om man inte kan få den här saken ur världen, säger han.

– Så att det blir bra, i alla fall bättre, för brottsoffren och så att vi får bort ett rättsfall som ligger och skaver och gnager.

– **Fallet har storpolitiska och internationella implikationer.** Ingen tjänar på det här, säger Johan Pehrson.

Att det gått prestige i fallet anses vara en viktig förklaring till det låsta läget. Den analysen gör bland andra Anne Ramberg, Advokatsamfundets generalsekreterare.

– Nu har det blivit lite cirkus kring det här och det har engelsmännen bidragit till men inte minst den misstänkte själv, säger hon.

– **Men man måste vara lite pragmatisk för att åstadkomma ett slut på den här cirkusen. Man borde ha begett sig till London för att förhöra honom.,** tillägger Anne Ramberg.

Även **förre överåklagaren Sven-Erik Alhem** tycker det är dags att försöka avsluta fallet. Han tycker att riksåklagaren ska ingripa.

– **Riksåklagaren borde ta ansvar nu** och säga: hur ska vi lösa situationen som uppkommit? Det kan inte vara rimligt att månad efter månad bara avvakta om Assange till äventyrs skulle vilja lämna sin ambassad, säger Sven-Erik Alhem. Åtal inte självklart efter förhör

Advokatsamfundet generalsekreterare Anne Ramberg är inte säker på att ett förhör med Julian Assange skulle leda till åtal.

– Det är ju inte uteslutet det skulle komma information vid ett samtal med Assange som skulle leda till att åtalet läggs ned. Det är möjligen den möjligheten som utesluts genom att man inte tar kontakt med honom, säger hon.

Ingen från Åklagarmyndigheten vill framför kameran förklara varför man inte kan förhöra Julian Assange i London men i ett mejl till SVT:s Agenda skriver man att "åklagarens möjlighet att ställa frågor om sådant i förundersökningen som inte är direkt uttryckt i den europeiska arresteringsordern är begränsade. **Det finns alltså en betydande risk att ett förhör i London inte kommer att föra utredningen framåt.**"

Åklagarmyndigheten skriver också: "Ärendet är pågående. Åklagaren ser ingen möjlighet att i media diskutera eventuella kommande bedömningar eller beslut som kan föranledas av utvecklingen i ärendet."

Hur ska dödläget i Assange-fallet brytas? I söndagens Agenda intrervjuas Assanges ombud Thomas Olsson och Claes Borgström, som företräder en av kvinnorna.

Agenda sänds söndag den 2 februari klockan 21.15 i SVT2. Programmet sänds även direkt på SVT Play och kan ses i efterhand här.

Misstankarna mot Assange

Julian Assange är häktad i sin frånvaro på sannolika skäl misstänkt för olaga tvång, två fall av sexuellt ofredande samt våldtäkt.

De brott som Assange är misstänkt för begicks enligt åtalet under Assange besök i Sverige i augusti 2010.

Våldtäkten betecknas som mindre grov – ett brott med en preskriptionstid på tio år. I juni 2012 flydde Julian Assange till Ecuadors ambassad i London där han sökte politisk asyl i landet.

I augusti 2012 meddelade Ecuadors president Rafael Correa att Julian Assange beviljats politisk asyl i landet.

SvD: 2 februari 2014

Åklagare pressas i fallet Assange

Dödläget måste brytas i fallet Julian Assange, anser Johan Pehrson, rättspolitisk talesperson för Folkpartiet och ledamot i justitieutskottet.

- Det här är ett exceptionellt fall. Därför kan man fundera på om inte åklagaren borde vända på stenarna ytterligare en gång för att se om man inte kan få den här saken ur världen, säger han till SVT:s Agenda.

Den 42-årige australiern och grundaren av Wikileaks har tillbringat ett och ett halvt år inne på Ecuadors ambassad i London. Han är i Sverige häktad i sin frånvaro på sannolika skäl misstänkt för olaga tvång, två fall av sexuellt ofredande samt våldtäkt.

Assange fruktar att via Sverige bli utlämnad till USA om han lämnar ambassaden. Åklagaren har å sin sida vill inte förhöra Assange i London, med motiveringen att "åklagarens möjlighet att ställa frågor om sådant i förundersökningen som inte är direkt uttryckt i den europeiska arresteringsordern är begränsade".

Nordic News Network
2 February 2014

Mounting Criticism of Swedish Prosecution in Assange Case

After more than three years, the poorly justified pursuit of Julian Assange is being publicly challenged by Swedish legal experts

For well over three years, a Swedish prosecutor has sought to extradite Julian Assange from England for questioning on suspicion of sexual misconduct. Her basis for and manner of doing so have raised suspicions of prosecutorial misconduct*, but public debate on that issue has been limited.

Recently, however, legal experts have begun to express criticism in major media about the conduct of the case. In early January this year, the Stockholm daily Svenska Dagbladet, published an opinion piece by a retired prosecutor under the headline, "Time to conclude the Assange case". ...

Complete text at <http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/critics.pdf>

DN: 2014-02-03

Holder hyllade Sverige— och försvarade NSA

Sverige är en förebild inom mänskliga rättigheter, sade USA:s justitieminister Eric Holder i riksdagen i dag. Han försvarade också NSA:s massövervakning. Holder hyllade att Sverige var det sjunde landet i världen att låta homosexuella ingå äktenskap.

– Det är inte bara nobelt utan också rätt, sade Holder.

Han underströk att Sverige och USA delar värderingar som att samhället stärks av mångfald.

Holder's tal blev en historisk hyllning till Sverige— och till medborgarrättsrörelsen, med referenser till medborgarrättskämparna Rosa Parks och Martin Luther King samt presidenterna John F Kennedy och Barack Obama.

Först när förberedda frågor från politiker började framföras kom NSA-frågan upp, huruvida individen har tillräckligt skydd i en värld av massövervakning.

– NSA:s agerande är lagligt enligt amerikansk lag, sade Holder.

– Men det svarar inte på frågan om det är något vi bör göra. Om vad som bör modifieras.

Holder refererade till Obamas tal om massövervakning för ett par veckor sedan och sade att han och hans medarbetare arbetar på att "hitta balans".

Holder är den förste amerikanske justitieminister som besökt Sverige, påpekar ambassadör Mark Brzezinski.

I förmiddags mötte Holder sin svenska kollega Beatrice Ask. De två diskuterade bland annat brottsbekämpning och integritet samt IT-relaterad brottslighet. **Under dagen har Eric Holder även mött riksåklagare Anders Perklev**, bekräftar en ambassadkälla för TT.

Holder's Stockholms-besök är en del av en rundresa i Europa, under vilken han bland annat också ska besöka Polen. Det sker i en tid, då frågor som USA:s signalspaningsmyndighet NSA:s massövervakning— och dess samarbete med svenska FRA— fått stort utrymme i medierna.

SvD: 3 februari 2014

Hård RÅ-kritik mot politiker

Riksåklagaren Anders Perklev riktar skarp kritik mot riksdagsledamoten Johan Pehrson (FP). Detta sedan Pehrson i SVT:s Agenda i söndags uttalat sig om Assange-ärendet och sagt att "åklagaren borde vända på stenarna ytterligare en gång för att se om man inte kan få den här saken ur världen".

Perklev tolkar uttalandet som att Pehrson vill påverka hur ärendet handläggs.

"Att en riksdagspolitiker öppet ifrågasätter åklagares beslutsfattande i enskilda ärenden är anmärkningsvärt. Det strider mot den grundläggande maktfördelning mellan lagstiftare och verkställande myndighet som råder i Sverige", säger Perklev i ett pressmeddelande.

Även den ena kvinnans advokat, Elisabeth Massi Fritz, är mycket kritisk. Hon skriver till TT att åklagare inte ska "utsättas för politiska påtryckningar eller låta mediedrev påverka sitt agerande".

Wikileaksgrundaren Julian Assange är i Sverige häktad i sin frånvaro på sannolika skäl misstänkt för bland annat våldtäkt.



Swedish Lawmakers Boosting Efforts to Question Assange

Niclas Rolander and Sven Grundberg
Wall Street Journal
February 3, 2014

STOCKHOLM-- Members of Sweden's parliament have for the first time publicly called on prosecutors to step up their efforts to question Julian Assange on sexual-assault allegations he faces in Sweden.

Staffan Danielsson, a member of parliament in the country's ruling coalition, on Monday said the prosecutors should travel to London to interview Mr. Assange rather than insisting he come to Sweden. "It's in the interest of everyone involved in this process that the prosecutor reaches a conclusion to either file charges or dismiss the case, and it's obvious that Assange won't come to Sweden," said Mr. Danielsson of the Center Party, part of the ruling coalition.

In Sweden, lawmakers rarely weigh in publicly on matters being handled by justice officials.

Mr. Assange, the WikiLeaks founder who has been living at Ecuador's embassy in London since he sought political asylum there *in the summer of 2012, hasn't been*

questioned on the allegations that he raped [not really --A.B.] one woman and molested another during a visit to Stockholm in 2010. He denies the allegations and hasn't been charged with a crime. Mr. Assange was arrested in the U.K. in December 2010 on a European warrant requested by Sweden. He fought a long court battle to avoid extradition; when his legal options ran out, he sought asylum at Ecuador's embassy.

The WikiLeaks founder has long suggested that the Swedish investigation is politically motivated and backed by Washington as a way to speed what he contends would be his eventual extradition to the U.S., where he says he would be tried for publishing thousands of classified U.S. government documents. The U.S. hasn't charged Mr. Assange with a crime or issued an extradition request for him.

Swedish officials and the lawyer for the two women say the allegations have nothing to do with WikiLeaks activities. Swedish prosecutors have said they want him to travel to Sweden for questioning on the sexual-assault allegations, while Mr. Assange has said he is willing to talk in London.

The prosecutor "needs to turn every stone to see whether this case can be moved forward," Johan Pehrson, another member of Sweden's parliament who sits on the committee for justice affairs for the Liberal Party, said Monday. Mr. Pehrson first spoke out on the issue Sunday during a debate on Swedish television.

The Swedish Prosecution Authority said it isn't changing its position on wanting Mr. Assange to come to Sweden. Marianne Ny, the prosecutor in charge of the case, has refrained from discussing the details of the matter while Mr. Assange remains in London, but a statement published on the Prosecution Authority's website Sunday said there is "significant risk that questioning in London will not move the investigation forward."

The authority added that an interview with Mr. Assange would have to be carried out by British police, and the questioning would be restricted by the contents of the European arrest warrant.

"At the moment prosecutors feel unable to [question Assange in the U.K. with assistance from British police]," Mr. Pehrson, the Swedish lawmaker, said. "I respect that, but now we have a deadlock which affects the injured parties."

A spokesman for Beatrice Ask, Sweden's Minister of Justice, declined to discuss the case, saying it wouldn't be appropriate for a minister to interfere in specific legal matters.

Mr. Assange has no plans to surrender himself, said Thomas Olsson, the lawyer who acts as Mr. Assange's legal representative in Sweden. "All this time, Mr. Assange has made himself available and has urged the Swedish prosecutor to conduct any necessary interviews with him in London," Mr. Olsson said. "I spoke to Mr. Assange on Sunday, and he still has no intention to leave Ecuador's embassy as long as he sees a risk of being handed over to U.S. authorities."

Anne Ramberg, head of the Swedish Bar Association, added her voice to those pushing for a change of course. Ms. Ramberg said it's time for Swedish prosecutors to show pragmatism and evaluate the option to question Mr. Assange in London, rather than wait for his arrest warrant to be executed.

"Clearly, this process has gotten out of hand," Ms. Ramberg said. "I understand that Swedish prosecutors find it offensive that Mr. Assange, a suspected rapist, wants to control the process. But for the sake of everyone involved, including the plaintiffs, this shouldn't become a matter of prestige."

<http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20140203-708418.html>

SvD: 5 februari 2014

Varför ska undantag göras för Assange?

Alla är vi lika inför lagen. Det är en grundläggande mänsklig rättighet, och inget undantag bör göras för Julian Assange. Det skriver advokaten Elisabeth Massi Fritz, som företräder en av kvinnorna.

Den senaste tiden har ett flertal insändare och debattartiklar publicerats i svenska medier angående förundersökningen mot Julian Assange. Alla med samma budskap: "Lägg ner Assange-fallet. Det är skandal att åklagaren inte åker till Ecuadors ambassad i London och förhör Assange. Det har gått prestige i fallet."

Även i SVT:s program Agenda debatterades söndagen den 2 februari 2014 om fallet bör läggas ner. Varför ha domstolar när vi kan ha omröstningar i dagstidningar och debatter i tv? Brottmål ska drivas i domstol, inte i medierna *[skall hon säga! --A.B.]*. Politiker ska inte uttala sig om pågående förundersökningar som till exempel skedde i Agenda. Inte heller ska åklagare utsättas för politiska påtryckningar eller låta mediedrev påverka sitt agerande.

Var finns hänsyn till de båda målsägandena? Handlar det bara om Assange och hans rättigheter när det här fallet diskuteras?

Det handlar om en man som låst in sig själv på en ambassad i London, vilket åklagare Marianne Ny rutinmässigt beskylls vara ansvarig för *[av vilka? --A.B.]*. Det har gått tre och ett halvt år.

Det är en skandal att Assange och **dem jag kallar hans "senaste pr-agenter"** med flera, verkar driva en kampanj som går ut på att öka trycket på åklagaren.

Det är en skandal att kvinnors rättigheter i Sverige år 2014 fortfarande av många ses som en parentes, en inskränkning i denna "hjärtes" viktiga arbete. *[Om det vore sant hade denna "circus" aldrig kommit i gång. --A.B.]*

Det är en skandal att så många människor inte vet vad en våldtäkt är och förlöjligar gärningsbeskrivningarna och skuldbelägger de båda målsägande. *[Det är inte målsägandena som skuldbeläggas för cirkusen. --A.B.]*

Det är en skandal att Ecuador står i vägen för de svenska och brittiska rättsväsendena genom att gömma en misstänkt på sin ambassad vilket bryter mot Wienkonventionen *[enlig vilken paragraf? --A.B.]*.

Det är däremot inte en skandal att en svensk överåklagare försöker få en man som är häktad för sexualbrott överlämnad hit för att förhöras och eventuellt lagföras. *[Kritiken handlar inte om detta. --A.B.]*

Julian Assange har sedan hösten 2010 undanhållit sig det svenska rättsväsendet efter att han uteblivit från förhör i Sverige. Han lämnade landet *[med åklagarens medgivande -- A.B.]* samma dag som han för andra gången blev anhållen i sin frånvaro. Han vägrade sedan att återvända. *[Inte sant. --A.B.]* Det resulterade i att åklagaren i fallet Marianne Ny, efter att Assange hade häktats på sannolika skäl misstänkt för våldtäkt, två fall av sexuella ofredande, och ett fall av olaga tvång av Svea Hovrätt, utfärdade en europeisk arresteringsorder. Assange greps följaktligen i London *[han anmälde sig själv --A.B.]*, och överklagade sedan Sveriges begäran om överlämning i alla det brittiska rättsväsendets instanser. I Magistrates Court, i High Court, och även i Supreme Court. Han förlorade i alla instanser.

I stället för att respektera nämnda domsluten så bröt han mot sina borgensvillkor och flydde sommaren 2012 till Ecuadors ambassad i London där han sökte asyl, bara dagar innan han skulle inställa sig hos den brittiska polisen för att överlämnas till Sverige. Ecuador beviljade diplomatisk asyl, på grund av Assanges rädsla för att bli lagförd i USA. Detta trots att USA inte hade begärt honom utlämnad. Assange hävdade att det inte hade någonting med Sverige att göra över huvud taget, det faktum att han sökt asyl i Ecuador, och att han inte skulle lämna ambassaden ens om den svenska förundersökningen lades ner.

Trots det begärde Assange gång på gång att den svenska åklagaren skulle resa till London för att förhöra honom inne på Ecuadors ambassad. Vad som skulle hända efter det förhöret, om åklagaren beslutade att väcka åtal, ville Assange och hans advokater inte säga. De hävdar att åklagaren skulle lägga ner fallet så snart hon hade fått höra Assanges version. Åklagaren har vägrat gå Assanges krav om förhör inne på Ecuadors ambassad i London till mötes. En rättegång kan bara genomföras i Sverige och ingenting tyder på att Assange frivilligt skulle lämna ambassaden för att ställas inför rätta i Sverige.

Varför skulle åklagaren, med hjälp av brittisk polis [???], förhöra honom i London? Hur skulle det föra förundersökningen framåt? *[På det sätt som flera insatta jurister har förklarat. --A.B.]*

Alla är vi lika inför lagen, det är en fundamental del av vårt samhälle, vårt rättssystem och ett villkor för rättssäkerhet. Den enda som håller Assange instängd på ambassaden är han själv. Han kan låta sig överlämnas till Sverige eller sitta på sitt rum på Ecuadors ambassad i London tills brottsmisstankarna preskriberas. Det orsakar enorma kostnader för de brittiska skattebetalarna att han gömmer sig från brittisk polis som ska verkställa överlämningen till Sverige, och därför bevakar Ecuadors ambassad dygnet runt. När tänker Assange börja ta ansvar? När tänker han sluta gömma sig, sluta försöka fly?

De båda målsägande i fallet har inget intresse av att denna utdragna process fortsätter i flera år till. Min klient vill få ett avslut på denna process, hon vill gå vidare med sitt liv. Hon drivs inte av någon hämndlystnad som hon i media har anklagats för. *[Vilka media är dessa? --A.B.]* Hon vill att hennes rättigheter ska respekteras, att rättsprocessen ska få ett avslut som inte är ett resultat av den förföljelse hon själv och det svenska rättsväsendet har varit utsatta för sedan 2010. *[Assange vill också få ett slut på cirkusen; enda villkoren är att han inte kan utlämnas till USA. --A.B.]*

Ska målsägande i sexualbrottsmål behöva utstå år av hot, förtal och trakasserier utan att varken polisen eller datainspektionen ingriper? Ska en vanlig kvinna tvingas bli en offentlig person, utan rätt till anonymitet för att en känd man misstänks ha förgripit sig på henne? Ska brottsmisstänkta kända män särbehandlas av rättsväsendet och få påverka när, var och hur de ska bli förhörda? Är det ett sådant samhälle vi vill ha? Är det Sverige? *[Självklart inte. Och ingenting som Rolf Hillegren m.fl. har föreslagit skulle leda dit — snarare tvärtom. --A.B.]*

Nej, det är inte Sverige och därför ska åklagarna fortsätta driva målet. Åklagaren varken kan eller ska ta politiska hänsyn utan ska följa vår lagstiftning. *[Då kan hon acceptera justiterådet Stefan Lindksogs tolkning av denna lagstiftning och resa till London för att förhöra Assange. --A.B.]*

SvD: 2014-02-12

Behandla Assange enligt svensk lag

Åklagaren Marianne Ny måste upphöra med sin negativa särbehandling av Julian Assange och i stället börja behandla honom som alla andra som är misstänkta för brott. Om hon inte gör det bör en överordnad åklagare granska hennes handläggning av fallet. Det skriver Julians Assanges svenska advokater, Thomas Olsson och Per E Samuelsson.

På senare tid har många påpekat att Julian Assanges situation är pinsam för Sverige och borde lösas. Men vissa påstår fortfarande, däribland Elisabeth Massi Fritz (Brännpunkt 5/2), att Julian Assange kräver specialbehandling när han begär att få bli förhörd på Ecuadors ambassad i London.

Detta är en missuppfattning. Assange kräver bara att få bli behandlad enligt svensk lag.

Enligt 23:4 rättegångsbalken ska en förundersökning bedrivas skyndsamt och så att den misstänkte inte i onödan utsätts för olägenhet.

Enligt 5 § förundersökningskungörelsen skall förhör hållas på tid och plats som kan antas medföra minsta olägenhet för den som skall höras.

Innebörden av dessa regler är att varje förundersökning ska anpassas till den situation som den misstänkte personen befinner sig i.

Julian Assange befinner sig på Ecuadors ambassad i London sedan juni 2012. Skälet till att han sökte sig dit var en oro för att bli utlämnad till USA. Att det rör sig om en befogad oro står klart sedan det från officiellt amerikanskt håll uttalats att det pågår en brottsutredning rörande publiceringarna på Wikileaks. Allvaret i situationen blev tydlig under rättegången mot Chelsea (tidigare Bradley) Manning, som dömdes till 35 års fängelse som påstådd källa till Wikileaks.

För att förhindra att risken för utlämning förverkligas har Ecuador beviljat Julian Assange politisk asyl. Därmed har denna något ovanliga och minst sagt olustiga situation uppkommit: En person sitter inlåst på en ambassad i Västeuropa för att undgå att ställas till svars för att han utnyttjat sin yttrandefrihet och, som journalist, framfört kritik mot hur USA för kriget i Irak.

Enligt svensk lag är åklagaren således skyldig att anpassa sig till Assanges situation och med den som utgångspunkt driva förundersökningen skyndsamt framåt och utan att onödig olägenhet uppstår för de inblandade.

Nästa steg i utredningen är att förhöra Assange. Ett sådant förhör kan hållas på ambassaden i London, men inte i Sverige. Men Marianne Ny vägrar åka till London. I stället gör hon ingenting. Några rationella skäl för hennes passivitet är svåra att se. Efter förhöret med Julian Assange kan åklagaren besluta om fortsättningen. Helt eller delvis läggas ned eller fortsätta till åtal. Innan förhöret kan Marianne Ny inte göra någonting.

Givet att åklagaren inte har en förutfattad mening i skuldfrågan, och är beredd att förhålla sig objektiv till de olika redogörelserna, är det uppenbart att ett förhör med Julian Assange skulle gagna alla inblandade, inklusive målsägandena. De skulle få ett besked, vilket det nu blir, och slippa leva med ovissheten om vad som kommer att hända med förundersökningen.

I dagsläget har Marianne Ny inte kunnat presentera någon lösning på problemet, utan enbart pekat på svårigheter. Kanske är det då en god idé att göra så som framförts på vissa håll, nämligen att låta en överordnad åklagare titta på ärendet med nya fräscha ögon. I så fall kommer man förhoppningsvis att se möjligheterna i problemet och inte bara problemet med möjligheterna.

Att Elisabeth Massi Fritz (och Claes Borgström) inte ansluter sig till vårt krav är för oss en gåta. Fritz skriver ju att hennes klient "har inget intresse av att denna utdragna process fortsätter i flera år till". Genom att stödja åklagarens passivitet bidrar ju Massi Fritz till just det, precis tvärtom mot vad hennes klient vill.

"Assange särbehandlas negativt — överåklagaren har målat in sig i ett hörn utan hedervärd återvändo"

Dagens juridik
2014-02-18

DEBATT — av Rolf Hillegren, före detta åklagare

Den 2 februari visade SVT Agenda ett inslag om fallet Assange. Anledningen var att kritiken växer mot åklagarens hantering av fallet och att alltfler röster höjs i Sverige för att åklagaren ska låta förhöra honom i London.

Den 6 februari skrev den ena kvinnans målsägandebiträde, Elisabeth Massi Fritz, på SvD Brännpunkt och menade att Assange inte bör särbehandlas. Därmed missade hon att det är precis det som sker — Assange särbehandlas till sin nackdel.

Det är utmärkt att fallet uppmärksammas då dess karaktär av rättsskandal blir alltmer framträdande vartefter tiden går. Något som kraftfullt måste framhållas är det utomordentligt svaga bevisläget, vilket naturligtvis har stor betydelse när man ska bedöma åklagarens agerande. Bevisläget är så svagt att ytterligare förhör är onödigt, vilket Elisabeth Massi Fritz vägrar att inse.

Var finns hänsynen till de båda målsägandena frågar Elisabeth Massi Fritz. Motfrågan lyder: var finns hänsynen till Assange? Så länge han inte är dömd ska han betraktas som oskyldig. Därför är han ett lika tänkbart offer som de båda kvinnorna. Åklagaren har i den uppkomna situationen en delikat uppgift då det är lika troligt att en oskyldig blir orättvist behandlad som att två brottsoffer blir det.

I Agenda framträdde den andra kvinnans målsägandebiträde, Claes Borgström. Såväl han som Elisabeth Massi Fritz och åklagaren intar en stelbent hållning. Faktum är att ingen av dem tycks vara intresserad av att fallet avslutas på ett rimligt sätt.

Eftersom heller inte RÅ förefaller benägen att nyttja sin position för att avsluta fallet lär Assange bli kvar på ambassaden i väntan på brottens preskription. Den som finner att detta gagnar de båda målsägandena bör gärna utveckla tankegången ytterligare.

Inom straffrätten är proportionalitetsprincipen viktig. Den innebär att de tvångsåtgärder som vidtas mot den misstänkte måste stå i proportion till brottets allvar. Den principen gör att få erfarna åklagare skulle ha handlagt detta fall på det sätt som nu sker. För att man överhuvudtaget ska överväga att begära någon utlämnad till Sverige bör brotten vara allvarigare och bevisläget avsevärt bättre än i detta fall. Därför kan man säga att Assange har särbehandlats till sin nackdel.

Åklagaren påstår att det finns en betydande risk att ett förhör i London inte kommer att föra utredningen framåt. Lite enklare uttryckt innebär det att åklagaren finner ett sådant förhör meningslöst för den händelse hon kommer fram till att Assange ska åtalas, eftersom han då ändå inte är tillgänglig för en rättsprocess.

Det minsta man kan begära är dock att åklagaren gör en sannolikhetsbedömning av hur stor den möjligheten är. Om så sker bör hon komma fram till att det mest troliga är att ärendet kan avslutas sedan Assange har hörts.

Vad skulle då kunna tänkas hända om åklagaren svalde förtretet och begav sig till London för förhör med Assange? Mitt grundtips är att åklagaren efter förhöret skulle konstatera att brott inte kan styrkas och att utredningen därför ska läggas ned. För Assange skulle detta innebära att han kan lämna Ecuadors ambassad som en fri man. För åklagaren skulle det innebära att hon får motta ytterligare kritik för att hon inte företog denna åtgärd så snart det stod klart att Assange inte var villig att bege sig till Sverige.

Om grundtipset mot förmodan inte skulle slå in blir alternativet att åklagaren bestämmer sig för att Assange ska åtalas. I så fall kommer dödläget att bestå, eftersom rättegången måste hållas i Assanges närvaro. Detta alternativ är dock föga troligt då förhöret kommer att bli lika offentligt som den hittillsvarande utredningen. Det kommer därför att bli utomordentligt svårt för åklagaren att hävda att tillräckliga skäl för åtal föreligger.

Skulle sedan det allra mest osannolika inträffa, nämligen att Assange infinner sig i Stockholm, förhörs och åtalas är jag fullständigt övertygad om att han kommer att frikännas.

Sammanfattningsvis är min bedömning den att oavsett hur åklagaren väljer att göra så kommer det att finnas skäl att rikta ytterligare stark kritik mot hennes handläggning av

fallet. Hon har av outgrundliga skäl, som föga vittnar om yrkesskicklighet, målat in sig i ett hörn från vilket inte finns någon hedervärd återvändo. Den kritik som kommer att framföras kommer inte endast att drabba henne utan dess värre hela det svenska rättssystemet.

Eftersom detta mål även innehåller en politisk dimension vore det även såväl intressant som önskvärt om justitieministern ville förklara varför det anses omöjligt att ge Assange garanti för att han inte kommer att utlämnas till USA om han kommer hit.

Sunt förnuft samt mänskliga och juridiska skäl talar kraftfullt för att staten genom sin representant, åklagaren, har allt att vinna på att ge avkall på den prestige som hittills genomsyrat handläggningen av ärendet. Förhör utomlands är ingen ovanlig åtgärd och handlar inte om särbehandling.

Åklagaren må tycka att Assanges flykt till ambassaden har försvårat hennes arbete, men det befriar henne inte från att finna en vettig utväg ur denna situation som hon försatt det svenska rättsväsendet i och indirekt även det brittiska.

<http://www.dagensjuridik.se/2014/02/assange-sarbehandlas-negativt>

Snowden Documents Reveal Covert Surveillance and Pressure Tactics Aimed at WikiLeaks and Its Supporters

*Glenn Greenwald and Ryan Gallagher
The Intercept
18 Feb. 2014*

Top-secret documents from the National Security Agency and its British counterpart reveal for the first time how the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom targeted WikiLeaks and other activist groups with tactics ranging from covert surveillance to prosecution.

The efforts— detailed in documents provided previously by NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden— included a broad campaign of international pressure aimed not only at WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, but at what the U.S. government calls “the human network that supports WikiLeaks.” The documents also contain internal discussions about targeting the file-sharing site Pirate Bay and hacktivist collectives such as Anonymous.

One classified document from Government Communications Headquarters, Britain’s top spy agency, shows that GCHQ used its surveillance system to **secretly monitor visitors to a WikiLeaks site. By exploiting its ability to tap into the fiber-optic cables that make up the backbone of the Internet, the agency confided to allies in 2012, it was able to collect the IP addresses of visitors in real time, as well as the search terms that visitors used to reach the site from search engines like Google.**

Another classified document from the U.S. intelligence community, dated August 2010, recounts how the Obama administration urged foreign allies to file criminal charges against Assange over the group’s publication of the Afghanistan war logs.

A third document, from July 2011, contains a summary of an internal discussion in which officials from two NSA offices—including the agency’s general counsel and an arm of its Threat Operations Center—considered designating WikiLeaks as “a ‘malicious foreign actor’ for the purpose of targeting.” Such a designation would have allowed the group to be targeted with extensive electronic surveillance—without the need to exclude U.S. persons from the surveillance searches.

In 2008, not long after WikiLeaks was formed, the U.S. Army prepared a report that identified the organization as an enemy, and plotted how it could be destroyed. The new documents provide a window into how the U.S. and British governments appear to have shared the view that WikiLeaks represented a serious threat, and reveal the controversial measures they were willing to take to combat it.

In a statement to The Intercept, Assange condemned what he called “the reckless and unlawful behavior of the National Security Agency” and GCHQ’s “extensive hostile monitoring of a popular publisher’s website and its readers.”

“News that the NSA planned these operations at the level of its Office of the General Counsel is especially troubling,” Assange said. “Today, we call on the White House to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate the extent of the NSA’s criminal activity against the media, including WikiLeaks, its staff, its associates and its supporters.”

Illustrating how far afield the NSA deviates from its self-proclaimed focus on terrorism and national security, the documents reveal that the agency considered using its sweeping surveillance system against Pirate Bay, which has been accused of facilitating copyright violations. The agency also approved surveillance of the foreign “branches” of hacktivist groups, mentioning Anonymous by name.

The documents call into question the Obama administration’s repeated insistence that U.S. citizens are not being caught up in the sweeping surveillance dragnet being cast by the NSA. Under the broad rationale considered by the agency, for example, any communication with a group designated as a “malicious foreign actor,” such as WikiLeaks and Anonymous, would be considered fair game for surveillance.

Julian Sanchez, a research fellow at the Cato Institute who specializes in surveillance issues, says the revelations shed a disturbing light on the NSA’s willingness to sweep up American citizens in its surveillance net.

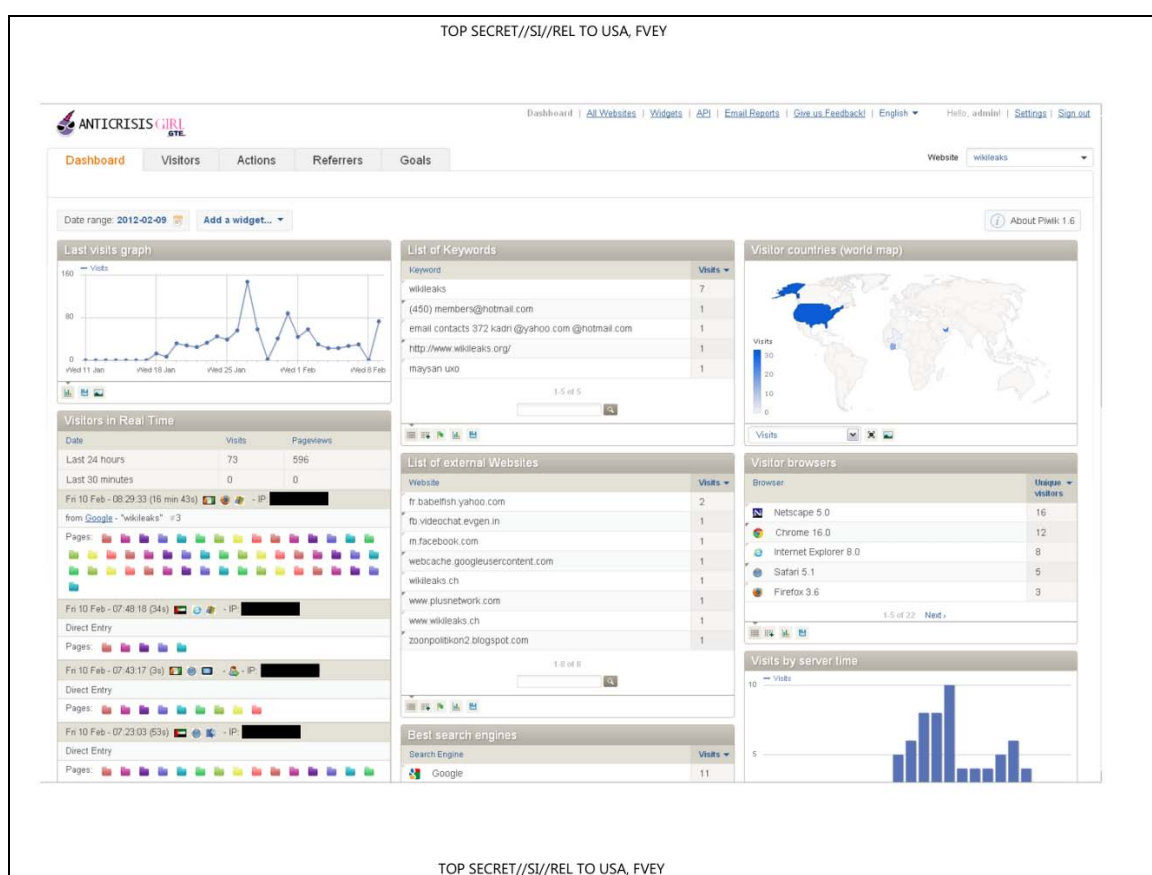
“All the reassurances Americans heard that the broad authorities of the FISA Amendments Act could only be used to ‘target’ foreigners seem a bit more hollow,” Sanchez says, “when you realize that the ‘foreign target’ can be an entire Web site or online forum used by thousands if not millions of Americans.”

GCHQ Spies on WikiLeaks Visitors

The system used by GCHQ to monitor the WikiLeaks website—codenamed ANTICRISIS GIRL—is described in a classified PowerPoint presentation prepared by the British agency and distributed at the 2012 “SIGDEV Conference.” At the annual gathering, each member of the “Five Eyes” alliance—the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand—describes the prior year’s surveillance successes and challenges.

In a top-secret presentation at the conference, two GCHQ spies outlined how ANTICRISIS GIRL was used to enable “targeted website monitoring” of WikiLeaks. The agency logged data showing hundreds of users from around the world, including the United States, as they were visiting a WikiLeaks site—contradicting claims by American officials that a deal between the U.K. and the U.S. prevents each country from spying on the other’s citizens.

The IP addresses collected by GCHQ are used to identify individual computers that connect to the Internet, and can be traced back to specific people if the IP address has not been masked using an anonymity service. If WikiLeaks or other news organizations were receiving submissions from sources through a public dropbox on their website, a system like ANTICRISIS GIRL could potentially be used to help track them down. (WikiLeaks has not operated a public dropbox since 2010, when it shut down its system in part due to security concerns over surveillance.)



In its PowerPoint presentation, GCHQ identifies its target only as “wikileaks.” One slide, displaying analytics derived from the surveillance, suggests that the site monitored was the official wikileaks.org domain. It shows that users reached the targeted site by searching for “wikileaks.org” and for “maysan uxo,” a term associated with a series of leaked Iraq war logs that are hosted on wikileaks.org.

The ANTICRISIS GIRL initiative was operated by a GCHQ unit called Global Telecoms Exploitation (GTE), which was previously reported by The Guardian to be linked to the large-scale, clandestine Internet surveillance operation run by GCHQ, codenamed TEMPORA.

Operating in the United Kingdom and from secret British eavesdropping bases in Cyprus and other countries, GCHQ conducts what it refers to as “passive” surveillance— indiscriminately intercepting massive amounts of data from Internet cables, phone networks and satellites. The GTE unit focuses on developing “pioneering collection capabilities” to exploit the stream of data gathered from the Internet.

As part of the ANTICRISIS GIRL system, the documents show, GCHQ used publicly available analytics software called Piwik to extract information from its surveillance stream, not only monitoring visits to targeted websites like WikiLeaks, but tracking the country of origin of each visitor.

It is unclear from the PowerPoint presentation whether GCHQ monitored the WikiLeaks site as part of a pilot program designed to demonstrate its capability, using only a small set of covertly collected data, or whether the agency continues to actively deploy its surveillance system to monitor visitors to WikiLeaks. It was previously reported in The Guardian that X-KEYSCORE, a comprehensive surveillance weapon used by both NSA and GCHQ, allows “an analyst to learn the IP addresses of every person who visits any website the analyst specifies.”

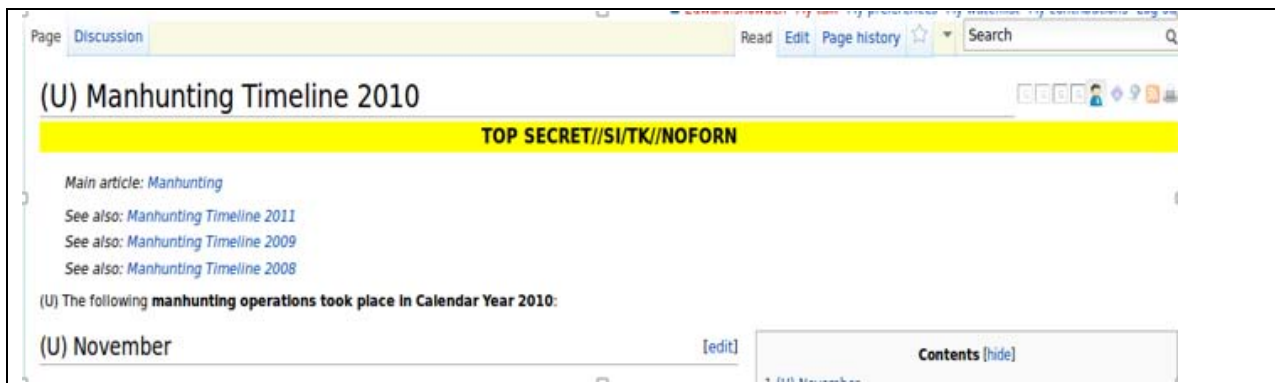
GCHQ refused to comment on whether ANTICRISIS GIRL is still operational. In an email citing the agency’s boilerplate response to inquiries, a spokeswoman insisted that “all of GCHQ’s work is carried out in accordance with a strict legal and policy framework which ensures that our activities are authorized, necessary and proportionate, and that there is rigorous oversight.”

But privacy advocates question such assurances. “How could targeting an entire website’s user base be necessary or proportionate?” says Gus Hosein, executive director of the London-based human rights group Privacy International. **“These are innocent people who are turned into suspects based on their reading habits. Surely becoming a target of a state’s intelligence and security apparatus should require more than a mere click on a link.”**

The agency’s covert targeting of WikiLeaks, Hosein adds, call into question the entire legal rationale underpinning the state’s system of surveillance. “We may be tempted to see GCHQ as a rogue agency, ungoverned in its use of unprecedented powers generated by new technologies,” he says. “But GCHQ’s actions are authorized by [government] ministers. The fact that ministers are ordering the monitoring of political interests of Internet users shows a systemic failure in the rule of law.”

Going After Assange and His Supporters

The U.S. attempt to pressure other nations to prosecute Assange is recounted in a file that the intelligence community calls its **“Manhunting Timeline.”** **The document details, on a country-by-country basis, efforts by the U.S. government and its allies to locate, prosecute, capture or kill alleged terrorists, drug traffickers, Palestinian leaders and others.** There is a timeline for each year from 2008 to 2012.



An entry from August 2010— headlined “United States, Australia, Great Britain, Germany, Iceland”— states: “The United States on August 10 urged other nations with forces in Afghanistan, including Australia, United Kingdom, and Germany, to **consider filing criminal charges against Julian Assange.**” It describes Assange as the “founder of the rogue Wikileaks Internet website and responsible for the unauthorized publication of over 70,000 classified documents covering the war in Afghanistan.”

In response to questions from *The Intercept*, the NSA suggested that the entry is “a summary derived from a 2010 article” in the *Daily Beast*. That article, which cited an anonymous U.S. official, reported that “the Obama administration is pressing Britain, Germany, Australia, and other allied Western governments to consider opening criminal investigations of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange and to severely limit his nomadic travels across international borders.”

The government entry in the “Manhunting Timeline” adds Iceland to the list of Western nations that were pressured, and suggests that the push to prosecute Assange is part of a broader campaign. The effort, it explains, “exemplifies the start of an international effort to focus the legal element of national power upon non-state actor Assange, and the human network that supports WikiLeaks.” The entry does not specify how broadly the government defines that “human network,” which could potentially include thousands of volunteers, donors and journalists, as well as people who simply spoke out in defense of WikiLeaks.

In a statement, the NSA declined to comment on the documents or its targeting of activist groups, noting only that the agency “provides numerous opportunities and forums for their analysts to explore hypothetical or actual circumstances to gain appropriate advice on the exercise of their authorities within the Constitution and the law, and to share that advice appropriately.”

But the entry aimed at WikiLeaks comes from credentialed officials within the intelligence community. In an interview in Hong Kong last June, Edward Snowden made clear that the only NSA officials empowered to write such entries are those “with top-secret clearance and public key infrastructure certificates”— a kind of digital ID card enabling unique access to certain parts of the agency’s system. What’s more, Snowden added, the entries are “peer reviewed”— and every edit made is recorded by the system.

The U.S. launched its pressure campaign against WikiLeaks less than a week after the group began publishing the Afghanistan war logs on July 25, 2010. At the time, top U.S.

national security officials accused WikiLeaks of having “blood” on its hands. But several months later, McClatchy reported that “U.S. officials concede that they have no evidence to date that the documents led to anyone’s death.”

The government targeting of WikiLeaks nonetheless continued. In April 2011, *Salon* reported that a grand jury in Virginia was actively investigating both the group and Assange on possible criminal charges under espionage statutes relating to the publication of classified documents. **And in August of 2012, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, citing secret Australian diplomatic cables, reported that “Australian diplomats have no doubt the United States is still gunning for Julian Assange” and that “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.”**

Bringing criminal charges against WikiLeaks or Assange for publishing classified documents would be highly controversial— especially since the group partnered with newspapers like *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* to make the war logs public.

“The biggest challenge to the press today is the threatened prosecution of WikiLeaks, and it’s absolutely frightening,” James Goodale, who served as chief counsel of the Times during its battle to publish *The Pentagon Papers*, told the *Columbia Journalism Review* last March. “If you go after the WikiLeaks criminally, you go after the Times. That’s the criminalization of the whole process.”

In November 2013, *The Washington Post*, citing anonymous officials, reported that the Justice Department strongly considered prosecuting Assange, but concluded it “could not do so without also prosecuting U.S. news organizations and journalists” who had partnered with WikiLeaks to publish the documents. According to the *Post*, officials “realized that they have what they described as a ‘*New York Times* problem’”— namely, that any theory used to bring charges against Assange would also result in criminal liability for the *Times*, *The Guardian*, and other papers which also published secret documents provided to WikiLeaks. [Note: *The Post*’s source was anonymous and it was not clear if the hunt for Assange on other grounds continued. --A.B.]

NSA proposals to target WikiLeaks

As the new NSA documents make clear, however, the U.S. government did more than attempt to engineer the prosecution of Assange. **NSA analysts also considered designating WikiLeaks as a “malicious foreign actor” for surveillance purposes—a move that would have significantly expanded the agency’s ability to subject the group’s officials and supporters to extensive surveillance.**

Such a designation would allow WikiLeaks to be targeted with surveillance without the use of “defeats”— an agency term for technical mechanisms to shield the communications of U.S. persons from getting caught in the dragnet.

That top-secret document— which summarizes a discussion between the NSA’s Office of the General Counsel and the Oversight and Compliance Office of the agency’s Threat Operations Center— spells out a rationale for including American citizens in the surveillance:

"If the foreign IP is consistently associated with malicious cyber activity against the U.S., so, tied to a foreign individual or organization known to direct malicious activity our way, then there is no need to defeat any to, from, or about U.S. Persons. This is based on the description that one end of the communication would always be this suspect foreign IP, and so therefore any U.S. Person communicant would be incidental to the foreign intelligence task."

In short, labeling WikiLeaks a "malicious foreign target" would mean that anyone communicating with the organization for any reason—including American citizens— could have their communications subjected to government surveillance.

When NSA officials are asked in the document if WikiLeaks or Pirate Bay could be designated as "malicious foreign actors," the reply is inconclusive: "Let us get back to you." **There is no indication of whether either group was ever designated or targeted in such a way.**

The NSA's lawyers did, however, give the green light to subject other activists to heightened surveillance. Asked if it would be permissible to "target the foreign actors of a loosely coupled group of hackers ... such as with Anonymous," the response is unequivocal: "As long as they are foreign individuals outside of the US and do not hold dual citizenship ... then you are okay."

NSA Lawyers: "It's Nothing to Worry About"

Sanchez, the surveillance expert with the Cato Institute, says the document serves as **"a reminder that NSA essentially has carte blanche to spy on non-Americans. In public statements, intelligence officials always talk about spying on 'terrorists,' as if those are the only targets — but Section 702 [of the 2008 FISA Amendments Act] doesn't say anything about 'terrorists.' They can authorize collection on any 'persons reasonably believed to be [located] outside the United States,' with 'persons' including pretty much any kind of group not 'substantially' composed of Americans."**

Sanchez notes that while it makes sense to subject some full-scale cyber-attacks to government surveillance, "it would make no sense to lump together foreign cyberattackers with sites voluntarily visited by enormous numbers of Americans, like Pirate Bay or WikiLeaks."

Indeed, one entry in the NSA document expressly authorizes the targeting of a "malicious" foreign server— offering Pirate Bay as a specific example—"even if there is a possibility that U.S. persons could be using it as well." NSA officials agree that there is no need to exclude Americans from the surveillance, suggesting only that the agency's spies "try to minimize" how many U.S. citizens are caught in the dragnet.

Another entry even raises the possibility of using X-KEYSCORE, one of the agency's most comprehensive surveillance programs, to target communications between two U.S.-based Internet addresses if they are operating through a "proxy" being used for "malicious foreign activity." In response, the NSA's Threat Operations Center approves the targeting, but the agency's general counsel requests "further clarification before signing off."

If WikiLeaks were improperly targeted, or if a U.S. citizen were swept up in the NSA's surveillance net without authorization, the agency's attitude seems to be one of indifference. According to the document— which quotes a response by the NSA's Office of General Counsel and the oversight and compliance office of its Threat Operations Center— discovering that an American has been selected for surveillance must be mentioned in a quarterly report, "but it's nothing to worry about."

The attempt to target WikiLeaks and its broad network of supporters drew sharp criticism from the group and its allies. **"These documents demonstrate that the political persecution of WikiLeaks is very much alive,"** says Baltasar Garzón, the Spanish former judge who now represents the group. "The paradox is that Julian Assange and the WikiLeaks organization are being treated as a threat instead of what they are: a journalist and a media organization that are exercising their fundamental right to receive and impart information in its original form, free from omission and censorship, free from partisan interests, free from economic or political pressure."

For his part, Assange remains defiant. "The NSA and its U.K. accomplices show no respect for the rule of law," he told *The Intercept*. "But there is a cost to conducting illicit actions against a media organization." Referring to a criminal complaint that the group filed last year against "interference with our journalistic work in Europe," Assange warned that "no entity, including the NSA, should be permitted to act against a journalist with impunity."

Assange indicated that in light of the new documents, the group may take further legal action. "We have instructed our general counsel, Judge Baltasar Garzón, to prepare the appropriate response," he said. "The investigations into attempts to interfere with WikiLeaks' work will go wherever they need to go. Make no mistake: those responsible will be held to account and brought to justice."

Comment

'The New York Times problem' could indeed be a problem for intelligence agencies, considering these statements:

"You could get a journalist cheaper than a good call girl, for a couple hundred dollars a month."— CIA operative cited in "Katherine The Great" by Deborah Davis

"The Central Intelligence Agency owns everyone of any significance in the major media."— William Colby, former CIA Director, cited by Dave McGowan in "Derailing Democracy"

"There is quite an incredible spread of relationships. You don't need to manipulate Time magazine, for example, because there are [Central Intelligence] Agency people at the management level."— William B. Bader, former CIA intelligence officer, briefing members of the Senate Intelligence Committee, From 'CIA and the Media', by Carl Bernstein

"The Agency's relationship with [The New York] Times was by far its most valuable among newspapers, according to CIA officials. [It was] general Times policy ... to provide assistance to the CIA whenever possible."— "CIA and the Media" by Carl Bernstein

Media has long been a target of ‘information operations’ by intelligence, in a way this is ‘much ado about nothing’, when considering the by far larger problem of so-called ‘mainstream media’ having been long since co-opted, because it is the ‘mainstream’ outlets shape the direction society will take.

— *Ronald Thomas West*

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We Demand an Investigation: NSA and GCHQ Spying on WikiLeaks

Julian Assange
Wikileaks.org
February 18, 2014

Today, documents were published from the national security whistleblower Edward Snowden, detailing US and UK spying efforts against the publishing organization WikiLeaks. One document shows that as far back as 2010 the US National Security Agency added WikiLeaks publisher Julian Assange to a “MANHUNTING” target list, together with suspected members of al-Qaeda. Another shows that the NSA wanted to designate WikiLeaks as a “malicious foreign actor” in order to expand the NSA’s ability to target WikiLeaks staff, associates and supporters. And a third document, from 2012, demonstrates that the NSA’s UK partner GCHQ also spied on WikiLeaks and its readers.

In response to these revelations WikiLeaks Editor Julian Assange has released the following statement:

‘WikiLeaks strongly condemns the reckless and unlawful behavior of the National Security Agency. We call on the Obama administration to appoint a Special Prosecutor to investigate the extent of the NSA’s criminal activity against the media including WikiLeaks and its extended network.

News that the NSA planned these operations at the level of its Office of the General Counsel is especially troubling. No less concerning are revelations that the US government deployed “elements of state power” to pressure European nations into abusing their own legal systems; and that the British spy agency GCHQ is engaged in extensive hostile monitoring of a popular publisher’s website and its readers.

The NSA and its UK accomplices show no respect for the rule of law. But there is a cost to conducting illicit actions against a media organization. We have already filed criminal cases against the FBI and US military in multiple European jurisdictions. The FBI’s paid informant, who attempted to sell information about me and my staff to the FBI, was imprisoned earlier this year.

No entity, including the NSA, should be permitted to act against journalists with impunity. We have instructed our General Counsel Judge Baltasar Garzón to prepare the appropriate response. The investigations into attempts to interfere with the work of WikiLeaks will go wherever they need to go. Make no mistake: those responsible will be held to account and brought to justice.’

The disclosures come after yesterday's release of two new documents from the long-running US Grand Jury against WikiLeaks. As of November 2013 the United States Department of Justice has stated that the investigation continues.

<http://wikileaks.org/nsa-gchq-spying.html>

SvD: 19 februari 2014

Därför är ett förhör i England otillräckligt

Det är ganska övermaga av Assanges två försvarare att påstå sig veta vad som gagnar min klient bäst.

Claes Borgström

Assanges båda svenska advokater, Thomas Olsson och Per E Samuelson, kräver på Brännpunkt 11/2 att Assange ska bli behandlad enligt svensk lag. Genom att inte resa till London och hålla förhör med Assange på Ecuadors ambassad följer inte överåklagaren Marianne Ny gällande svensk rätt, enligt advokaterna.

Ett effektivt förhör med en misstänkt person som förnekar brott förutsätter att den misstänkte sitter mitt emot förhørsledaren för att möjliggöra ögonkontakt. Förhørsledaren måste vara väl inläst på förundersökningsmaterialet. Frågorna är planerade i förväg men svaren ger ofta anledning till oplanerade följdfrågor. Från utredningssynpunkt är det angeläget att den misstänkte inte känner till vilken information som polisen sitter inne med så att han inte i förväg ska kunna anpassa sina svar till bevisläget. Han konfronteras under hand med uppgifter från vittnesförhör, teknisk utredning med mera. På så sätt får åklagaren det bästa underlaget för att kunna stämna av den misstänktes berättelse mot bevisningen.

Ett förhör med Assange på Ecuadors ambassad genomförs av engelsk polis som i förväg har fått besked från sina svenska kollegor vilka frågor som ska ställas. Den engelske förhørsledaren har inte den fullständiga kunskap om utredningsläget som krävs för att genast kunna ställa relevanta följdfrågor. Det motverkar väsentligt utredningsintresset. Det bör understrykas att allt utredningsmaterial inte ligger ute på nätet.

Om den misstänkte lämnar uppgifter som strider mot målsägandens berättelse, vilket ju är regel när den misstänkte förnekar, får målsäganden i ett förnyat förhör tillfälle att kommentera dessa uppgifter. Inte sällan kommer det då fram nya uppgifter som den misstänkte måste ges tillfälle att bemöta i ett nytt förhör. Det är inte ovanligt att det förekommer flera förhör med båda parter.

Att begära tillstånd hos de engelska myndigheterna att få genomföra polisförhör i England är en omständlig och tidskrävande procedur. Det går inte att bedriva förundersökning på det sättet. Polisens och åklagarens arbete skulle försvåras avsevärt.

Nu till svensk lag. Olsson/Samuelson skriver att enligt 23:4 rättegångsbalken ska förundersökning bedrivas "skyndsamt och så att den misstänkte inte i onödan utsätts

för olägenhet.” Så står det inte. I bestämmelsens andra stycke sägs:
”Förundersökningen ska bedrivas så skyndsamt som omständigheterna medger” (min kursivering). I första stycket anges att undersökningen ska bedrivas så att inte någon får vidkännas kostnad eller olägenhet. Den bestämmelsen tar sikte på misstänkta som är på fri fot.

Enligt Olsson/Samuelson stadgas i 5 § förundersökningskungörelsen förhör ska hållas ”på tid och plats som kan antas medföra minsta olägenhet för den som ska höras.” Även den bestämmelsen avser personer som är på fri fot. Men dessutom så står det inte så. Den lydelsen är: ”Förhör ska, såvida inte därigenom förundersökningens behöriga gång motverkas eller polisens eller åklagarens arbete avsevärt försvåras (min kursivering), hållas på tid och plats, som antas medföra minsta olägenhet för den som ska höras.

Olsson/Samuelsson har alltså i sin artikel hänvisat till två bestämmelser som inte har någon relevans under nuvarande förhållanden. De har också vilselett läsarna genom att undanhålla för bedömningen avgörande delar av de refererade bestämmelserna.

Det är uppenbart att förundersökningens behöriga gång motverkas och att åklagarens och polisens arbete avsevärt försvåras om de skulle hålla förhör på Ecuadors ambassad i London. Det är också uppenbart att förundersökningen med hänsyn till omständigheterna, omständigheter som Assange ensam råder över, inte kan bedrivas mer skyndsamt.

Ett förhör med Assange i London skulle inte föra utredningen framåt.

Assange är häktad av Svea hovrätt som på sannolika skäl misstänkt för våldtäkt, mindre grovt brott, olaga tvång och sexuellt ofredande. Han har brutit mot det reseförbud som engelsk domstol utfärdat genom att gå in på Ecuadors ambassad. Han ”sitter inlåst” på ambassaden, skriver advokaterna. Han är inte inlåst. Han bestämmer själv om han vill vara kvar.

Situationen är påfrestande för de två kvinnor som utsatts för övergrepp av Assange. Min klient skulle gärna slippa den påfrestningen som Assange åsamkar henne sedan flera år. Men det är ganska övermaga av Assanges två försvarare att påstå sig veta vad som gagnar henne bäst.

CLAES BORGSTRÖM

Advokat, målsägandebiträde för en av kvinnorna i Assange-målet

SvD: 24 februari 2014

Sannolikt att svensk polis gör förhöret

SLUTREPLIK | Thomas Olsson och Per E Samuelsson

Advokat Claes Borgström riktar i sin replik ”eine grausambe salbe” mot undertecknade ombud för Julian Assange (Brännpunkt 19/2). Vi anklagas för att vilseleda läsarna och på ett övermaga sätt uttala oss om parternas bästa.

Uppenbarligen har vi och Claes Borgström olika uppfattningar om vad det innebär att handlägga ett ärende skyndsamt. **Claes Borgström synes mena att det mest skyndsamma är att göra ingenting.** Vi överlåter med detta åt andra att avgöra vem som vilseleder vem.

Vid den bedömningen bör dock läsaren känna till ett väsentligt sakfel i Borgströms och åklagarens ståndpunkt.

"Ett förhör med Assange på Ecuadors ambassad genomförs av engelsk polis som i förväg har fått besked från sina svenska kollegor vilka frågor som ska ställas," påstår Borgström.

Detta är felaktigt. Hur förhöret genomförs bestäms av brittiska myndigheter. I alla de fall vi varit med om tidigare har dock engelsk polis överlåtit åt svensk åklagare och polis att själva hålla förhöret precis som om det hade ägt rum i Sverige. Så skulle med all säkerhet bli även i detta fall.

Inte heller finns det någon begränsning till vilka frågor som får ställas. Vid ett förhör i London står det svensk polis och åklagare fritt att ställa vilka frågor de vill. Assange kommer att besvara dem alla.

Vi tvingas sammanfattningsvis konstatera att åklagaren genom att göra ingenting bryter mot skyndsamhetskravet i svensk lag, gömmer sig bakom felaktiga påståenden om hur ett förhör i London skulle gå till och därmed envisas med att särbehandla Assange negativt.

Huruvida detta gagnar målsägandena anser Borgström att vi inte ska uttala oss om. Vi tror dock, ärligt och uppriktigt, att alla inblandande gynnas av att förundersökningen drivs framåt, vilket bara kan ske om förhöret med Assange genomförs i London så snart som möjligt.

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Julian Assange posed 'no real security threat' to Australia

*Philip Dorling
Sydney Morning Herald
February 24, 2014*

WikiLeaks publisher Julian Assange has been an "irritant" and "a gadfly" but not a significant security threat, according to former Australian intelligence and security officials.

Former government officials say only one of the 1400 US diplomatic cables relating to Australia published by WikiLeaks caused any major security concern, and no one was harmed as a consequence.

This relatively relaxed view of Mr Assange undercuts assertions by former prime minister Julia Gillard who said that WikiLeaks' release of leaked cables was "a grossly irresponsible thing to do, and an illegal thing to do."

Former security and intelligence officers say that while WikiLeaks' disclosures in 2010 and 2011 were embarrassing to the government "no great harm was done". "Assange proved more an irritant or a gadfly than anything else," one former intelligence officer said. By comparison former US intelligence contractor Edward Snowden's leaks are considered to be "much, much more damaging".

Only one US embassy cable leaked to WikiLeaks by US soldier Chelsea Manning, formerly Bradley Manning, caused high level concern— a January 2010 list of 23 Australians suspected of terrorist connections by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation. **Officials urged Ms Gillard in November 2010 to condemn the release of "ASIO-derived information". But the cable wasn't published until WikiLeaks' full release of US cables in September 2011.**

Top secret intelligence documents leaked by Mr Snowden and reported on last week by American journalist Glenn Greenwald show Mr Assange was listed in a US National Security Agency "Manhunting Timeline" recording efforts to eliminate terrorists and other threats to US national security.

The timeline states that in August 2010, shortly after WikiLeaks published thousands of US military reports on the war in Afghanistan, the US government "urged other nations with forces in Afghanistan, including Australia, United Kingdom, and Germany to consider filing criminal charges against Julian Assange."

Former attorney-general Robert McClelland has said he received "no such request" from the US, though he did not rule out it had pressed for criminal charges in discussions between officials.

Attorney-General's Department head Roger Wilkins referred the question of whether Mr Assange had broken any Australian law to the Federal Police. After a brief investigation in December 2010 they reported he had not.

Former Australian security and intelligence officials have said that in late 2010 and in 2011 US Justice Department officials canvassed the possible prosecution of Mr Assange in the US, making it clear they were "determined to get Assange, but also didn't want to make a martyr of him".

"We were all happy when he got caught up in a sexual imbroglio in Sweden," one former Australian official said, because "it was much better to have him facing sex crimes allegations than to argue about First Amendment [press] freedoms in the US."

Mr Assange has been in Ecuador's London embassy since June 2012 and has been granted political asylum.

www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/julian-assange-posed-no-real-security-threat-to-australia-20140223-33akn.html

WikiLeaks' Julian Assange Has Cost The Met Police £5.3m During Ecuador Embassy Stay

*Jessica Elgot
Huffington Post
25 February 2014*

Julian Assange's prolonged stay in the Ecuadorian Embassy has cost the Metropolitan Police £5.3 million, in the 18 months since he entered the building in Knightsbridge.

Police are stationed day and night outside the embassy, where the WikiLeaks founder was granted asylum, ready to arrest Assange, who was set to be extradited to face questioning in Sweden on sexual assault allegations.

Assange claimed that Sweden would extradite him to the US over leaking secret documents. In Sweden, he faces potential rape charges from one woman and sexual assault charges from another, stemming from a visit to Stockholm in 2010.

The most recent estimated cost available for the policing operation outside the Ecuador Embassy is for the period to 31st December 2013, according to an Freedom of Information request sent to the Huffington Post UK by the Metropolitan Police.

The estimated total cost of policing the Ecuadorian Embassy between June 2012 and the end of December 2013 is £5.3 million, of which £4.4 million is police officer pay.

Around £900,000 has been paid out in police overtime costs, as a direct result of the deployments at the Ecuadorian Embassy. The cost to the taxpayer has been just under £10,000 every day.

Assange could potentially stay in his Ecuadorian Embassy bolt-hole until 2022—when the statute of limitations on his extradition request expires. This, at current costs, would mean £36.5m is spent on policing.

This month, Swedish MPs called on the prosecutors in the case to travel to question Assange at the Ecuadorian embassy, saying they should accept that Assange will not be leaving the embassy voluntarily.

"It is in the interest of everyone involved in this process that the prosecutor reaches a conclusion to either file charges or dismiss the case, and it is obvious that Assange will not come to Sweden," Staffan Danielsson, from the Center Party, was quoted in the Times as saying....

"Big Government's opposition to WikiLeaks's work became confused, not least in Assange's mind, with the rape allegations against him," wrote O'Hagan. "It has been a fatal conflation.

"A man who conflates such truths loses his moral authority right there. Because he has no ability to see through other people's eyes he can't see how dishonest this conflation seems even to supporters such as me."

London Assembly Member Jenny Jones said: "This is a terrible waste of money for Londoners and has been dragging on for far too long. The Mayor should be on the phone to the Foreign Office asking them to resolve this situation and on the phone to the Home Office so that Londoners aren't paying for this expensive stakeout."

We write about Assange's lasagne because we can't stomach ourselves

Guy Rundle

Crikey

Feb. 27, 2014

The latest “expose” of Julian Assange — and the errors contained within it — mark the final break by the UK Left-liberal establishment with the WikiLeaks founder — amid crisis for the brand.

“[Julian] tended to eat pretty much with his hands. People in magazine articles say he doesn't eat, but he had three helpings of lasagne that night and he ate both the baked potato and the jam pudding with his hands ...”

Oh good god, here we go again. It's another elephantine article/expose/hatchet job on Julian Assange, in which the grey blur's habits, table talk and sock preferences are **examined in minute detail for several thousand words, at the end of which he is accused of being self-obsessed.** This time around, elephantine doesn't really sum it up. It is a balene, blue whale-sized piece, 27,000 words from the *London Review of Books*, written by Andrew O'Hagan, the ghostwriter of Assange's “unauthorised” autobiography, the half-completed memoir that Canongate put out in 2011, when it was clear that a full and finished manuscript would not be forthcoming.

The piece is a record of the months O'Hagan spent working with Assange at Ellingham Hall, the Norfolk pile where WikiLeaks was based after Assange was bailed during the extradition proceedings against him by Sweden in 2011. It's also a playing-out by O'Hagan of his own contradictory feelings about Assange, who he seems to feel is something more than a Jack-the-lad — more a malign manipulator, too chaotic to be purposeful with it — but with whom he kept up a sort of friendship until very late in the day.

Needless to say, it's being taken as another and decisive denunciation of Assange, exposure of hypocrisy, etc, and shooting around the world. What makes it of interest is from whence it comes, and at what moment — a bulletin from the British Left-liberal establishment, at a time when its project and identity is under more great pressure.

To do the book at high speed, O'Hagan moved up country and spent months hanging out with Assange and the floating WikiLeaks staff, amid what he portrays as a sprawling work, or non-work, process. Assange gave him the run of the organisation and opened up to him about WikiLeaks strategy and tactics, worldviews, etc. A risky thing to do with a novelist — although by now it is quite possible that he is using such notoriety to stoke a striking media presence. O'Hagan justifies it by the usual defence, that WikiLeaks believes in transparency, and sauce for the Norfolk-reared goose, etc. That's a travesty of the WikiLeaks position, which argues that personal privacy should be respected while public institutions should be transparent, but that is by now par for the course with meeja encounters with WikiLeaks.

Thus we get thousands of words on how Assange eats lasagne, his relationship with Sarah Harrison, the WikiLeaks staffer with whom he had a personal relationship, his liking of the expensive suits donated by a well-wisher, and so on. More pertinently to a

degree, O'Hagan alleges that Assange manipulates staff to some degree, has scratchy relations with some supporters, and a tendency to cynicism and backstabbing of some of those who'd supported him.

He portrays the WikiLeaks work process as chaotic and wasteful, but he also notes that they get things done, and stuff happens. He portrays a half-dozen of them, at the height of the Egyptian uprising in 2011, doing a hack to reopen the Egyptian telecoms connection to the world after the Mubarak regime had cut it off:

"At the time of the Egyptian uprising, Mubarak tried to close down the country's mobile phone network, a service that came through Canada. **Julian and his gang hacked into Nortel and fought against Mubarak's official hackers to reverse the process.** The revolution continued and Julian was satisfied, sitting back in our remote kitchen eating chocolates."

That event, which — supposing it was not exaggerated to O'Hagan, who appears to be as technologically illiterate as every British Left-liberal — was **of more import than anything else O'Hagan witnessed, gets five lines.** Assange's apparent obsession with landing in helicopters — at the Hay festival, having a helipad for his 40th birthday party at Ellingham, etc — gets paragraphs and paragraphs. To the casual reader, it's merely a novelist's expose, the material gathered under the moral rule of *caveat interlocutor*.

Central to that impression is O'Hagan's tone by turns amused, impressed, and ultimately dismayed and disturbed. In reality however, it's a piece tilted against Assange and WikiLeaks, even as it appears to be more indulgent of him than most.

That is revealed in the most important claim in the article — that Assange and Co released the unredacted 250,000 diplomatic cables of the "cablegate" archive as part of their dispute with former WikiLeaks member Daniel Domscheit-Berg. Assange claimed that the fault lay with David Leigh, the Guardian journalist who co-wrote the quick-bucks book *WikiLeaks: Inside Julian Assange's War on Secrecy*, on which the movie *The Fifth Estate* was subsequently based.

In writing the breathless scenes of accessing the files during the WikiLeaks-Guardian co-operation, Leigh revealed the exact password that had been assigned to the "cablegate" archive — including even the "salt", the phrase left out of a written transfer of a password, and conveyed verbally, as a final security measure. When Domscheit-Berg revealed that copies of the cablegate archive were floating round the internet, both key and lock were now publicly available, and they made the full archive available, to restore transparency.

Leigh initially denied that the fault was his, and the British press largely supported him. But when *The Economist* published an article pointing out that the revelation of a password is the key security breach with encrypted files — which are merely 1s and 0s without it — Leigh engaged in a furious battle with critics in the comments string of the article (as I reported at the time). After two days, he gave up, saying:

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. [???

But in O'Hagan's article, this is not recorded. Instead, O'Hagan claims: "He insisted Leigh had included a password in his book that could decrypt the files WikiLeaks had left online. Leigh has always said this is nonsense."

This is either sloppy reporting on O'Hagan's part — and sloppy in a way aimed against Assange — or he has spoken to Leigh, and got a further revised version of the story.

The "redaction" issue matters, beyond all the lasagne nonsense, because it has always been the way in which the UK Left-liberal media establishment distinguishes itself from Assange and WikiLeaks. They are demented cowboys, sources and not real journalists. We are professionals who protect sources, such as informers and spies named in a quarter-million cables.

Instead, the reverse was the case. *The Guardian* and its journalists, Leigh and Luke Harding, were so desperate to get a quick score on cablegate that the book was rushed to press without due diligence as regards security of the files. The omission was almost demonstrably contemptuous of the hacker world that had dropped the cablegate scoop in their laps. Everyone, even this luddite, knows that you don't reveal a full password. But *The Guardian* reporters had cultivated the cult of the amateur as regards the technical matters of hackerdom to such a degree that they were simply blase about matters they had no knowledge of. Their book, together with Domscheit-Berg's, was bought by Dreamworks to serve as the basis for the \$60 million film *The Fifth Estate*. **Neither Leigh and Harding, nor *The Guardian* itself, have disclosed how much they were paid for a volume that allowed the security services of the world to access any cache of the cables they happened to get hold of.**

There's a lot more in the article, and O'Hagan would be within rights to claim that some of it is pertinent to moral decisions people might make. O'Hagan portrays Assange as willing to engage in deceitful too-clever-by-half double-play to achieve results. He suggests, for example, that Assange arranged to denounce the book eventually produced, in order to increase sales, and while Assange may have his own account of that, it will seem plausible to many people dismayed by the debacle of the WikiLeaks Party, and attempts by an inner core to control a party they had set up as internally democratic. But, as with *The Fifth Estate* — the final frames of which implied that WikiLeaks had released the unredacted cablegate files out of sheer pique — the crucial charge is a falsehood, designed to paint Assange as as conscienceless as the organisations WikiLeaks goes up against. It's crucial to the Left-liberal pose that enthrones them as the ultimate arbiter of moral action.

As I noted at the time of the Leigh admission, **there is something about Assange that drives the Left-lib establishment a bit crazy, which is why they get into the contradictory position of decrying the cult of personality at the same time as they spend pages on how he eats pasta.** Novelists novelise, but what is the argument of the

LRB — a serious and unquestionably leftist publication — for running what is mostly trivia at such length? Could some of the space not have been used for, say, stories arising from the gradual release of the Edward Snowden cache of papers and its revelations about the all-encompassing surveillance of British as well as American public and private life?

The answer is, of course, that such stories are difficult and sometimes depressing, while an Assange story is catnip. **With a circulation of 50,000, and currently carrying a debt of 27 million pounds (owed to its editor, a Russian-British heiress), it needs the zing of cheap scandal and voyeurism as much as anyone.** It may also be that even this leftish part of the British Left-liberal establishment is also washing its hands of Assange.

The Guardian's wars against him — which included allowing a journalist who had denounced him to write up the report of the rape accusations against him... — are noted, as its extension into *Private Eye*, which is itself an extension of one faction within *The Guardian* these days. More recently, the *New Statesman* gave Jemima Khan the run of the magazine as guest editor, to run her own campaign against Assange after he ducked bail (some of which Khan had guaranteed) to enter the Ecuadorian embassy — Khan giving a confused account as to why she had fervently supported his attempts to avoid extradition to Sweden in the first place.

Overall, one can't help but feel that the fascination and ambivalence the Left-lib establishment displays towards Assange has something to do with the crisis in its own project — that of the individual conscience, with no real theory of power, exposing falsehood. WikiLeaks, as a campaigning site, was precisely opposed to that conception, seeing mass leaks against conspiratorial power elites as a way out of the impasse that investigative journalism / whistleblowing had fallen into. Assange's firm understanding of a way in which the world worked, and his application of that to a strategy, is what energised so many of them. That the regard was not returned in kind appears to have been part of the reason — beyond Assange's unquestionable errors, gaucheries and self-sabotage — why the turn against him is so fierce.

That is especially pertinent now, because of an announcement by *The Guardian*, the centrepiece of the left-liberal establishment, that it is entering a partnership — Guardian Labs — with, of all groups, Unilever, the world's third largest processed food producer. **As the press release noted:**

"The new Unilever partnership will create a bespoke engagement platform to increase awareness of, and foster debate about, sustainability issues, and ultimately encourage people to live more sustainable lives. The platform, which will initially focus on engaging with a UK-based audience, will provide interactive and cross-media content, as well as live events, from the beginning of March 2014."

This is a company accused of deforestation for palm oil production, toxic dumping in India, bullying of governments to support genetically modified organisms, monopoly domination of local markets, and the promotion of overly intensive agriculture as "sustainable". How can *The Guardian* claim independence on a vast range of issues if it has contracted a partnership funding 133 staff positions with such a group?

It can't, of course. *The Guardian*, quietly, has given up. It recently sold its last cash cow, a 50% stake in Auto-Trader, for 600 million to 700 million pounds. That fund will have to cover 30 million pound-plus losses annually, as the global Guardian model appears to be failing to take off. The Unilever deal suggests that it sees no alternative but to be a combined news/content-production media group, which is, of course, the endgame. One suspects that that is a symptom of a wider malaise, and a crisis of identity for British Left-liberals, in an era when the sovereign liberal conscience doesn't matter bupkiss. Which is why it remains crucial for all such groups to portray themselves as the repositories of conscience, and the source and conduit of a significant number of their scoops over the past eight years as a man outside of conscience.

For "conscience", it appears, is becoming a valuable brand.

www.crikey.com.au/2014/02/27/rundle-we-write-about-assanges-lasagne-because-we-cant-stomach-ourselves

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In defence of Julian Assange

Julian Assange's publisher writes about his experience of working with the much-criticised WikiLeaks founder

Colin Robinson
The Guardian
6 March 2014

A great deal has been written recently about the frustrations of publishing a book with Julian Assange, mainly in a widely discussed, marathon article for the *London Review of Books* by Andrew O'Hagan. O'Hagan relates his experiences when working as a ghostwriter on an autobiography of the WikiLeaks leader that ended up being published in opposition to its subject's wishes. I'm the co-publisher of Assange's most recent book (*Cypherpunks: Freedom and the Future of the Internet*) and I, too, have found the experience frequently exasperating.

Let me give an illustration. It's June of last year and I'm at a party in New York when a friendly, youngish man with a beard and a beer engages me in conversation. He tells me he is a journalist on one of the city's listings magazines and asks what I do for a job. I reply that I'm a publisher and he asks whose books I'm working on. I pick the one writer of whom I'm pretty certain he will have heard. "Well," I say, shouting to make myself heard above the music, "I've just published Julian Assange." The young man's demeanour changes abruptly and he fixes me with a sneer. "Assange," he echoes, "he's a bit of a cunt isn't he?"

I've become wearily accustomed to this over my time working with Assange: the vituperation heaped on my author, the scorn directed at me for giving him a platform. I know the general script that will follow. And, sure enough, here it so often comes, as if read from the page: "I mean, he's a weirdo isn't he? That massive ego. And the sex offences in Sweden."

It's almost impossible to counter this kind of attitude, with its shallow presumptions about the character of someone never met and the guilt of someone never tried. I'm aware of what feeds it: there's plenty in the Annals of Assange about fallings-out with past collaborators — enough to suggest a "burn that bridge when we get to it" approach to life. And the accusations of the women in Sweden (which I believe, if charges are formalised, should be heard in front of a judge) do remain unanswered, in court at least.

But I also know that it is especially dangerous to pass casual judgment on the character of people who confront the powerful, because our perceptions of them are open to manipulation by those to whom they present a threat. This point is underscored by Glenn Greenwald's recent publication of documents from the Joint Threat Research Intelligence Group, a hitherto secret unit within GCHQ. The papers, part of the cache acquired by Edward Snowden, show the way that covert agents are developing internet techniques to destroy the personal reputation of targets. Appearing under the heading "The Art of Deception", tactics discussed include "'false flag operations' (posting material to the internet and falsely attributing it to someone else), fake victim blog posts (pretending to be a victim of the individual whose reputation they want to destroy), and posting 'negative information' on various forums". Furthermore, another Greenwald report reveals that Assange and WikiLeaks have been the specific target of operatives in GCHQ and the NSA.

O'Hagan's LRB piece is no part of an organised dirty tricks campaign. But by focusing as it does on Assange's character defects, it ends up serving much the same purpose. Here is a man who eats with his hands and is paranoid about assassins in roadside bushes, whose lascivious gaze is directed towards teenagers and who is infatuated with the thrill of arriving at the Hay literary festival in a helicopter. **Meanwhile, his achievements in uncovering the misdemeanors of the secret state are almost entirely passed over.**

O'Hagan portrays Assange as a Walter Mitty-like fantasist whose absorption with grand and unrealisable schemes prevents him from ever achieving anything practical. Yet this is someone who can number among his achievements the founding of WikiLeaks, the publication of the Iraq and Afghanistan war logs, and the smuggling of Edward Snowden to safety. **During the time that O'Hagan writes about, Assange was managing the ongoing Cablegate releases, preparing for his own extradition hearings and a US grand jury investigation, and assembling the Guantanamo documents from Chelsea (then Bradley) Manning that would appear in April 2011.**

I have direct experience of Assange's ability to get things done. The publication of *Cypherpunks* at the beginning of 2012 involved an intensive editorial and promotional effort by its author. The book is based on substantially edited transcripts of conversations led by Assange and including fellow internet theorist/activists Jacob Appelbaum, Andy Müller-Maguhn and Jérémie Zimmermann. Melding these various inputs **required close attention to detail and diplomatic flexibility.** When it came to promotion, media interviews were agreed to with little fuss; a video parody of Bruno Ganz's portrayal of Hitler in *Downfall* was quickly assembled for use as a book trailer; and an op-ed for the *New York Times* was delivered to a tight deadline, the editorial process smooth and consensual.

Cypherpunks was a big hit for OR Books; it soon became our bestselling title. In its foreword, Assange describes a world "not sliding, but galloping into a new transnational dystopia" in which "the Internet, our greatest tool for emancipation, has been transformed into the most dangerous facilitator of totalitarianism we have ever seen". He proceeds to analyse the political and philosophical implications of the state having unlimited access to data passing through our computers and mobile phones. It is all eerily and precisely predictive of the revelations about NSA surveillance that would emerge eight months later with Snowden's whistle blowing.

It's also worth saying that during the months O'Hagan's essay covers, Assange was in a tough place. He had only recently been released from Wandsworth prison, and was now required to wear an electronic anklet while reporting to the local police station on a daily basis. The most powerful politicians on earth were demanding his head; calls for his assassination by *Fox News* and *Time* magazine pundits were in circulation. Funding for WikiLeaks had dried up in the face of a financial blockade implemented by Bank of America, Pay Pal and the credit card companies.

In O'Hagan's account, collaborators such as journalists and the head of Assange's erstwhile publisher Canongate come in for much fiercer criticism from Assange than more powerful and malevolent opponents in corporations and government. But if this charge of narcissism of small differences has any purchase when directed at Assange, it can be levelled too against O'Hagan, who largely ignores the bigger issues about which Assange and WikiLeaks have consistently sounded alarm.

I'm Julian Assange's publisher, not his friend. I'm now working on another book with him, an account of his exchanges with Eric Schmidt, the executive chairman of Google. I've visited him on a regular basis in the Ecuadorean embassy and have always enjoyed our conversations, which are generally focused on matters of politics and publishing. Though his enthusiasm and relentless optimism are striking, I don't know much about what he is like as a person. I am, however, acutely aware of his achievements, which seem to me to be both substantial and generally on the side of justice. Each time I leave the embassy and pass in front of the stern gaze of the armed special branch officer who sits at the reception desk outside, I feel a pang of sadness for my author, trapped in a small, overheated room for more than a year and half. It seems to me he deserves better.

Nordic News Network
31 March 2014

Solution to Assange case? Not interested.

Swedish authorities decline meeting with distinguished visitor offering way out of legal impasse

The Swedish officials who are most directly responsible for the ongoing effort to have Julian Assange extradited from England have declined to hear the proposals of Eva Joly, the well-known French magistrate and member of the European Parliament, who recently visited Sweden to suggest a way out of the legal impasse.

"I have asked to meet with the minister of justice [Beatrice Ask], the chief prosecutor [Anders Perklev] and with Marianne Ny, the prosecutor handling the case. None of them wants to meet with me, and I am wondering why....

"Of course, they have no obligation to meet with me," acknowledged Ms. Joly. "But in my experience, that is very unusual. In fact, I cannot recall any similar occasion." She also found it "unusual" that Anders Perklev and Marianne Ny offered no explanation for their refusal to meet, and that none of the three officials indicated any willingness to welcome her on some later occasion.

"This is clearly a difficult question which Swedish officials are very reluctant to discuss," concludes Eva Joly. "That is unfortunate, because the case involves important issues of legal and human rights that concern everyone, not only Julian Assange...."

Complete text in PDF format:

<http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/joly.pdf>

Eva Joly Rush Transcript — Assange press conference, 27 March 2014

Press conference about the Julian Assange case by Eva Joly (abbreviated EJ), MEP, former Presidential candidate, former judge and prosecutor, head of the EU Parliamentary Committee on Development. Joly has thirty years of experience as a practitioner and is currently involved in developing the policy on international cooperation to do with the appointment of a European prosecutor. Others present: Jon Thorisson, of the Eva Joly Institute in Iceland (abbreviated JT)

EJ: Thank you for coming. I think I should start by telling you where I am talking from. why I am interested in this case. i think that the first reason is that **I have been a judge and an investigator myself for some 25 years. I was first a prosecutor and I was then and investigating magistrate. And I have carried out probably successfully, one of the most important financial investigations ever done in Europe. That was the ELF case that was done from 1994 until I ended it in 2002 and people were convicted in 2003. So this means that I am a practitioner, so I know how international cooperation works and how it does work from the inside.** I have been working with it for years and I have been fighting with it. And I decided in 2002 to try to change the world from Norway. i worked in Norway for eight years on development issues and on anti-corruption issues and also to improve international cooperation.

And then I became an EMP - a Member of the European Parliament in 2009, and that I did to fight, to continue to fight corruption, money laundering, and to improve legal cooperation. And I am heading in the European Parliament the Committee on Development and Human Aid. I am heading the committee on support for democracy. And I am involved on the reflection on the creation of a special prosecutor in Europe. Meaning that I am engaged in these issues for more than thirty years. So this is my background.

And so - Why Julian Assange? One of the reasons is that I was impressed when WikiLeaks started up in 2006, by what they published, what we learned about the world that we are living in, and also because of hazards of life - when I was conducting the investigation into the banking crisis in Iceland in 2009 to 2011 I met with Julian

Assange who was in Iceland in 2010. I think it was Spring 2010. And at that time there was a special atmosphere in Iceland because of the crisis they had been through, because of their democratic wake up. How was it that the bankers could have driven them into bankruptcy and no one has seen anything. And you'll remember there were new elections and a will to change a lot of things. And Julian Assange came up with the idea that we could make Iceland a safe haven for information. Because as journalists you will know that you cannot publish everything, that you are exposed to libel, and that if you are a UK journalist you are also exposed to injunctions, and to secret injunctions not to talk about certain subjects. And this idea got huge echo in Iceland. It was called the **Modern Media Initiative**. To make Iceland a place that is the contrary of a tax haven - a paradise for information. And this project is still ongoing, and **Jon [Thorisson] who is with me is on the board of this project.**

So this is how I met with Assange the first time. And then in 2010 - that was the same year - when I read about the Swedish story I was shocked and - how to say it - I trusted that the Swedish legal system, which is very robust and which has long democratic traditions - that they would find ways forward, and **that they would be able to conduct this case within a reasonable time.** And I went to see Julian Assange in the Ecuadorian embassy a year ago. Just to have his news. And I saw how he lived - locked up in an embassy - a small space to live in, and I was then worried about his situation. And I started digging much more into it. And I thought something must happen this year, and nothing happened. And I went back to meet with him one month ago, and I found then that his appearance and his health situation had degraded from the year before. And then I decided that something must be done. We cannot go on with this situation that is locked. The arrest order, sent out by the Swedish prosecution authorities was three and a half years ago. So what is important today is to have a new look on it.

We have a situation where we have legitimate interests on both sides. We have the situations of the victims, that must be taken care of. I do not have an opinion on the responsibilities of guilt - who is guilty and who is not guilty. That is not my purpose. What I want to see is that we must find a solution and I think I know the solution. The arrest order is three and a half years old. And everything goes on like the **Swedish prosecution service does not take seriously that Ecuador has granted asylum.** And that this asylum means that the danger that JA alleged as to the threat he faces regarding an extradition to the US is real - that is what it means. And if you read the newspapers and gather all the information that there is - there is tonnes of information that there is an ongoing investigation in the US into WikiLeaks, the founders of WikiLeaks and into JA himself and that they try to have him judged as an accomplice of terrorism and spying, espionage - rather than being a publisher of what other people are sending to his platform. And this is a threat to all the journalists in the world - if you are in possession of documents by a source and that is in the public interest, you could be called an accomplice of terrorism. I think this is not a world that we want.

And this situation was judged by Ecuador to be sufficiently serious to grant him asylum. So this **I cannot see why JA should give up his human rights to ask for asylum in order to answer questions by the Swedish prosecutors here in Sweden.** And we do not know what the prosecutors will do with the case and to take the risk of having an extradition order then coming to Sweden. And when I see that the prosecutor says "we know that he cannot be extradited" - I think they are talking about what they do not know. It's none of their business. The prosecutor doesn't have a word to say about the extradition. This is for the government to decide and then for the courts, but not for the prosecutor at this stage. And so I think here there are some misunderstandings so we've taken into account that **JA has the right to ask for asylum**

and that is a serious decision that the Swedish prosecution cannot just take [and say] "well I do not care about this, he should come here" and we have the [alleged] victims rights, their human rights to have their case tried. Because they also need to move on with their lives. They have been waiting for four years.

And then, in our common toolbox in Europe we have tools that do allow for international cooperation. It's not a big deal. In the ELF case I went abroad to interrogate a suspect that had fled France, that didn't want to come back, and I managed to interrogate him in Israel for instance, we had no convention but we made an ad hoc agreement with the authorities and this was done. We had the convention from 1959 of European cooperation and now we have a much better convention that is from 2000 that entered into force in 2005 (32:03) and which has modernised and made international cooperation much more efficient. And I can say that the UK was known for not cooperating easily but that has changed also. Today this cooperation is much easier. And I can [say] that because I didn't stop doing investigating work in 2002 because i conducted, set up and I helped the Icelandic investigation into their banksters. And you know that today this is the only country in the world that is putting their bankers [before a] court and obtaining convictions.

And we used this new European convention and we obtained cooepration from Luxemburg which had a very bad record in legal international cooperation and the most important [inaudible - house search?] that were made in Luxembourg were made from Iceland. So thiese new tools are working. **So why shouldn't the Swedish prosecutor use the tools that are in the toolbox? This is not a special treatment for Julian Assange. This is for anybody who is abroad and who refuses to come back if you don't use the arrest order. The arrest order - this is the bazooka. You use the cooperation [tools] to get this information. And then if we did that, then maybe later on it would be needed to make confrontations with the [alleged] victims and other witnesses, and we I would say that this could be done by videoconference even if it's not foreseen in the law book. This is done at the International Court of Justice when the witnesses are in danger, this is done on a daily basis in all the courts in Europe and I did in my important cases in the nineties.** It was not foreseen in the lawbook but I did it in a creative way, making sure who the witness was, the date, and the Surpeme Court accepted it. **Today it is in the law books.**

Things are not today like they used to be yesterday, and we cannot live only saying "I can't do anything that I didn't do yesterday". You have to live with the modern tools that you have, and if Swedish law does not foresee it then the law should be changed. Maybe that could be changed in an urgent way, or judges can just do it and see what happens. I mean the Supreme Court could allow that. And then when the preliminary work is finished - interrogations, confrontations, then the decision can be taken: either there is a case to answer or there is not a case to answer.

Let's take the scenario where there is a case to answer: then the Swedish prosecution service can send it to the Swedish courts, and **Swedish law does not foresee in absentia judgments. But this we didn't do in France either for serious crimes but when we judged our former president, Jacques Chirac, he said "I'm too tired to come, but I want the court case to move on and I do accept to be judged in a [adversarial] way with my lawyers being present and I have told you everything I know". And so it was done in spite of the fact that in the lawbook it was said that he should be present.** And then you must remember - why does this rule exist? It exists because of the protection of the suspect, to ensure the [adversarial] process, and I [contend] that if the lawyers of Assange are present at the process and Julian Assange himself [participates] by [video]link by Skype or video conference, this could be a good process and we would take care of all the interest of the interested parties: not

sacrificing Julian Assange's right to have asylum for the right of the [alleged] victims to have their case tried.

And if this solution is not agreeable to the Swedish prosecutors they could use another tool in the toolbox that we have made because it is useful and that I have used myself - that is a delegation of the public action. They could send their files to Ecuador and ask Ecuadorian justice to take the case. So I thank you now - this is a way—

Q: Just to clarify that you say that the case could be tried in Ecuadorian courts?

EJ: It can be. And then one more element and then I'll stop talking and I'll leave the floor to you. **We also have agreements for serving the sentence. If he was judged in Sweden, and he was convicted to imprisonment, he can serve his sentence elsewhere.** All this is possible. I have seen from the debate here in Sweden that most people did not believe in the reality of the danger that Assange was exposed to. I think that it's paramount today that there is a debate in Swedish society, because the world has really changed with Snowden. With what Snowden tells us about the general surveillance of all of us, and also more specifically about Assange. And I am sure you know this TV interview he said on German television - he said that Assange is on a Manhunting list.

And you might remember that **eminent members of the [US] Senate have asked for Assange to be tried for spying, for terrorism, I am thinking about Dianne Feinstein who said that.** And this is not a nobody. She is a very important member of the American senate and I do recommend you to read her speech held in the Senate some two weeks ago where she told the world and also Swedish journalists that the CIA and also the American agencies are not playing by the rules. And that they have gone into the computers in the Senate and that they have suppressed some photos and pages about the CIA not respecting the rules. And I think we have difficulties in understanding how much the world has changed with all the information that we got from Assange and from Snowden. And **I think it is an urgency that this situation that is a bleeding wound and I think it is not good for anybody, and there are means to solve it taking into account the interests of all the parties.** Thank you.

Q Can you tell us about your attempts to discuss this with the relevant Swedish officials, especially the prosecutor in charge and the chief prosecutor?

EJ: It's very easy to tell: I have asked to meet with the minister of Justice, with the Chief Prosecutor and with Marianne Ny and **nobody wants to meet with me. And I am wondering why.** I am an honourable person.

Q: Have you encountered that sort of blasé reaction anywhere else? Is this unusual?

EJ: **Normally when I as a member of the European Parliament, a head of a Committee, in charge of 59 billion euro/year ask for an appointment- I get it.**

Q: Do you draw any conclusions from this?

EJ: **That this is a very difficult question,** and in a way, that I am here in my own quality. Nobody is paying me. I'm using my own time. And I hope, European money. This is a European issue. It is a European issue. It shows that we need better cooperation. If we cannot solve this problem between England and Sweden - how do

we think that we can solve problems with Afghanistan, or Turkey, or a lot of other countries. I also forgot to tell you that I am working in Afghanistan and that I am not at all an anti-militaristic person. I went to a military school. I did the Institute of Superior military studies in France. And I am working in Afghanistan as an anti-corruption person. I was appointed by the UN and I am working very closely with Americans who risk their lives and I have sensitivity to all these questions.

Q: How would you describe your personal relationship to Mr. Assange? Are you a personal friend of his?

EJ: It was inexistent until - this is totally transparent, I want to be totally transparent - I met with him the first time in Iceland. And I felt that we had common views on how damaging secrecy is to the world. Because I spent my life fighting against tax havens. Seeing how criminal many banks are - how they are stealing, how they are allowing themselves to take a huge percentage of the produced value every year - this was my fight. And I also met... because I met a journalist, because I follow cases in Africa - for instance the Trafigura case with the - what was the name of the boat - Probokwala (?) I think - this went to Ivory coast and spread a lot of toxic waste there I followed it because I was interested. And all of a sudden the Guardian stopped talking about it. And then they went to the British parliament to ask a question because you have immunity in the House of Commons. And they had a question that they asked in Parliament about Trafigura. And then we learned that there was a secret injunction for all the press to talk about this case. So I was very sensitive to the idea of making Iceland a safe haven for information. So this was - he was sympathetic to me. And then when I learned about this story here in Sweden I was - as everybody else - shocked. And I wanted this to be investigated and I hoped in the bottom of my heart that he would be cleared. But I was not sure - you cannot be sure - so what I am saying is that this case should come to an end.

Q: But you would not describe Assange as a friend, a personal friend of yours?

EJ: No. I am not. I am not. I mean - there is a generational problem. I know that I am looking very young and beautiful but I am seventy years old and he is forty I think.

Q: Are you in any way optimistic that the Swedish investigators could change their mind?

EJ: What I am optimistic about is you. I think that you will understand. And that you will write articles that will make the public opinion understand that **this is not a Swedish issue. That this is an international issue.**

Q: But you know that the prosecutors have already disregarded the idea of a video link? The question has been [raised] before.

EJ: Yes, but I do not like situations where the will [16:47] of one person can stop a whole process. I like when there are appeals. And I think there is not such a thing as "This is what I want to do and this is how it shall be". This is not democratic.

Q: You are referring to Marianne Ny?

EJ: Yes, well - she had the right to conduct the case the way she wanted for four years. It has gone nowhere.

JT: She also has a responsibility to contribute to a solution. If her current policy is not working and the case is not moving forward she has an obligation. Because in the end it is a human rights issue that everybody involved in the case has a right to a satisfactory conclusion to the case. And it's not just Assange but it's also the two girls.

EJ: **That is article 9 of the European Convention of Human Rights.**

JT: And repeating the same solution and expecting different results is not working.

EJ: What I do expect is the head of the Swedish prosecution should take the case himself.

Q: Have you discussed this at all with Assange's Swedish lawyers?

EJ: No I haven't met with the Swedish lawyers. I am not Assange's lawyer. I am talking from my own platform, with my thirty years of experience in this business, and seeing it from many angles. I could have met with his lawyers. They will give you their version. I am giving you a version of a member of the European Parliament that is sensitive to human rights. If you look me up you will also see that I am defending Basmah Belaid - the widow of Mr. Belaid who was killed in Tunisia. In the same way, talking about the importance of getting the case to court. Maybe one day I will become a lawyer but I am still a parliamentarian. I am running for a second term because I want the issue of a European prosecutor to move forward.

Q: How would this new prosecutor touch upon this case?

EJ: What would a European prosecutor do with this? In the first stage - and we will take 5 years to get there, the EU prosecutor would only have the power to take care of the economic interests of the Union, so this would not be his case. But I think in a second [phase] we should have a prosecutor that can take care of transnational criminality and prosecutions. But I think we are very far away until we have a unique prosecutor.

Q: It's not yet established that the two women are 'victims', it's probably not right to call them 'victims' but 'alleged victims'

EJ: Alleged victims, you are right. Because we have the presumption of innocence, which means that Julian Assange is innocent until he is convicted, if and when.

Q: The other thing is that a Supreme Court judge in Sweden has himself said that there is no impediment to the prosecutor traveling to the UK, so there is no legal impediment, even under Swedish law.

EJ: I know that and that's what I wanted to come and say with strength, from a practical point of view, and I think that **it is not acceptable for the interests here, and also for the reputation of Sweden, that a case can be stopped because of prestige** - there should be ways to go forward. And if they do not exist the law should be amended.

Q: As far as I know it's not clear what the public opinion is about this. I don't know of any systematic opinion poll. Does anyone here? Because the press here has been very skewed.

EJ: I think it's very important to get the facts on the table. Because the discussion, unless people are aware of what has happened, of The Times correspondent [Michael Grunwald] saying in Autumn 2013 "I cannot wait to have to justify the drone attack that took Julian Assange away" [Correct quote: "I can't wait to write a defense of the drone strike that takes out Julian Assange" <https://twitter.com/AbbyMartin/status/369232379350499329>]. It's very violent.

Jon Thorisson: And another thing that we've been trying to point out is that Julian Assange and WikiLeaks are a publishing organisation. They haven't leaked anything. They have taken information leaked from other sources and published it. So for you guys as journalists this is a really important question because this is the criminalisation of journalism. The way he has been treated and the Wikileaks organisation and now people associated with Snowden and I mean - Miranda, Glenn Greenwald's partner who was apprehended at the airport in London and his computers taken and it's done under the UK anti-terrorism legislation. So it's a very important distinction. This is what the Americans are trying to do and Chelsea Manning's American lawyer said that he had the feeling that he had two defendants - one was Manning and the other was Julian Assange. Because they tried everything they could to throw [Assange] into Manning's case and in the closing statements of the Manning case in the US they **mentioned Assange's name twenty-six times, just in the closing statements**. So what they are trying to do is to establish a conspiracy between WikiLeaks and...

[Unstructured discussion] Person a: That's a distinction that they are trying to make that Wikileaks is not a passive recipient of leaks but has incited them...

EJ: That is what they want to show...

Person b: Really, is that proven?

Person a: No, that's what they are trying to say.

Q: About your suggestion, have you discussed that with the Ecuadorian authorities?

EJ: I think that was in a way premature. We needed first to obtain from the Swedish prosecution authorities that they are willing to go there, and because Ecuador has given Julian Assange asylum, I think we can anticipate that they will not oppose. But we are in British territory, we need their cooperation and we need it first. And then we need the cooperation of the Ecuadorian authorities.

Q: What if they say no?

EJ: The UK has a duty to cooperate, if they are asked, as per the convention that I have referred to. They are, and they are spending four million dollars - or pounds - to guard the embassy. So this is also absurd, isn't it? An absurd use of money, and time that goes by. Okay. So now I think it's important that the debate takes place.

Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5T3UtgRDJCE>

SvD: 27 mars 2014

Joly: Assange kan prata via Skype

Den norskfödde juristen Eva Joly besökte på torsdagen Stockholm för att presentera en lösning på Assange-fallet. Grundaren av Wikileaks har tillbringat drygt ett och ett halvt år inne på Ecuadors ambassad i London.

I Sverige är han häktad i sin frånvaro på sannolika skäl misstänkt för olaga tvång, två fall av sexuellt ofredande samt våldtäkt. Han fruktar för en utlämning till USA om han kommer hit för förhör, något Eva Joly säger är välgrundade farhågor även om den svenska åklagarmyndigheten avvisat detta.

– Det är den svenska regeringen som bestämmer om utlämning, inte åklagaren. Motsvarande fall med Chelsea Manning och Edward Snowdens exil i Ryssland är bevis för att Julian Assange har grundad anledning att frukta att bli utlämnad till USA, säger Eva Joly.

Hon påpekar att han i USA inte räknas som publicist utan anklagas för terrorism och spioneri.

– Detta är ett hot mot alla journalister i världen och det är inte den värld vi vill ha. Jag förstår inte varför Assange ska ge upp sina mänskliga rättigheter för att låta sig utfrågas i Sverige med risk för utvisning till USA.

Hon tycker att den svenska åklagaren ska bryta dödläget och menar att inget hindrar ett förhör av Assange utan att han lämnar ambassaden i London. Själv träffade Eva Joly honom på ambassaden tidigare i år och oroade sig för att hans hälsa försämrats.

Eva Joly föreslår att rättegången genomförs i Sverige med Assanges advokater medan Assange kan prata via Skype. Hon har själv försökt få till stånd möten med justitieminister Beatrice Ask och åklagare Marianne Ny men båda har avböjt.

– Vanligtvis när jag som EU-parlamentariker ber om ett möte brukar jag få det, säger Eva Joly.

• *Harry Amster*

Tung röst vill lösa Assanges dödläge

TT/SVT

27 mars 2014

Den norskfranska EU-politikern och antikorrupionskämpen Eva Joly kom till Stockholm med en lösning på dödläget i fallet Julian Assange. Men varken justitieministern, riksåklagaren eller den ansvariga åklagaren ville träffa henne.

Eva Joly är jurist, specialiserad på ekonomisk brottslighet, och mest känd som undersökningsdomare i korrupcionshärvan kring oljebolaget Elf på 1990-talet. Hon

anlitades också efter den isländska finanskraschen 2008 och det var där hon träffade Wikileaksgrundaren för första gången 2010.

Sedan juni 2012 åtnjuter Assange politisk asyl på Ecuadors ambassad i London. Som djupt engagerad i fallet var Eva Joly i Stockholm på torsdagen för en rad möten om fallet.

– Lösningen finns inom ambassadens fyra väggar. Och det är möjligt genom det verktyg som heter europeiskt samarbete mellan rätts- och polismyndigheter, säger hon till TT.

Eva Joly anser att överåklagare Marianne Ny av prestigeskäl vägrar att förhöra Assange på ambassaden eller via videolänk— idéer som åklagaren tidigare avvisat — och vill att riksåklagare Anders Perklev tar över ärendet.

Frågan om Assanges skuld tar den 70-åriga EU-parlamentarikern för De gröna inte ställning till. Hon menar bara att han, liksom de två kvinnor som anklagat honom för sexbrott, har rätt att få saken prövad inom rimlig tid enligt den europeiska konventionen om mänskliga rättigheter.

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The raid that almost was

Submitted by WikiLegal
W.L. Central
2014-04-17

Late on Wednesday evening 15 August 2012, the Metropolitan police surrounded the Ecuadorean Embassy in London. This followed the publication by the Ecuadorean government of the aide memoir from William Hague, the British Foreign Secretary, on how the diplomatic status of their London embassy could be revoked.

Observers assumed that the arrival of the police must be the presage to a raid. For those watching the unfolding events, in the end it all turned out to be an anticlimax. Though the outcome could have turned out very differently had it had not been for the interventions of certain cyber warriors— in the UK, Australia and elsewhere— whose quick-wittedness may have ensured that a major international incident was averted.

From Darker Net, this is the inside story of the raid that almost was.

When 20 or so police, backed by others in vans nearby, attempt to enter a building from two directions, they are clearly not there to protect that building or perform street theatre. It began as a raid, but then aborted. No doubt behind the scenes officials from the embassy and lawyers acting for Assange were making it clear to the police and government officials that the premises were inviolate. But had the police succeeded in penetrating the embassy, the ramifications would have been huge, affecting the status of every embassy of every country around the world.

As for the part played by the citizen journalists that evening, while this was no Tahir Square, the tactics were not that dissimilar, and in shining a cyber spotlight on what the police were attempting to do they made certain the rest of the world were directly involved at every move.

22:34	A group of WikiLeaks supporters gather outside the embassy
22:44	Jennifer Robinson, Julian Assange's Australian lawyer, is tweeted
23:01	Jennifer Robinson tweets the URL of the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act
23:02	Tweet sent out by Occupy that police now surround embassy
23:15	Tweet sent with URL of Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act to supporters and WikiLeaks orgs
23:18	Tweet sent for someone to contact Gareth Peirce, Assange's UK lawyer
23:24	Livestream video from supporter outside embassy shows police, accompanied by man in suit with briefcase, entering building via front entrance
23:25	Tweet sent to Julian Burnside, Assange's Australian lawyer, advising that police look like entering premises
23:38	Police attempt to enter premises via the fire escape at the side of the building
23:39	Tweet sent to Jennifer Robinson advising her of latest developments
23:58	Jennifer Robinson tweets URL of CPS document covering diplomatic immunity and diplomatic premises of
00:00	Police seen entering building via fire escape at side of building
00:15	Police outside and inside building
00:24	Burnside, Robinson and others updated
00:30	Police abandon attempt to enter embassy and regroup outside of premises
01:18	Jennifer Robinson tweets that to her knowledge the status of the embassy has not been withdrawn
01:33	AntiLeaks claim DDoS on Livestream (no longer active)
01:45	WikiLeaks announces via Facebook the release of new batch of Global Intelligence Files
01:52	Jennifer Robinson tweets Ecuador has called emergency summit of OAS
00:54	Police return to vans
00:57	Australian WikiLeaks Citizens Alliance tweets that Christine Assange's Twitter account blocked
01:02	Police leave area in vans, leaving only a handful of police outside embassy
01:25	Livestream back in action

Later that day, an embarrassed British government released a statement denying it had attempted to raid the embassy or that it ever intends to. Also, it became obvious that Hague's memo to the Ecuadorean government had not been supported by his own civil servants or, apparently, sanctioned by the prime minister. The following day the Organisation of American States carried a motion supporting Ecuador in its stance against the British Government. On Sunday, prior to a statement by Julian Assange from the balcony of the Ecuadorean Embassy, Snr Baltasar Garzón, the former Spanish judge who is leading Assange's legal team, stated that he will be taking steps to prosecute the British government. (No further details were added.)

More evidence

There is mounting evidence (see below) that the siege of the Ecuador Embassy on the evening of Wednesday 15 August was indeed a raid in progress but that the raid was

called off literally at the last moment while the police were inside the building and only minutes away from entering the embassy to arrest Mr Julian Assange. Moreover this evidence (from an insider) supports the assertion that the raid had been organised largely as a result of pressure from the USA. As previously stated, that the raid was called off in the way it was may be partly due to the vigilance of a few cyber warriors who were conveying to the world via Livestream video link and tweets exactly what was happening at the embassy, second by second.

Firstly, the aftermath... An extraordinary meeting of the Organisation of American States was called and that meeting condemned the threat made by the British government to raid the premises of the Embassy... Commentators around the world agreed that the threat was a huge mistake and had the raid proceeded then this would have set a precedent with embassies everywhere being subject to similar raids... In the end the British government was forced into a total climbdown and issued a statement to the Government of Ecuador making it clear it would not seek to forcibly enter its premises... The British and Ecuadorian governments have now agreed to resume dialogue on finding a solution to the current impasse... There has been a call for the USA to impose economic and other sanctions against Ecuador.

Also, it has since been shown that specialist police units SO10 (Covert Operations, specialising in undercover work) and SO20 (Counterterrorism) are or were involved in the policing of the embassy. SO10 have a history of working closely with the Special Reconnaissance Regiment and it's not inconceivable that some of their operatives are involved in the policing of the Ecuador Embassy too.

New evidence

The new evidence that supports the assertion that a raid had been ordered comes from Craig Murray, the whistleblower who formerly spent 20 years in the British diplomatic service. Mr Murray reports via his blog and via WikiLeaks that on August 15th he had heard from a contact in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office that a raid on the embassy was imminent. Mr Murray immediately blogged this.

"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."



Match: Rendezvous with the whistleblower and Eva Joly

Submitted by Laila del Bosque
W.L. Central
2014-04-19

Friday 28 March. The Ecuadorean Embassy in London. Behind him: a green screen, in front of which he films for Skype and the social networks. Threatened by the United States, the founder of WikiLeaks has been confined for two years to a room at the Ecuadorean Embassy in London. He was visited by Eva Joly who is working on

The 15 square metres where he's lived as a recluse since June 2012 are overrun by computers and other electronic equipment. At 3 Hans Crescent, Knightsbridge, London, in the tiny office put at his disposal by embassy staff, there's a corner fireplace, now blocked by a table on which today sit a Mac and three computer monitors used in video editing. Nearby: a Sony high definition professional camera, and a Canon 5D. On the other side of the room, hung against the wall: a green screen used for special effects. It's bordered by a battery of projectors that gives it the appearance of a film studio. Everywhere there are books, folders, storage boxes. Assisted by a young colleague from his company Sunshine Press Productions, it's here in this 'cool' environment that Julian Assange, founder of WikiLeaks, welcomes his guests and now, for the third time, prosecutor, presidential candidate, and former judge Eva Joly.

Smiling from under a short fashionable beard, wearing a T-shirt and black jeans, the Internet activist doesn't seem too worn for the six hundred fifty days he's been cloistered, unable to exit into sunlight. But his figure has thinned, his face has widened,

and his complexion and hair look even paler than before. He speaks in a slow voice and with a solemn air, his eyes on his interviewer. (His family worry about his deteriorating health.)

In this virtual prison, under the protection of the government of Ecuador, a small Latin American country that granted him asylum, Assange says he hasn't time to get bored. 'Imagine that you were, like me, the target of the world's superpowers, responsible for making an international organisation like WikiLeaks run... You don't have a lot of free time', he quips. 'I've got nothing I can do but work. To be able to withstand the attacks of which I'm the target, you have to be very concentrated, have to exercise a lot of self-discipline. In this small space of mine here, I'm very well organised.'

Thanks to his computer equipment, the veteran programmer can stay in touch with his many faithful via Skype, the social networks, or his WikiLeaks web channel. 'I remain above all else a journalist and editor fighting for freedom of expression', he says. Despite his imprisonment, despite the financial blockade by Visa, MasterCard, PayPal, and Bank of America, he's proud that he's been able to keep WikiLeaks afloat. 'Since we released the confidential US diplomatic dispatches in 2010, we've been targeted by the Pentagon and the White House', he explains. 'Around the world, newspapers or publishers who've published these revelations have been attacked. Some of them went bankrupt. But the actions of the CIA, the FBI, and the US State Department aren't enough to kill us. WikiLeaks survives. The organisation's even in good financial health.'

With an obsession bordering on paranoia, another of Assange's concerns is his personal safety. When he welcomes us into the room, he asks us to please not take pictures of the room's furniture or his computers, so we don't inadvertently divulge information to his enemies. Then he leads us to the window overlooking Harrods. 'Look, there in the grand circular staircase glass... There's a policeman there on duty day and night to watch me.' Assange opens one of his favourite books, *1984*, on the table next to his computer keyboard. *1984* is the novel by George Orwell who over thirty years earlier so presciently described the dangers of totalitarian society where citizens come under surveillance. On a nearby shelf is found 'The Whitehall Mandarin', a British spy novel by Edward Wilson that reveals the secret methods of the US intel services designed to preserve the dominance of the United States around the world.

As the fictional person he is, Julian Assange is probably right in being so cautious. Since the summer of 2010, right after the first WikiLeaks revelations about the US military presence in Afghanistan, he's faced an arrest warrant from a Swedish prosecutor who wants to investigate accusations of 'rape' and 'sexual assault' by two women. Assange has always denied the allegations, saying they were both 'consensual relationships'. He speaks of a 'conspiracy' by the US administration, a reaction to the disclosure of those 250,000 diplomatic cables provided by WikiLeaks soldier Bradley Manning. For him, this manoeuvre by Swedish authorities has but one goal: to secure his delivery to the United States where, like Manning who was sentenced last summer, he risks long imprisonment (or worse).

For now, even if the rape allegations aren't substantiated and no charges have been brought against him, Julian Assange has been placed under an order by a British system desperate to extradite him to Sweden. Since he took refuge in the small room in the embassy of Ecuador, nearly two years ago now, an impressive police force stay

deployed outside to prevent his escape. Assange notes that this has already cost British taxpayers more than €5 million, a sum that starts to wax polemic. 'It's always the same thing', he laments. 'Citizens are more concerned about their pocketbooks than protecting human rights.'

Trying to break the deadlock, Eva Joly meets with Assange for the third time on 28 March. She tells him of her efforts the day before in Stockholm with the Swedish authorities. The former anti-corruption judge, today a Minister of the European Parliament, first met Assange on Iceland in 2010, right before he came into the sights of the Swedish judiciary. 'I was leading the investigation into the causes of the Icelandic financial crisis', she remembers. 'And I was very impressed by the work of WikiLeaks. We wondered how the big bankers were able to lead the country to ruin with no one noticing anything. Then Julian Assange arrived on the scene with an idea of transforming Iceland into a haven where journalists can't be persecuted, an information paradise if you will. Assange's concept had a huge impact and led to the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative, a project to which I belong that continues to this day.'

In early 2013, when she learned he was staying at the Ecuadorean Embassy, Eva Joly came to visit Assange. And she returned again a year later. As the situation hadn't changed, she decided to travel to Stockholm to directly confront the Swedish judiciary. 'I proposed solutions where Assange would be questioned remotely', she said. 'Swedish judges can indeed travel to London the same way I traveled to Israel to interrogate a suspect in the Elf scandal. They can also question Julian Assange via video link, in the presence of his attorneys, as is already done in France. Finally, it's possible for them to use the Ecuadorean judicial system as a framework for the interrogation.' So far, Eva Joly, who's been unable to meet with the Swedish prosecutor, has received little response for her proposals, other than from the media. But the former judge hasn't given up. She plans to continue at the European level in her fight for justice for Assange, and to continue to denounce Sweden's disregard for the presumption of innocence and everyone's right to a speedy trial.

Before leaving, Eva Joly and Julian Assange pause for a long hug. Visibly moved, the head of WikiLeaks thanks the French MEP for being so supportive. 'You're a strong person', he tells her, then: 'I'd like to live in France someday.' But after four years of playing cat and mouse with Sweden and the US, including twenty-two months buried alive in that compartment at the Ecuadorean Embassy, hasn't the cost of WikiLeaks proven too high to bear?

'I pay a high price', Assange admits. 'But the challenge is worth it.'

Try as I may I can not escape the sound of suffering. Perhaps as an old man I will accept suffering with insouciance. But not now; men in their prime, if they have convictions are tasked to act on them.

— Julian Assange, 2007 (ICH, 2014-04-19)

A new US Department of Justice document sent in response to a FOIA request confirms there is an ongoing FBI and DoJ "multi-subject investigation" into WikiLeaks.

<http://pdfserver.amlaw.com/nlj/doj-response-wikileaks-foia.pdf>



DOJ Is Still Investigating Wikileaks

Mike Masnick
TechDirt
April 30th, 2014

It's no secret that many in the US government would love to find a way to charge Wikileaks and Julian Assange with criminal activities for reporting on leaks. However, as many have pointed out, doing so would create a firestorm, because it's difficult to see how what Wikileaks did is any different than what any news publication would do in publishing leaked documents. The attack on press freedom would be a major problem.

Still, the Justice Department has spent years trying to come up with any way possible to charge Assange with a crime. They even tortured Chelsea Manning and then offered her a deal if she lied and claimed that she "conspired" with Assange to release the State Department cables. That didn't work. Even as the DOJ couldn't produce any evidence that Manning and Assange conspired, the Defense Department insisted it had to be true. Last year, however, there were finally reports that the DOJ was just about ready to admit that it had no legal case against Assange, with officials effectively admitting that it would be tantamount to suing a newspaper.

But apparently the DOJ's investigation still isn't over. As Marcy Wheeler noted, a FOIA request by EPIC concerning the DOJ's investigation into Wikileaks supporters has been rejected, because the DOJ's investigation of Wikileaks is still not closed. In fact, the judge notes that there are "at least two investigations" still going on—the one on Wikileaks itself, and Chelsea Manning's appeal. On the Wikileaks investigation:

"The second type of enforcement proceeding, generally, is the DOJ's civilian criminal/national security investigation(s) into the unauthorized disclosure of classified information that was published on the WikiLeaks website. The investigation of the unauthorized disclosure is a multi-subject investigation and is still active and ongoing. While there have been developments in the investigation over the last year, the investigation generally remains at the investigative stage. It is this second category of enforcement proceeding that is actually more central to defendants' Exemption 7(A) withholdings in this case."

So, despite basically admitting last year that there is no case, the government has not yet given up that it can find something to pin on Assange and "there have been developments in the investigation over the last year." This is an investigation that has been going on for about four years already. It would appear that at least some folks at the DOJ are still obsessed with finding some way to charge Assange with some crime, just because.

This Day in WikiLeaks
2014-05-07

Multiple, often negative references to WikiLeaks have been made in recent entertainment media including:

"Captain America: Winter Soldier", where Julian Assange is shown as a creation of the HYDRA terrorist organisation

"24: Live Another Day", which has a WikiLeaks-esque organisation called "Open Cell" (<http://open-cell.org>)

"RoboCop", where a news ticker states "Green Peace attacked by WikiLeaks hackers"

Conference on Internet Freedom: Swedish Foreign Ministry prevents Snowden's invitation

Petra Sorge
Cicero
15. May 2014

The next European meeting of internet activists will be held in Sweden at the end of May. The "Stockholm Internet Forum" focusses on global development as well as surveillance. However, the world's most important digital rights activist is not welcome: Edward Snowden

Sarah Harrison showed her anger at the USA. She explained how the US secret service surveyed the world, how it collected and analyzed data. The journalist that accompanied Snowden during his journey from Hong Kong to Moscow was a speaker at Berlin's internet conference re:publica in the beginning of May. The hall was crowded, it was Europe's largest gathering on these topics. But Harrison did not want to dismiss her audience without a warning: "You have two months to sort your government out, folks!" Snowden's asylum in Russia ends in August. Up to that point a new shelter for the world's most important whistleblower has to be found.

The Federal government [of Germany] has repeatedly resisted accepting Snowden. The opposition in the NSA parliamentary committee demand just that: The ex NSA employee should testify in Germany, and give him an opportunity here. The governing coalition prefers leaving Snowden in Moscow— and instead questioning him via video.

Harrison, aware of this political controversy, demanded EU neighboring states to jump in: "Other countries have to support and put pressure on Germany."

But they seem to show little interest in the fate of Edward Snowden. For example Sweden: According to information by Cicero Online, the Swedish Foreign Ministry has disinvited Snowden and some of his closest confidants to an internet conference in its own country.

When third "Stockholm Internet Forum" opens on May 26, the activists will not descend on an old postal industrial area as they did for Berlin's re:publica in 2014.

Sweden's largest digital convention will take place in the town hall, under the red brick tower with three golden crowns. It's there in the ballroom where the Nobel prizes are awarded each year.

The event will not be hosted by a group of bloggers, but rather by the Swedish government. The minister of development will hold the opening address, adding meaning to the conference's motto "Internet Freedom for Global Development".

Sweden, which is regularly awarded top rankings for freedom, human rights and social welfare, wants to prove its democratic virtue again during this event. In an online podcast, Foreign Minister Carl Bildt has already sketched out the scope of topics: The Forum will not only discuss the opportunities in the digital world, but also the question as to how state control and censorship can be countered. The first point on the agenda the following morning is "the debate regarding surveillance and the right to privacy in the wake of the revelations by Edward Snowden".

There's a flipside: Neither the former NSA employee Edward Snowden nor any of his confidants will be at the conference in Stockholm. The Swedish government has taken care of that.

In addition to the ministries of foreign affairs and development, a third partner has helped organize and finance the forum: the internet organization .SE. They administer Sweden's top level domains and were responsible for selecting suitable experts worldwide for the Stockholm Internet Forum. The SIF only accepts hand-picked speakers and guests. This year about 500 participants are expected.

So how did this come about?

.SE — the only non-governmental organization among the hosts— made a list of possible candidates. The most important name on it: Edward Snowden. Further names included journalists Glenn Greenwald and Laura Poitras, the two journalists that informed the world about the NSA's activities, Guardian Editor in Chief Alan Rusbridger as well as hacker Jacob Appelbaum, who found the mobile phone number of German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Snowden's database. The list of candidates was sent to the Swedish Foreign Ministry for approval.

According to information from Cicero Online, that's where Snowden's name was marked in red. In official use, this apparently means: "do not invite". The ministry had no comment on this when asked. Instead, it stated that the focus of the conference was to "represent a wide array of backgrounds, cultures and opinions". The main ambition was to invite equal numbers of women and men and that at least half of the participants came from developing countries. "We would also like to point out that those who haven't been invited are able to follow the entire conference online and give opinions and raise questions during the discussions", the ministry added.

Indeed, Edward Snowden would not have been able to escape his Russian asylum in order to go to Stockholm. However, his invitation would have been a symbol. With a little imagination the hosts could have included him anyway. The German NSA parliamentary committee is currently discussing a video interrogation. Snowden has already answered questions posed by the European Council via a live broadcast; that was also the way he chose to spoke to participants of a tech festival in Texas.

Sweden could also have allowed Snowden's confidantes to speak for him. That's what other hosts of large computer and internet conferences have recently done. The Net Mundial in São Paulo, Brazil, chose a live broadcast with Wikileaks founder Julian Assange, hacker Jacop Appelbaum was there personally. The Chaos Communication Congress had Glenn Greenwald speaking via video. Appelbaum and Harrison spoke there too, as well as at Berlin's re:publica.

The Swedish Foreign Ministry only authorized one name among the Snowden confidantes: Laura Poitras. The documentary filmmaker has recently refrained from loud political demands. She eventually turned down the invitation. "Of course I would boycott any conference with a blacklist", she said to Cicero Online.

The objection against Appelbaum was supposedly recorded as follows: "Has been discussed, and has to be discussed further."

Appelbaum himself is outraged. "It is unacceptable that I am the target of retribution for attempting to discuss the issues of mass surveillance and the chilling effect it has on society."

The Swedish Foreign Ministry replied to Cicero's inquiries saying it had wanted to select participants that they believed would benefit from coming to the convention and who hadn't been there before. "Only a fraction of the participants have been invited to all three SIFs [Stockholm Internet Forums, the editor]. Mr. Appelbaum was invited to both previous SIFs."

Apparently the Swedish government's selection of participants also upset the non-governmental host. The organization .SE, which had helped with the first two conferences, has reduced its involvement this year. The development ministry confirmed this. A .SE spokeswoman attested that "this year we are offering our support as a sponsor but we are not involved in the SIF program".

Stockholm's Internet Freedom convention will send out a contradictory message to the world: On the one hand, it wants to talk about surveillance and data protection issues. On the other hand, it locks out those people who could best speak about these topics. "Is this what they mean by internet freedom?" Jacob Appelbaum wonders. "Or by freedom in general?"

Perhaps Sweden does not want to spoil its chances with the powerful American ally. After all, the EU state shares its destiny with the USA. Just as the fox lurks in front of the rabbit cave, both countries await the extradition of their whistleblower: Assange here, Snowden there. This could explain why Sweden refrains from inviting Snowden.

<http://www.cicero.de/weltbuehne/conference-internet-freedom-swedish-foreign-ministry-prevents-snowdens-invitation/57582>

***Synopsis:** Representatives of the Brazilian social movement MST met with Julian Assange at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London. MST expressed solidarity with Assange and stated they would pressure Sweden into allowing him passage to Ecuador. MST also offered Assange asylum in their settlements.*

Em reunião com Julian Assange, MST estabelece parceria com Wikileaks

Por Maíra Kubík Mano

Da Página do MST/Agência Pública

15 de maio de 2014

Em frente à Embaixada do Equador em Londres, um grupo de cinco pessoas reúne-se todos os dias para protestar. Com alguns cartazes e uma faixa costurada à mão, exige a libertação de Julian Assange, o fundador do Wikileaks, confinado no prédio. “Em 19 de junho faremos um grande ato, você pode participar?”, perguntam aos curiosos que passam pela rua. A Embaixada fica em uma área turística da cidade, bem ao lado de uma grande loja de departamentos, e a manifestação chama atenção.

A prisão de Assange foi pedida pela Suécia em um processo de assédio sexual e ele, que é australiano, entrou na Embaixada do Equador para evitar a extradição. Recebeu asilo político do governo de Rafael Correa, mas se deixar o local será detido imediatamente. Ao menos dois policiais ficam 24 horas por dia à sua espreita, o que custa, por ano, módicos 3,8 milhões de libras (R\$ 14,6 milhões), conforme revelou a polícia metropolitana. “Além de tudo estão gastando nosso dinheiro”, critica uma das ativistas, uma senhora chilena que vive em Londres desde o golpe contra Salvador Allende.

O isolamento forçado de Assange limita não só seus movimentos físicos como sua comunicação. Quem quiser falar com ele precisa antes passar por seus assessores e ter sua vida checada. Ao entrar no prédio, celulares, câmeras e quaisquer outro tipo de aparelhos eletrônicos são confiscados, para garantir sua privacidade. Jornalistas são terminantemente proibidos. E expulsos, caso tentem — imagine como consegui essa informação.

Nesta quinta-feira (14), é um dos principais movimentos sociais do Brasil, o MST, quem vai encontrar o cabeça de uma organização que sacudiu a diplomacia internacional, bancos e até a igreja da Cientologia após vazar milhares de documentos em seus 7 anos de atividade. Na pauta, a aliança entre os movimentos sociais latino-americanos e o Wikileaks.

A reunião é longa e, às 18h, o grupo que protestava diante do prédio se retira. “Vou para a Embaixada da Síria. A situação está feia lá”, diz uma delas. Agora sou apenas eu e os policiais olhando para a Embaixada, que é uma lateral térrea de um prédio sofisticado. O espaço onde Assange está, dizem, tem poucos metros quadrados.

Após duas horas de conversa — e muitas voltas na quadra —, João Paulo Rodrigues, da direção nacional do MST, saiu afirmando que “é importantíssimo que os movimentos sociais estejam juntos na luta em defesa do asilo de Assange no Equador”. Segundo o dirigente, o papo “fluiu”, e o MST vai contribuir para pressionar a Suécia a permitir a ida dele ao país sul-americano.

O fundador do Wikileaks estaria também temeroso com a possibilidade de ser extraditado para os Estados Unidos. “Ele acha que, caso seja preso pela Suécia, vão mandá-lo para os Estados Unidos por conta das acusações de espionagem”, conta Rodrigues.

O MST prometeu então se juntar à mobilização do dia 19 de junho, quando Assange completa dois anos na Embaixada, realizando protestos nas representações diplomáticas suecas e estadunidenses. Os sem-terra vão circular ainda um abaixo-assinado junto com outros movimentos sociais e intelectuais, que deve ser entregue ao Alto Comissariado de Direitos Humanos da ONU (Organização das Nações Unidas).

Em troca de toda a solidariedade recebida, o Wikileaks se prontificou em contribuir na difusão das ações do MST aos seus 5 milhões de seguidores em todo o mundo.

Ao final, os representantes do MST entregaram ao fundador do Wikileaks um cartaz assinado pelos “movimentos sociais da Alba” (Aliança Boliariana para os Povos da América) com as fotos de Assange, Chelsea Manning — condenada a 35 anos prisão pelo vazamento de dados confidenciais dos EUA — e Edward Snowden, antigo funcionário da CIA e atualmente exilado na Rússia. “Toda solidariedade aos combatentes do Império”, dizia o poster.

Posaram para fotos juntos, todas tiradas pela assessora de Assange, que edita as imagens antes de liberá-las — até agora elas não chegaram. Muitos cliques com o boné vermelho do MST. Bem-humorado, Rodrigues colocou o movimento à sua disposição: “caso precise de um asilo no Brasil, oferecemos os nossos assentamentos”. Ganhou de volta um abraço.

À noite, sobraram só os policiais.

<http://www.mst.org.br/node/16110>

Bob Carr and Julian Assange: Brothers in arms

*Andrew Fowler
The Interpreter
19 May 2014*

When former foreign minister Bob Carr published his diary in April, he launched himself into the struggle over what should remain a government secret and what should be revealed to the public.

Carr, who worked as a journalist with the now defunct Bulletin magazine, delighted in flourishing his Media Alliance membership card at press conferences, seemingly to impress reporters. But it seems Carr has been stuck somewhere between his journalistic desire to reveal information and his legal obligation as a former foreign minister to keep secrets.

Unlike Kevin Rudd— who as foreign minister had offered WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange support, dismissing a suggestion by the then attorney general that Assange's Australian passport may be taken away— Carr was openly hostile towards Assange. He took a deeply antagonistic stand against Assange being described as a journalist and went so far as to say that Assange's work was 'amoral'.

He even boasted in his recently published diaries that he'd been deliberately misleading about his handling of Assange's calls for diplomatic representation by the Australian Government. Carr says he was 'fed up' with Assange's supporters saying he hadn't done enough. Carr writes that he convened a press conference to tell the gathered media that Assange had received more consular support than 'any other Australian', but then suggests it didn't matter whether this statement was factually correct. It was, Carr writes, 'a broad healthy truth that I don't think anyone could disprove'.

Carr joined the chorus of politicians lining up to whack Assange, but it is Carr who is now suffering the very criticism hurled at the Wikileaks editor-in-chief — that he may have endangered security operations.

Carr tells of meeting with an official from Oman, Salem Ben Nasser Al Ismaily, in June 2012, who he suspects is 'more than Oman's trade adviser, his putative role'. Carr writes that he asked Ismaily for help with the Taylor case (Australian lawyer Melinda Taylor, accused of spying in Libya) and was told that Oman had people 'on the ground' in Libya and 'referred to our (Australia's) liaison officer in UAE', the United Arab Emirates.

Carr writes: "Liaison officer? Our Ambassador said to me, 'That would be the other agency you're responsible for.' Right."

The Australian Secret and Intelligence Service (ASIS) is the 'other' agency within the Foreign Affairs portfolio.

The US was also reportedly not impressed that Carr detailed 'a cable based on CIA sources' with a profile of the Zintan militia fighters holding Ms Taylor prisoner. 'This criticism would be preposterous if it were not so comic,' Carr told the Fairfax media, and blamed 'espionage antics' for causing much greater damage in recent times with Indonesia. 'I refer to the alleged decision to record the phone calls of the Indonesian president and his family... I'd like to know where the genius lay in the decision to target trade deals and pass information to the US.'

So Carr attacks Assange and then falls back on the work of whistleblower Edward Snowden, whose cache of US documents revealed the Australian spying on Indonesia, to defend himself. Carr's moral position, if nothing else, has entered what former CIA Counter Terrorism head James Jesus Angleton called 'the wilderness of mirrors'.

Carr disclosed information which could hardly be described as harmful. The fact that Australia has an ASIS officer stationed in the UAE is unsurprising. Yet according to The Age newspaper, Australia's spy agencies believe he may have broken the law by providing information about ASIS. This raises the argument that lives may have been put at risk, the same argument which has been run against Assange and WikiLeaks and recently in the Financial Review against Snowden with absolutely no evidence ever being produced that anyone has ever been harmed.

It is possible that Carr feels, as many journalists do, that Assange does not belong and that he is an interloper. It is also possible that he is merely continuing the attack on Assange started by the person who appointed him as foreign minister— former Prime Minister Julia Gillard. Gillard made a famously erroneous statement that WikiLeaks' leaks of US State Department documents had been an illegal act. Gillard had much for which to detest Assange. The WikiLeaks documents revealed detailed briefings given by her supporters to US embassy officers in Canberra about the planned coup to topple Kevin Rudd.

Carr is now being called to account for his revelatory prose, and he is protesting in the same way Assange protested. Assange was motivated by a belief that the public had a right to know much that governments kept secret. Carr has similar motivations. They should see themselves as journalistic brothers in arms.

<http://www.lowyinterpreter.org>

Justice Department: Release of WikiLeaks Records Could Harm 'Pending Future Prosecution'

*Kevin Gosztola
Firedog Lake
May 20, 2014*

The United States Justice Department has indicated in a lawsuit involving a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request that records related to WikiLeaks must remain secret because the release may “cause articulable harm” to an ongoing Justice Department and FBI criminal investigation and “pending future prosecution.”

The Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC) submitted a request for records on “individuals targeted for surveillance” for their support or interest in WikiLeaks. They requested records of any lists of names of people placed on lists for their support or interest in WikiLeaks. They requested records of communications with Internet or social media companies on any lists of individuals who have shown support for WikiLeaks.

The organization also requested records on any communications with financial services companies, including Visa, MasterCard and PayPal, on lists of individuals who have donated money and shown support for WikiLeaks.

Government attorneys in this lawsuit have now confirmed twice that the criminal investigation into the unauthorized disclosure of information that was published on WikiLeaks' website is not over. The government has feared revealing any information would jeopardize “civilian criminal/national security investigation(s)” that are apparently “multi-subject” and “active and ongoing.”

The government's position in the lawsuit is either reflective of (a) the fact that someone connected to WikiLeaks, including its editor-in-chief Julian Assange, may be indicted in the future or (b) the investigation is being kept open in order to help prevent the release of information related to the investigation.

Unknown officials anonymously claimed to Washington Post reporter Sari Horowitz in November 2013 that charges would not be brought against Assange for “publishing classified documents because government lawyers said they could not do so without also prosecuting US news organizations and journalists.”

What the Post’s story overlooked or neglected was how the Justice Department could potentially pursue charges that would essentially criminalize the communication of classified information in the course of engaging in journalism. It also failed to highlight the grand jury that remains empaneled in Alexandria, Virginia. So long as it remains empaneled, a possibility that cases could be constructed remains a distinct possibility.

Regardless of whether prosecutions are, in fact, brought eventually, the government is worried about revealing law enforcement records that would show “the size, scope, and direction of the DOJ’s and FBI’s pending criminal investigation.”

The FBI also has an interest in keeping the records concealed, which would show just how intertwined the investigations of Chelsea Manning and WikiLeaks happen to be.

This fact came up in the court-martial of Manning with questions asked directly by military prosecutors about how Assange worked to facilitate his leaks to the organization.

Here the case of Barrett Brown, a journalist and activist who has faced criminal charges related to the publication of information from the private intelligence firm, Stratfor, is instructive.

Brown faced up to 105 years in prison if convicted of all counts. Charges were withdrawn by the government, and the potential time he would likely serve in prison was significantly reduced. However, the government slipped in a new charge in a superseding indictment: “accessory after the fact to an unauthorized access to a protected computer,” a charge under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act.

Kevin Gallagher of Free Barrett Brown expressed concern to Index on Censorship that the “legal construction” of this charge now made it so that “journalists may be prosecuted for merely speaking to hackers and having knowledge of their breaches.”

There are records of communications with a person whom the government believes was Assange. These communications involve conversations about future unauthorized disclosures to be posted to WikiLeaks. Would that be enough to charge him as the government charged Brown?

Recognize that the Justice Department does not consider Brown a journalist. Assange is not a journalist to the Justice Department either. These are people who traffic information from hackers, leakers, or government insiders, etc, and the Justice Department will utilize all FBI resources to disrupt and stop them.

The National Security Agency (NSA), as documents from NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden reveal, included an entry in something called a “Manhunting Timeline” that related to efforts to have Assange prosecuted in 2010:

"The United States on 10 August urged other nations with forces in Afghanistan, including Australia, United Kingdom and Germany, to consider filing criminal charges against Julian Assange, founder of the rogue WikiLeaks Internet website and responsible for the unauthorized publication of over 70,000 classified documents covering the war in Afghanistan. The documents may have been provided to WikiLeaks by Army Private First Class Bradley Manning. The appeal exemplifies the start of an international effort to focus the legal element of national power upon non-state actor Assange and the human network that supports WikiLeaks."

The US intelligence community even considered designating WikiLeaks a "malicious foreign actor" for the purposes of being able to conduct surveillance of American users who were visiting the website.

Government attorneys note that the risk of disclosure of records in Manning's trial has diminished, but the release of "investigative files" could "jeopardize proceedings" in the appeal, particularly if there was "any reversal and remand for new trial." But the same attorneys even acknowledge this is not the chief concern; they're worried primarily about the investigation that remains ongoing into WikiLeaks.

Anonymous US officials have deliberately tried to convince the public through the gullibility of US reporters that no threat of criminal investigation remains. It has been a part of an effort to further marginalize and make all those involved in WikiLeaks, especially Assange, seem irrationally paranoid.

Alarmingly, in all this, few have seriously called into question how the Obama administration has insisted on maintaining a low-hanging cloud over WikiLeaks to further isolate the media organization and convince many to tread carefully when working with the media organization.

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Assange targeted by FBI probe, US court documents reveal

*Philip Dorling
Sydney Morning Herald
May 20, 2014*

WikiLeaks publisher Julian Assange remains the subject of an active criminal investigation by the United States Justice Department and Federal Bureau of Investigation, newly published court documents reveal.

Papers released in US legal proceedings have revealed that a "criminal/national security investigation" by the US Department of Justice and FBI probe of WikiLeaks is "a multi-subject investigation" that is still "active and ongoing" more than four years after the anti-secrecy website began publishing secret US diplomatic and military documents.

Confirmation that US prosecutors have not closed the book on WikiLeaks and Mr Assange comes as a consequence of litigation by the US Electronic Privacy Information Centre to enforce a freedom of information request for documents relating to the FBI's WikiLeaks investigation.

Justice Department lawyers last month told the US District Court in Washington DC that there had been "developments in the investigation over the last year." In a document filed with the court on Monday, the US Government further affirmed that the "main, multi-subject, criminal investigation of the [Department of Justice] and FBI remains open and pending" making it necessary "to withhold law enforcement records related to this civilian investigation."

In August 2013 US Army private Chelsea Manning, formerly Bradley Manning, was sentenced to 35 years imprisonment, with the possibility of parole in eight years, as a consequence of his conviction on espionage and other charges for leaking thousands of classified US military and diplomatic documents to WikiLeaks.

During Private Manning's trial US military prosecutors made repeated references to Mr Assange, alleging that the WikiLeaks publisher guided and directed the soldier's disclosure of classified information.

The US Department of Justice opened an investigation of WikiLeaks after Private Manning's arrest in May 2010.

Australian diplomatic cables released to Fairfax Media under freedom of information laws later revealed that senior Justice Department officials privately described the investigation as being "unprecedented in scale and nature."

Since June 2012 Mr Assange has resided at Ecuador's London embassy where he has been granted political asylum by Ecuador on the grounds that he is at risk of extradition to the US to face conspiracy or other charges.

British police are on guard outside the embassy 24 hours a day, waiting to arrest Mr Assange so he can be extradited to Sweden to face questioning about sexual assault and rape allegations that were first raised in August 2010. The cost of the continuous police presence has now exceeded £5.9 million (\$10.7 million).

Mr Assange's lawyers have advised that his extradition to Sweden could facilitate his extradition to the United States. The British and Swedish governments have declined to provide assurances that Mr Assange would not be extradited to the US.

Former Foreign Minister Bob Carr stated in June 2012 that Mr Assange had received more consular assistance than any other Australian over a comparable period. In his recently published diary, Mr Carr observed that "strictly speaking" he didn't know if this was actually the case and that he made the claim "to needle [Assange's] self-righteousness."

"He's no more likely to be extradited by the Americans from there than from the United Kingdom," Mr Carr wrote.

"Sure enough, my needling has an effect," Mr Carr added. "His mother is sounding off on AM the next morning claiming we should be defending him in Sweden-- as if it's our job to fight the court cases of Australians in trouble overseas."

Mr Carr later told a Senate estimate committee hearing in February 2013 that he would not "over-service" Mr Assange's consular case and had told the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to make no further representations on the matter because it "doesn't affect Australian interests".

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop has said she believes Australia has provided "appropriate consular support" to Mr Assange.

"He chose to seek political asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy... I have judged that the support that we have given to Mr Assange is appropriate in the circumstances," she said in an interview with an Indian newspaper.

www.smh.com.au/world/assange-targeted-by-fbi-probe-us-court-documents-reveal-20140520-3811p.html

This Day in WikiLeaks

2014-05-26

L'Espresso interviewed Glenn Greenwald on mass surveillance, Edward Snowden, WikiLeaks, and the recent disagreement over publication strategies. Below is a rough translation from the original Italian:

"Absolutely, WikiLeaks was crucial in preventing Snowden to end up in a US maximum security prison. Without the courage of Sarah Harrison, this would never have happened. I was and am one of the greatest defenders of WikiLeaks and it disturbs me deeply when those who believe in transparency attack WikiLeaks. The organization is imperfect, Julian Assange is imperfect, like all of us, but the role they play is so important. And I say this even though a few days ago WikiLeaks criticized me and The Intercept the hard way: and that's okay. I'm glad they're there and increase the pressure for greater transparency. And I do not think that there would have been any other group or person that would do what WikiLeaks and Sarah Harrison did for Edward Snowden at that moment: he was the world's most wanted, sought in the viewfinder of the most powerful government on the globe."

Surveillance advocates want to save the internet

*Von Petra Sorge
Cicero
26. Mai 2014*

The Global Commission on Internet Governance wants to foster free expression and online privacy. However, the body comprises passionate surveillance advocates. E-mails leaked to the German magazine Cicero Online even show: the Swedish government, which chairs the commission, has been denying representatives of the whistleblower project Wikileaks access to an internet freedom forum in its own country

The aims of this worldwide internet organization actually sound pretty promising. The Snowden "revelations about the nature and extent of online surveillance have led to a loss of trust", the Global Commission on Internet Governance states. That is why the internet governance mechanism needs an update. Furthermore, the name of the website appears like grass roots democracy: ourinternet.org.

The Global Commission on Internet Governance was founded in the wake of the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2014, and was honored by the globalists and anti-surveillance activists of Brazil's Net Mundial. Within two years, the project is to present ideas for a better future of the internet.

Among the members is also the former Editor-in-Chief of the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, Mathias Müller von Blumencron, who now leads the online department of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Blumencron regularly reports on the NSA scandal. "We have to fight for liberty", he stated in a recent article.

He hopes to do that in the Global Commission on Internet Governance: to save the internet. However, journalist Glenn Greenwald, who met Edward Snowden in Hong Kong and who has just published his book *No Place To Hide*, contests this view in a Cicero interview: the Commission would rather damage the internet.

Indeed the list of participants casts a shadow on the good intentions of this body. Among the members is David Omand, former director of the GCHQ. The British secret service entertains massive surveillance programs; last year agents forced their way into the editorial offices of *The Guardian* and ordered the destruction of hard drives with Snowden material.

David Omand is not a friend of whistleblowers that unmask government lies either. In 2003 he had a serious problem with U.N. weapons inspector David Kelly. He had secretly informed BBC reporters that the British government had manipulated data to justify the Iraq War intervention. Omand thus agreed that the informant should face "more forensic examination" according to a *Daily Mail* report. A few days later, Kelly's body was found in a forest in which the inspection report later attested it having been ruled a suicide.

But a figure much more powerful in the Global Commission on Internet Governance is Sweden's Foreign Minister Carl Bildt. He is chairing the initiative. Bildt likes to be seen as a man of the internet: he uses twitter, broadcasts online videos, etc. He triumphs over having brought freedom of expression and internet issues on the agenda of the United Nations.

Before Wednesday, his ministry organized an important Swedish web conference – the "Stockholm Internet Forum". Bildt's conference on "Internet Freedom for global development" embodies the motto: "Internet — privacy, transparency, surveillance and control"; yet it has come under criticism. As reported in *Cicero Online*, the Swedish Foreign Ministry has prevented Snowden's invitation. The name of the whistleblower was marked red on a list of possible participants. Also some close confidants of Snowden – among them Greenwald, journalist Jacob Appelbaum or *The Guardian* Editor-in-Chief Alan Rusbridger – were uninvited. The Foreign Ministry has denied any allegations that this was a political boycott or politically motivated.

However, e-mails disclosed to *Cicero Online* now suggest the opposite. Accordingly, already in 2012 the Scandinavian country blocked participation of the whistleblower platform Wikileaks, which works closely with Snowden and his allies. Ahead of the first Stockholm Internet Forum, members of the revelation project took efforts to receive an invitation. Since it is only the Swedish Foreign Ministry that invites participants, the activists addressed their plea twice to this agency. On 5 March 2012,

an officer stated: "I regret to inform you that we are not able to invite representatives from your organisation to the Stockholm Internet Forum." A copy of the message also went to Olof Ehrenkrona, political adviser to the Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, and most important strategist behind the conference.

Wikileaks did not give up: a representative wanted to know if Bildt was personally informed about the incident. He also repeated his appeal to be able to participate in the conference. Wikileaks "has more experience with internet censorship than any other organisation and is also the boldest and most persecuted publisher". He quoted from an Amnesty International report praising Wikileaks's role for the freedom of expression: "Those who live with the daily abuses of power... [t]heir last hope for accountability is disclosure— however messy, embarrassing and apparently counter-productive it may be."

Nonetheless, the government turned down the request. There would be no more space in the conference room. "Thus only selected participants could be invited", the officer wrote. Wikileaks suggested participating remotely— i.e. via video broadcasting. However, the Ministry never replied to this offer.

A press officer confirmed to Cicero Online that the e-mails were real. But he said to be "quite confident that we have had several participants that have had close links with Wikileaks attending the SIF over the years". Wikileaks spokesman Kristinn Hrafnsson denies this: "As far as I can recall, members of our organization have never been invited."

Journalist Glenn Greenwald sees a reason for that: The Swedish secret service FRA („Försvarets Radioanstalt") has been a "very, very close partner of the NSA and works with them in a very extensive and cooperative manner". This has been shown by the Snowden documents. "The Swedish government is certainly hostile to these revelations that we've been doing and certainly has been hostile to the revelations that Wikileaks did in 2010 and 2011." This would be true for many governments, and already in 2010, plans of the US secret service CIA to damage Wikileaks were leaked to the platform.

Greenwald thus also sees a relationship between the Wikileaks blockade and the request of extradition against Julian Assange. The founder of the platform has been sitting in the London embassy of Ecuador for two years. In June 2012, the Australian took refuge there to escape the extradition to Sweden following allegations of sexual offences. Assange fears to be eventually turned over to the USA.

The Swedish Foreign Ministry considers this as speculation and does not comment on this. "This is purely an issue for the law enforcement authorities." However, e-mails show that not only Assange but also his whistleblower platform are unwelcomed by the conservative government. Glenn Greenwald states: "I think that the Swedish government just in general dislikes any groups or people who challenge their ability to do things in secret."

He also has his doubts concerning the Global Commission on Internet Governance: "Swedish officials, who have demonstrated a willingness to cooperate with the NSA to have power within a commission like that, are exactly the people I would not trust to have that." Actually Greenwald thinks a global Internet organization could be "a very positive step" if it fights for a free internet and if it restricts U.S. dominance. But not

"[...]if you start putting people on that commission who are members of governments that have demonstrated an intent to undermine internet freedom. Then the entire project becomes corrupted."

Mathias Müller von Blumencron has a different perspective. When he was still Editor in Chief of Der Spiegel, he benefited from Wikileaks' revelations. Today he talks with those that would like to damage the whistleblower project. Blumencron knows very well that there are people in the commission "who act controversially", he wrote to Cicero Online. "But if we refused sitting down with them on one table to discuss the frameworks of the digital future, it wouldn't help us solving these contentious issues ." Those groups had all used and shaped the internet.

"It has never been more important to think about the conditions of a free internet in diverse groups", states Blumencron. And he insists to add: "This is no circle of security politicians, former secret service agents or conservatives."

So far, they haven't even started yet.

<http://web.archive.org/web/20140527180751/http://www.cicero.de/weltbuehne/conference-internet-freedom-sweden-blocked-wikileaks/57658>

Assange may stay in Ecuador embassy 'forever' as £6 million policing bill keeps growing

RT

June 7, 2014

Julian Assange, hiding inside the Ecuadorian embassy in London for almost two years, may remain there indefinitely, the Ecuadorean ambassador said, adding "it's a pity" that UK citizens have to cover the growing policing bill.

The 67 year old diplomat, Juan Falconi Puig said that Assange was "suffering" in custody but could remain there for a long time after the Wikileaks founder lost a Supreme Court bid to stop his extradition to Sweden, where the 42-year-old Australian is wanted for questioning over rape allegations, The Times reports.

Assange is "not a fugitive", Falconi stressed, reminding that Ecuador's president, Rafael Correa, granted him asylum on human rights grounds— and that Assange, if eventually extradited to the US, would face persecution and could even be tortured.

"He thinks it is a very strong possibility. The [Ecuadorean] government have accepted that position," Falconi said.

The UK has been refusing to provide Assange safe passage to Ecuador ever since the Australian sought refuge inside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London in June 2012.

Since he entered the embassy, the security measures implemented by the British security services to prevent Assange from escaping the Ecuadorian premises have amounted to £6 million for the British taxpayers.

"The estimated total cost of policing the Ecuadorean embassy between June 2012 and the end of March 2014 is £5.9 million, of which £4.9 million is opportunity costs and £1 million in additional costs," a spokeswoman for the Metropolitan Police Service announced in April, causing some outcry from the British public.

"It is absolute madness. I have been asking the Met questions about this because clearly at the moment the cost is falling on London taxpayers as a net police cost," Baroness Jenny Jones, deputy chair of the Police and Crime Committee at the London Assembly, was quoted in April.

She suggested that the Metropolitan Police should just walk away. "I do understand the legal ramifications of the case, but the fact is this is a complete nonsense. He could stay there for years."

Commenting on the growing bill, Falcone said, "That's not our problem."

"We have read something about that but we don't know the exact cost," he added. "We can't do anything about it. It's a pity. Britain's position has not changed but I would say that all the parties involved are willing to find a solution — that could be diplomatic or legal."

To move forward on the stalemate issue, the Ecuadorian envoy said that Sweden could arrange the questioning of Assange over the alleged crimes via an internet conference call.

This Day in WikiLeaks
2014-06-10

Australian academic Scott Burchill wrote on issues with current mainstream journalism, noting the attitude toward Julian Assange and Edward Snowden: "The personal hostility of many journalists and think tankers to Julian Assange and Edward Snowden stems from both professional jealousy that they were out-scooped by unorthodox competitors, and an instinctive fear of upsetting established power. Instead of investigating the behavior of governments and welcoming greater transparency about decisions being taken in the peoples' name, many in the media became complicit in defending state power from public exposure. Along the way the 'right to know' about government malfeasance was abandoned and replaced with personal smears, innuendo and outright lies about those were actually informing the public."

Brazilian authorities and citizens are preparing a request for the allowal of Julian Assange's transit to Ecuador. The request will be presented to the United Nations.

Adrian Cross, the character in "24: Live Another Day" inspired by Julian Assange, was revealed to be the secret villain in the latest episode.

Hillary says Julia faced sexism

*Caroline Overington
Australian Women's Weekly
June 10, 2014*

... Mrs Clinton speaks glowing of Australians in her book — with one exception: Julian Assange. She was furious when the WikiLeaks decided to release top secret US cables, saying "people of good faith understand the need for sensitive diplomatic communications." Nevertheless, she believes the leaked cables generally showed US officials "doing their jobs well".

One of the first calls she made after it became apparent that the cables would become public was "to my friend Kevin Rudd, the Australian foreign minister and former Prime Minister".

He agreed that WikiLeaks could be a "real problem" and Mrs Clinton said it could have a "dreadful fall out".

She hit the phones, and says some world leaders were angry, some were upset, but one joked: "You should hear what we say about you."

Of all those who had their feelings hurt, the Italian leader, Silvio Berlusconi, who was described in the cables as a bit of playboy, was the worst.

He asked Mrs Clinton: "Why are you saying these things about me?"

She apologised again, saying: "No-one wished these words had stayed secret more than I did."

Her relationship with Australia's leaders was also good. One of the first people she called when she became Secretary of State was former Foreign Minister Stephen Smith.

She believed that Mr Smith, and former prime ministers Kevin Rudd and Ms Gillard were key allies in the US strategy to expand its influence in Asia.

"Rich in natural resources, Australia was profiting by supplying China's industrial boom," Mrs Clinton writes, "but Rudd also understood that peace and security in the Pacific depended on American leadership."

...The 600-plus page book is published today. It is widely believed to establish the ground for Mrs Clinton— a former Secretary of State, New York senator and First Lady— to run for the White House in 2016....

www.aww.com.au/news-features/news-stories/2014/6/hillary-says-julia-faced-outrageous-sexism

59 International Organizations Call Upon UN to Remedy Human Rights Violations in Pre-Charge Detention of Wikileaks Publisher Julian Assange

WikiLeaks
16 June 2014

59 International Organizations Call Upon UN to Remedy Human Rights Violations in Pre-Charge Detention of Wikileaks Publisher Julian Assange

Groups Submit Reports to UN Universal Periodic Review Citing Sweden's Human Rights & Procedural Violations in Treatment of Julian Assange.

Report Details Linked Below.

Geneva, Switzerland — Before the United Nations this Sunday, 26 international human rights, fair trial, and jurist organizations, and 33 Latin American civil society organisations, condemned Sweden's violation of the fundamental human rights of WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange, who has experienced protracted pre-charge detention stemming from a Swedish investigation which has yet to charge him. Mr. Assange's pre-charge detention has spanned nearly four years as US Federal Grand Jury prepares a criminal case against WikiLeaks and its officers.

Two Swedish organizations, as well as jurist organizations from around the world including the American Association of Jurists (AAJ), the National Lawyer's Guild (NLG), the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL), and the Indian Association of Lawyers submitted two reports—one in English and one in Spanish—each highlighting various procedural rights violations of Julian Assange, Sweden's longest running case of pre-trial deprivation of liberty.

A third report, signed by 33 human rights groups, media and civil society organisations, and unions, including the Global Women's March (Marcha Mundial das Mulheres, MMM), petitioned the Human Rights Commission in Geneva to intervene to free the 'political prisoner', Julian Assange.

The reports were submitted to the UN's Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the peak UN human rights review mechanism that investigates each country's human rights record every four years. The submissions expose numerous systematic deficiencies in Swedish pre-trial procedures like the routine placement of persons who have not been charged with any crime in indefinite, isolated, or unexplained pre-charge detention.

According to the English report, signed by 16 organizations, "The methods employed by the prosecutor in Mr. Assange's case are a clear violation of his fundamental human rights, yet they remain beyond the reach of judicial review."

The second submission, signed by 10 international human rights, fair trial, and jurist organizations, says that "the Swedish Authorities' demand that Mr. Assange be physically present in Sweden for questioning... would imply that Mr. Assange would have to renounce his inalienable right [to the protection afforded by his asylum in relation to the United States], but also means in practice that Mr. Assange would have to risk his life and physical integrity".

The third submission, signed by 33 human rights groups, media and civil society organisations, and unions, from Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, and Ecuador, petitioned the UN Human Rights Commission to intervene with Sweden in order to secure the immediate release of Julian Assange:

"The entire international community has witnessed the opportunistic manipulation of the accusations against Mr. Assange, in an attempt to destroy his reputation and to prevent his freedom and his ability to act politically. **It is obvious that this unprecedented situation has not come about as a result of the alleged acts committed in Sweden, but rather due to the clear political interference by powerful interests in response to Mr. Assange's journalistic and political activities.** This situation has turned Julian Assange into a political prisoner, who is effectively condemned to house arrest without any charges having been brought against him, without being able to exercise his right to due process."

On 19 June 2014, Julian Assange will have spent two years inside the Embassy of Ecuador in London (and a total of nearly four years in the UK under different forms of restrictions to his freedom of movement). He has been granted political asylum in relation to US attempts to prosecute him as the publisher of WikiLeaks. Sweden has refused to give assurances that Julian Assange will not be extradited to the United States. A Swedish prosecutor has kept a preliminary investigation open for nearly four years, but has not charged Julian Assange with any crime. The prosecutor refuses to question him in London, leading to a stalemate. At least four formal offers have been made to the prosecution to interview Mr. Assange in person, in writing, via telephone, or via video-link. All offers have been declined. The stalemate has cost over \$10 million in the UK alone, where a costly police detail watches the Embassy and all of Mr. Assange's visitors around the clock.

The English UPR Report can be viewed [HERE](#).

The Spanish UPR Report can be viewed [HERE](#).

The Spanish UPR Submission by civil society organisations can be viewed [HERE](#).

A complete list of the undersigned groups is available below:

The coalition of Human Rights, Fair trial, and Jurist organizations, of the English submission, undersigned by:

American Association of Jurists (AAJ)

Arab Lawyers Union (ALU)

Association des Avocats Africains Antillais et Autres de France (5AF)

Association Droit Solidarite

Bangladesh Democratic Lawyers Association

CAGECHARTA 2008

European Association of Lawyers for Democracy and World Human Rights (ELDH)

Eva Joly Institute for Justice & Democracy (EJI)

Giuristi Democratici Italy (Italian Democratic Lawyers Association)

International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL)

Indian Association of Lawyers

Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais sem Terra (MST)

National Lawyers Guild (NLG)

National Union of People's Lawyers of the Philippines

The coalition of 10 Human Rights, Fair trial, and Jurist organizations, report in Spanish, undersigned by:

ILOCAD
Asociación Latinoamericana de Derecho Penal y Criminología
The Center for Justice & Accountability
Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de España
Comité de Apoyo al Tíbet
Fundación Internacional Baltasar Garzón
Instituto Mexicano de Derechos Humanos y Democracia A.C.
Colectivo de Abogados "José Alvear Restrepo"
Vortex
Unión de Juristas Independientes de Andalucía

The Coalition of 33 civil society organisations, report in Spanish, undersigned by:

Articulação de Empregados Rurais do estado de MG (ADERE-MG)
Asamblea Nacional de Afectados Ambientales - México
Associação de Rádios Públicas do Brasil (ARPUB)
Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT)
Confederación de Trabajadores de la Economía Popular - Argentina
Consulta Popular - Brasil
Executiva Nacional dos Estudantes de Biologia (ENEBIO)
Federação dos Estudantes de Agronomia do Brasil (FEAB)
Fora do Eixo
Fórum Nacional pela Democratização da Comunicação (FNDC)
Frente Popular Darío Santillán (FPDS - Argentina)
Fundación Pueblo Índio del Ecuador
Grupo Tortura Nunca Mais – Rio de Janeiro
Intersindical Central da Classe Trabalhadora
Jóvenes ante la Emergencia Nacional – México
Coletivo Juntos! - Por outro futuro
Levante Popular da Juventude
Marcha Mundial das Mulheres (MMM)
Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens (MAB)
Movimento Nacional de Rádios Comunitárias (MNRC)
Movimento de Mulheres Camponesas (MMC)
Movimento dos Pequenos Agricultores (MPA)
Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST)
Movimiento de Liberación Nacional – México
Movimiento de Trabajadores Excluídos – Argentina
Organización de Solidaridad de los Pueblos de África, Asia y América Latina
Pastoral da Juventude Rural (PJR)
Red Nacional Communia
Rede Ecumênica da Juventude (REJU)
União Nacional dos Estudantes (UNE)
União da Juventude Socialista (UJS)
União da Juventude Rebelião (UJR)
Sindicato Unificado dos Petroleiros de São Paulo

Contact: Andy Stepanian, 631.291.3010, andy@fitzgibbonmedia.com

<https://wikileaks.org/59-International-Organizations.html>

AB: 17 juni 2014

Chat med Julian Assange

Kommentar från Julian Assange

Hello Aftonbladet readers this is Julian Assange coming to you live from the Ecuadorean embassy in London. I look forward to answering your questions!

Kommentar från Rolf Johansson

Do you trust the Swedish justice system? Why/why not? Please take your time to explain your thoughts about the dead-lock between you and the Swedish prosecutor.

Julian Assange:

I think this would take a 200 page essay! In my experience the Swedish justice system has good aspects and bad, like most countries. Like everywhere else, geopolitically charged cases with lots of media interest test the justice system. The way the investigation has been handled is strange and did not make me feel secure. Partly this is because I am an Australian, do not speak Swedish and I am used to a different legal tradition, which I accept as a failing in me. But other aspects are concerning to other people also, including in Sweden. For example on Monday 59 organisations submitted complaints about what has happened to the UN. You can read more here: <http://justice4assange.com/>

Kommentar från Fredrik Berman

If you are innocent, why don't you face the charges in court to honor your name?

Julian Assange:

I have not been charged. If I had been charged I would at least have the legal rights of a defendant to protect my reputation. Instead I have been placed in a legal no-man's land. I don't go to Sweden because I would lose my political asylum which is protecting me from the US attempts put my and perhaps some of my staff in prison. You can read more about that here: <http://www.smh.com.au/world...> and the general background of my time in Sweden here: <http://wikileaks.org/IMG/ht...>

Kommentar från Karin

Hi Julian, can you tell us a bit about your life right now? I have read somewhere that you sleep on a mattress on the floor and get "sunlight" from a UV-lamp. Is this true?

Julian Assange:

The situation in the embassy is difficult, however it is not as difficult as the situation faced by one of my alleged sources, Chelsea Manning who has been sentenced to 35 years in prison. It is difficult to convey my situation without sounding whiny! It is not in the Australian tradition to complain about one's situation, but it has been difficult for me and my family. I have been separated from my children for four years. My step father and my grandfather have died while I have been confined here and I wish I could have said goodbye. My eye sight is deteriorating (at least that is my excuse for any spelling errors you see!) and the lack of sunlight and room for exercise causes some difficulties, but it is still better than the prison conditions I might face in the United States, which are very difficult for national security cases ("SAMS" -- look it up).

Kommentar från Mats Sederholm

What is currently, and from your perspective the biggest threat towards freedom of speech and democracy in the world?

Julian Assange:

Carl Bildt? (<- joke) But seriously, the two most significant threats are mass surveillance, which causes people to censor even the conversations they have with their friends and a pernicious type of geopolitical and social conformity which threatens freedom of speech and arises from the growing connectedness of states and major corporate holdings (which then buy up media organizations, for instance).

Kommentar från Guest

Hello Mr Assange. What's your relations with Bradley/Chelsea Manning today?

Julian Assange:

Just 15 minutes before joining you, I was in a meeting with the lawyer for her upcoming appeal, Nancy Hollander. On Sunday Chelsea published a great article in the New York Times on the Iraq war, the media and ISIS. It is well worth reading. See <http://t.co/j2VQr0LPnh> and <http://chelseamanning.org/>

Kommentar från Greger

Do you have any contact with Edward Snowden? What do you think your chances are of living a "normal" life again, you and Snowden?

Julian Assange:

Yes. There is mutual respect. I am a trustee for his legal defense and co-ordinated his asylum. Our Sarah Harrison kept him secure in his path out of Hong Kong and spent 40 days making sure he was OK in Moscow's airport. Just last week I co-launched a new international organisation, the Courage Foundation in Berlin. Pentagon Papers whistleblower, Nobel Peace Prize winner Mairead Maguire and many other great people are involved. Please support it and Mr. Snowden's asylum renewal campaign. See <https://couragefound.org/>. Snowden's most recent comments on WikiLeaks are here: <https://t.co/27YfsDxstQ>

Kommentar från Andreas Fahlcrantz

If you could go back in time, would you reconsider starting the website Wikileaks?

Julian Assange:

Not at all. We all only live once, so it is important to try to do something meaningful with our time. Of course there are many little things a few big things I would have done differently-- that's how one learns.

Kommentar från Jesper

I've read that you're not pleased with the way you were portrayed by Benedict Cumberbatch in The Fifth Estate. Could you elaborate on why you didn't like it?

Julian Assange:

You've heard bad Swedish accents (which non-Swedes seem to think are just fine). Well it is pretty funny when you hear a bad Australian accent and it is also someone pretending to be you. But seriously is interesting to experience a \$60m attack on your reputation. At the time I said it was a "geriatric snooze fest only the Pentagon could love and doomed to box office failure". But it wasn't just me. The film did win a solitary award-- for the biggest Hollywood failure of 2013. I like Cumberbatch's other work. He wrote to me and I told him it was super bad. Here's my letter to him:
<http://wikileaks.org/First-...>

Kommentar från VS

By international law Sweden can't give you any promise not to turn you over to America, since they haven't formally turned in such a request. And either way, Sweden would most certainly not turn you over, since it would be against international law regarding the crimes you're facing in America. So, what actually stops you from going to Sweden and answer the prosecutors questions?

Julian Assange:

I only wish that were true. My lawyers, who are serious people, and who have studied the matter in far greater depth than anyone else, advise me that there is a risk and that the risk is unacceptable. They don't say that Sweden would definitely hand me over to the US — like it has for all other people in Sweden the US has asked for since 2000, but that there is a risk and that the risk is too high. This is both in relation to the law and also because in geopolitical cases sometimes people find "creative" interpretations of the law.

An extreme example is Sweden's five year co-operation with the CIA's extraordinary rendition program that we exposed in late 2010, the renditions in the Agiza and Alzery cases, the Saudi-missile factory case, the FRA's illicit spying on Brussels together with the NSA, which even Britain's GCHQ refused to take part in it was so illegal (revealed by Edward Snowden and Glenn Greenwald in SVT). And there are strange events and statements by, Carl Bildt for example, which leave me feeling less than secure about the position of some elements of the Swedish government (see http://wikileaks.org/IMG/html/Affidavit_of_Julian_Assange.html#efmNOcOWN).

The decision on assurances is a political matter and are often employed in extradition cases. We know from the Independent that Sweden has been in informal talks with the US about my extradition since as early as the 8th of December 2010 —the day after I was detained on the request of the Swedish prosecution authority here in London. It is not unusual for these types of negotiations to occur informally, so that formally, they can be denied. A current Swedish justice official even admitted the informal nature of early stage extradition negotiations between other states and Sweden. The US Department of Justice is deliberately pursuing a variety of charge types that include offenses that are extraditable under the US Sweden extradition treaty. They are not amateurs. They took the same approach with their attempts to extradite Snowden from Hong Kong, tailoring the charges to fit the extradition law. The complex reality is partly detailed here:

<http://justice4assange.com/extraditing-assange.html#POLITICALEXCEPTIONS> — the reference to the Independent article is also there. No sane person would willingly expose themselves to these uncertainties and if they have responsibilities to others they are obligated not to.

<http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article19071839.ab>

Cantwell: "Hög tid att släppa prestigen"

Dödläget mellan Julian Assange och svensk åklagare har nu pågått i två år. Det är hög tid att släppa prestigen, sätta sig på ett plan till London och förhöra honom.

Att Wikileaks grundare skulle ge upp och lämna Ecuadors ambassad, dit han tog sin tillflykt sommaren 2012, förefaller inte vara troligt.

Därtill tycks Assanges rädsla för att Sverige ska lämna över honom till USA vara för stor.

Denne mans envishet har dock fått en värdig utmanare i form av åklagare Marianne Ny, som leder förundersökningen om bland annat misstänkt våldtäkt. Hon har inte vikt en tum från sin uppfattning: Assange ska förhöras i Sverige. Punkt slut.

Detta har lett till ett bisarrt dödläge som inte skulle sakna underhållningsvärde om det inte vore för att minnesbilder bleknar och bevisningen blir svagare då månad läggs till månad utan att någonting sker.

Bevisning som inte ens från början tycks ha varit särskild stark, med tanke på att utredningen har lagts ner och tagits upp igen.

Skäl för åklagarens inställning saknas dock inte. Det är mycket mer praktiskt att förhöra Assange i Stockholm än i London. Det skulle säkert [???] krävas ytterligare förhör för kompletterande frågor.

Att flaxa fram och tillbaka mellan Storbritannien och Sverige för att få ordning på utredningen är inte en önskvärd situation. *[Man kunde väl tillbringa ett par dagar i London om det skulle behövas. En del svenskar har gjort det tidigare. --A.B.]*

Men det finns å andra sidan inga hinder i lagen för att förhöra den misstänkte där hen befinner sig. Sådant har skett tidigare *[många gånger i avsevärt allvarigare fall --A.B.]*.

Ett förhör i London skulle, om inte annat, ge åklagaren en möjlighet att förklara det rättsliga läget. Den hopplösa situationen kompliceras nämligen ytterligare av att Assange har krävt garantier för att inte Sverige skickar honom till USA.

Det går inte att ge honom sådana av det enkla skälet att USA inte har framfört några sådana önskemål. Hur lova avslag på något som ingen har begärt? *[Det har man inte begärt, förstås. Det som krävs att Sverige lovar att inte lämna ut honom om USA skulle begära det — som det tveksutan skulle göra. --A.B.]*

Åklagaren skulle dock kunna förklara för Assange att det av flera skäl är i praktiken omöjligt att gå Washington till mötes om en begäran nu skulle komma:

1. Wikileaksgrundaren befarar att tortyr och i värsta fall dödsstraff väntar i USA. Men i Europakonventionen för de mänskliga rättigheterna, som Sverige har förbundit sig att följa, finns ett uttryckligt förbud mot att lämna ut människor som riskerar att avrättas. *[Sverige har tidigare svikit sina löfte i fall som är mindre angelägna för USA. Dessutom: Cantwell hänvisar till förbudet mot "att avrättas", men skriver ingenting om tortyr, långa fängelsestraff, m.m.]*

2. Det skulle bli mindre trassligt för USA att vända sig direkt till London med sin förfrågan. *[Inte i nuläget, då Assange har beviljats asyl av Ecuador. --A.B.]* Då Assange ska skickas till Sverige i enlighet med den europeiska arresteringsordern kan inte Stockholm skicka honom vidare med mindre än att Storbritannien ger sitt godkännande. Då måste alltså två länder plötsligt säga OK *[Finns det någon som tror att U.K. skulle vägra? -A.B.]*.

3. Det finns ett uttryckligt förbud mot att föra över människor som misstänks för militära eller politiska brott i utlämningsavtalet mellan Sverige och USA. Svenska UD har till exempel vägrat att gå med på krav om att lämna över Vietnamdesertörer. *[Detta var för länge sedan, under Palmetiden, och lagen har ändrats sedan dess. I alla fall kan regeringen nog alltid hitta på en "förklaring" till varför en eventuell utlämning inte handlar om "militära eller politiska brott". Att tro annat är att blunda för hur Assange redan har behandlats av svenska myndigheter. --A.B.]*

Marianne Ny, byt strategi. Förhör Julian Assange i London. För att komma vidare. För att två unga kvinnor ännu väntar på att få sin sak prövad.

<http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/kolumnister/oisincantwell/article19069747.ab>

AB: 2014-06-17

Åklagare vägrar svara på frågor om Assange

I snart fyra år har Julian Assange varit häktad i sin frånvaro.

Nu väljer 59 utländska organisationer att formellt kritisera Sverige inför FN.

Men överåklagaren Marianne Ny vägrar att svara på några frågor om utredningen.

Sedan våldtäktsutredningen mot Julian Assange gick i stå när han tog skydd på Equadors ambassad i Stockholm har åklagare Marianne Ny varit sparsam med kommentarer, med hänvisning till att ärendet handläggs i London.

– När vi bestämde oss för att hantera det på det sättet så beslutades det att vi inte gör enskilda intervjuer om fallet. I det fall det händer något nytt i fallet kommer vi att kalla till en presskonferens.

Men skulle du säga att utredningen mot honom fortgår?

– Det där är sådant som du kan läsa på åklagarmyndighetens hemsida. I övrigt har jag inga kommentarer.

På hemsidan som Marianne Ny hänvisar till finns det en kronologi över Julian Assanges fall. **Den uppdaterades senast i augusti 2012**, alltså för snart två år sedan när Assange beviljades politisk asyl i Ecuador.

På söndag kommer 59 olika organisationer med inriktning på mänskliga rättigheter, rättsväsende och juridik att lämna in rapporter där de kritiserar det svenska rättsväsendet, med anledning av behandlingen av Assange.

Bland annat kritiserar organisationen Sverige för att ha orättfärdigt långa häktningstider innan åtal väcks och har lämnat in rapporter inför FN:s allmänna ländergranskning (UPR) som är planerad för 2015. Då ska Sverige granskas för hur vi upprätthåller mänskliga rättigheter.

• Erik Wiman o. Victor Stenquist

<http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article19069748.ab>

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Lift Assange out of legal limbo

*Michael Ratner
USA Today
June 17, 2014*

A whistle-blower living in exile in Russia. A publisher seeking the asylum he has already been granted while his sources are imprisoned. This isn't the cast of a summer blockbuster. It's a perfect storm of real-life cases that make it clear that constitutional guarantees of a free press and government accountability are rhetorical devices, not political realities.

The whistle-blower is Edward Snowden. This month marks the first anniversary of his disclosures of massive National Security Agency surveillance. The publisher is Julian Assange. Thursday marks two years since he sought refuge in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London.

Meanwhile, two of Assange's sources, Chelsea Manning (formerly known as Bradley Manning) and Jeremy Hammond, remain in prison for providing WikiLeaks with confidential documents. Manning, who exposed atrocities from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, including evidence of U.S. war crimes, was sentenced to 35 years. Hammond is serving a 10-year sentence for hacking into the e-mails of a private intelligence company.

Harassment, targeting and prosecution of whistle-blowers, journalists and publishers have become a dangerous new normal — one we should refuse to accept, especially in a time when governments are becoming more powerful and less accountable. It's time to end this assault, starting with granting Snowden amnesty and withdrawing the threat of U.S. criminal prosecution of Assange.

In the two years Assange has spent cloistered in the Ecuadorian Embassy, the British extradition law under which he was ordered to Sweden to face allegations of sexual misconduct has changed. With this change, the allegations that originally secured Assange's extradition order to Sweden would no longer suffice. Now, a decision to charge Assange with a crime is necessary for extradition, but Sweden has never made that decision. (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/section/156/enacted>)

That hasn't kept Britain from ignoring Assange's right to asylum by clinging to the now-invalid law. *[The law cannot be applied retroactively. --A.B.]* Instead, British police and security forces keep watch on the entrance, windows and surroundings of the Ecuadorian Embassy around the clock, which has cost \$10 million.

Meanwhile, the U.S. continues to investigate Assange and might have secretly charged him without his knowledge. A grand jury empaneled in 2010 remains open, keeping Assange in legal limbo. Under such conditions, leaving the embassy would mean a stop in Sweden before Assange is given a one-way ticket to a U.S. prison to likely face inhumane treatment and a sentence similar to Manning's, including extended solitary confinement.

Similar harsh treatment and excessive punishments haven't applied to the people in government who perpetrated the crimes exposed by these whistle-blowers and published by WikiLeaks. In fact, people such as national intelligence director James Clapper, who lied under oath to Congress, have avoided consequences altogether.

It's no wonder publishers and whistle-blowers such as Assange and Snowden live in isolation and exile abroad. The United States and other governments have created a dangerous system of outdated espionage laws and shadow governments, severely restricting options for publishing classified documents and whistle-blowing free from outsized punishment.

It isn't a matter of "manning up," as Secretary of State John Kerry recommended Snowden do, when a superpower that regularly uses its authority to erode any sense of privacy calls you home to face punishment for what is a public service. Damning public comments by U.S. politicians have made fair trials for Assange and Snowden impossible. Submitting to this unbalanced system constitutes an almost-guaranteed threat to their safety.

It's astonishing that Assange is in this situation at all. He and WikiLeaks have done remarkable work, uncovering secret governments, exposing war crimes and diplomatic chicanery, and opening up a new world — one that Snowden stepped into. WikiLeaks then worked to ensure Snowden would not face imprisonment in the U.S., helping him leave Hong Kong and attempt to seek asylum.

Britain should respect Assange's asylum and allow him to leave the embassy unmolested. Whistle-blowers such as Snowden and Manning should not face the impossible decision between living in exile and spending decades imprisoned. We deserve a justice system that holds governments accountable and considers the public service done by whistle-blowers and the people who publish their information.

• *Michael Ratner, president emeritus of the Center for Constitutional Rights, is the U.S. attorney for Julian Assange and WikiLeaks.*

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2014/06/17/assange-wikileaks-espionage-ecuador-edward-snowden-column/10707289/>

Julian Assange to file fresh challenge in effort to escape two-year legal limbo

Two years after WikiLeaks founder took refuge in Ecuadorian embassy, lawyers poised to challenge Swedish detention order

*Ed Pilkington
The Guardian
18 June 2014*

Lawyers for Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder who on Thursday marks his second anniversary holed up in the Ecuadorian embassy in London, are preparing to file a challenge to his detention order in Sweden in a move that could impact the state of legal limbo in which he is trapped.

Jennifer Robinson, Assange's UK-based lawyer, told reporters that the legal challenge, which is due to be lodged with Swedish courts next Tuesday, was based on "new information gathered in Sweden". She declined to give any further details until the filing had been made.

News of the challenge was the first indication in months of any possible way out of the legal deadlock in which Assange has fallen since he took refuge in the Ecuadorian embassy on 19 June 2012. Since then, the embassy has been ringed with British police 24 hours a day, at a cost of more than £6m (\$10m) to the taxpayer, as the UK government seeks to enforce an extradition order to send the WikiLeaks publisher to Sweden.

The Swedish detention order that Assange is now challenging was issued in November 2010. It requires the founder of the free information website to be arrested and extradited to Sweden to face questioning over the alleged sexual assault of two women in that country.

Assange and his legal advisers have always protested that were he to cooperate with the British and Swedish authorities, he would expose himself to an ongoing criminal investigation by the US Department of Justice. The DoJ is known to have opened a grand jury investigation into WikiLeaks' publication of a vast tranche of secret official documents leaked by the US army private Chelsea Manning (Bradley Manning at the time).

In a telephone press conference on the eve of the second anniversary of his asylum in the embassy, Assange called on the US attorney general, Eric Holder, to put a stop to the investigation. "It is against the stated principles of the US and I believe the values supported by its people to have a four-year criminal investigation against a publisher. The on-going existence of that investigation produces a chilling effect not just to internet-based publishers but to all publishers," he said.

WikiLeaks caused a global sensation in 2010 when it began publishing, in collaboration with international news organisations including the Guardian, hundreds of thousands of confidential US files including diplomatic cables, warlogs from Iraq and Afghanistan, and a video of a US apache helicopter attack in Baghdad. The US government convened a grand jury to investigate WikiLeaks' role in the leak, although it has been reported that charges have not been filed.

Since his retreat into the Ecuadorian embassy, Assange has also played a key role in the fleeing of Edward Snowden, the former National Security Agency contractor, from Hong Kong to Russia. WikiLeaks staffers last year helped Snowden evade arrest and secure temporary asylum in Moscow.

Assange declined to say whether he has been in personal contact with Snowden. He also declined to say whether WikiLeaks has had access to the mountain of secret documents from the NSA and its British counterpart, GCHQ, leaked by Snowden. The WikiLeaks founder said that were next week's challenge successful in lifting the Swedish detention order, he would still face "the larger problem of the US and its pending prosecution and perhaps extradition warrant" as well as any possible arrest by the UK government for his role in the Snowden affair.

But he said it would be an important first step as it would remove "an extremely distracting political attack which has been to try and draw attention away from the largest criminal investigation ever by the department of justice into a publisher and me personally".

Despite attempts by Assange and his lawyers to focus attention on the US government's investigation into WikiLeaks, he continues to face public criticism for his refusal to subject himself to questioning in Sweden on the sexual assault allegations. A reporter from the UK broadcaster Channel Four News accused Assange of failing to abide by his own principles of global transparency, to which he replied: "Oh here we go, Channel 4 News, this is the state of the media in the UK."

Assange gave few details about how he was coping personally with living in cramped conditions in the embassy. He said he was watching the World Cup, supporting the Ecuador team, though television reception in the embassy was poor. "Perhaps it makes it more difficult for the bugs to transmit through the walls as well," he quipped.

Asked how he was coping on the second anniversary, he deflected the question by saying there were other people in more difficult circumstances. He pointed to Manning who has been sentenced to 35 years in military custody for leaking the WikiLeaks material and is currently being held in Fort Leavenworth in Kansas.

Assange repeatedly referred to the soldier as "he" even though Chelsea Manning has legally changed her name and now requests that she is addressed as a woman.

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IPI urges U.S. government to end Wikileaks investigation

Cites potential 'chilling effect' on newsgathering process

Olivia Harris

International Press Institute

June 18, 2014

VIENNA, – The International Press Institute (IPI) today called on the U.S. Justice Department to bring to a close its criminal investigation into Wikileaks over the website's role in the publication of leaked Defense and State Department documents in 2010.

Authorities have acknowledged that a criminal investigation targeting Wikileaks and its founder, Julian Assange, remains ongoing four years after the documents were published and nearly one year after the soldier who leaked the documents was convicted for doing so.

“The continuation of this investigation—viewed in light of the Obama administration’s prosecution of at least seven American whistleblowers under the Espionage Act, a pattern of conduct many have labelled a ‘war on whistleblowers’—has an extremely harmful effect on the newsgathering process, particularly the willingness of sources to speak out about abuses and the ability of journalists to interact with those sources,” IPI Executive Director Alison Bethel McKenzie said.

“Criminal prosecution of WikiLeaks or Assange potentially chills not only the fundamental press freedom rights of journalists and their sources, but the right of all Americans to share and receive information—a fundamental prerequisite for democracy. We urge the U.S. government to drop any criminal investigation into activities that assisted whistleblowers in exposing wrongdoing, facilitated government transparency or advanced citizens’ right to receive information in the public interest.”

Supporters of Assange are expected tomorrow to mark the second anniversary of his flight to the Ecuadorian embassy in London to avoid extradition. Assange received political asylum from Ecuador’s government in 2012 and he has remained in the embassy since entering it on June 19, 2012.

Prosecutors in Sweden want to question Assange about sexual assault accusations levelled against him there. Assange rejects the allegations as part of a smear campaign. He has refused to travel to Sweden, maintaining that he fears authorities there will allow him to be extradited to the United States.

<http://www.freemedia.at/special-pages/newssview/article/ipi-urges-us-government-to-end-wikileaks-investigation.html>

Assange completes second year in Ecuadorean embassy in London

Reporters without Borders
19 June 2014.

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has just completed his second year under permanent British police surveillance in the Ecuadorean embassy in London, where he sought refuge to avoid extradition to the United States via Sweden and a possible death sentence there.

There has been no sign of any resolution of the legal and diplomatic tangle surrounding Assange in the past two years. Shortly after WikiLeaks posted confidential US documents in 2010, the Swedish judicial authorities began investigating allegations against Assange of sexual misconduct.

Assange, who was in London at the time, fled to the Ecuadorean embassy after a British court approved Sweden’s extradition request. He then asked Ecuador to give him political asylum. His request was granted two months later.

Although still the subject of an extradition order to Sweden, what Assange really fears is extradition to the United States, where the Department of Justice and the FBI began investigating him in 2010. The investigation is secret because it concerns allegedly criminal activities involving national security but, under US Code, Assange could be facing the death penalty.

“As the First Amendment to the US Constitution guarantees the right to gather and publish information, Julian Assange should not be the subject of an investigation,” Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Christophe Deloire said. “The Obama administration has launched a war against WikiLeaks although the information it has published is of public interest.”

If it wanted to, Sweden could rule out any possibility of Assange being extradited to the United States. Its government has the right of veto over extraditions and extraditing Assange would anyway be illegal as extradition on political or military ground is excluded by article V.5 of the extradition agreement between Sweden and the US.

Furthermore, the precedent set by the 1989 ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in *Soering v. United Kingdom* prevents Sweden or the UK from extraditing anyone to a country where they might face the death penalty.

The Swedish government must undertake to respect the law and not approve any US extradition request.

<http://en.rsfs.org/united-kingdom-assange-completes-second-year-in-19-06-2014,46479.html>

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Julian Assange gives life advice on Reddit: How not to ‘feel helpless, overwhelmed and small’

The Wikileaks founder led a live question and answer session on the social media site

*Antonia Molloy
The Independent
19 June 2014*

Wikileaks founder Julian Assange has held a live question and answer session on Reddit, inviting users to “ask me anything” — and delivered a few pearls of wisdom in the proceeds.

The whistleblower, who has lived in Ecuadorian Embassy in London since 2012, logged on to the social media site on Thursday afternoon and said: “I am Julian Assange publisher of Wikileaks. Ask me anything.”

And Assange found himself probed on everything from the World Cup to changing the world.

User madazzahatter asked: “What advice would you give to ordinary citizens in regards to how they can have an impact? Many of us feel helpless, overwhelmed and small. We are screaming for change, but what steps can we take?”

To which Assange replied: "When we are aware of the world and the scale of its inhumanity and stupidity we feel small. It very hard to 'think globally' and 'act locally', because by thinking globally we become overwhelmed with the scale of the problems to be solved.

"However the internet permits many people to act globally in a way they couldn't before. WikiLeaks is a realisation of this tension. By releasing materials on many parts of the world, we empower others to think and act.

"What can ordinary people do? Support and promote projects that are acting at scale. WikiLeaks is my realisation of this tension, but there are a flood of others starting. The clash between diversity and global uniformity which has been created by wiring the world to itself is now in play. You are the troops."

Asked about fellow whistleblower Edward Snowden, the former US NSA contractor who disclosed thousands of classified documents, Assange said he had carried out an "intelligent and heroic act".

And he spoke about his [??] newly launched Courage Foundation, which aims to raise legal aid for the likes of Snowden and himself.

Despite being holed up in order to avoid extradition to Sweden, Assange said that being at the "centre of a pitched, prolonged diplomatic standoff" meant he is never bored; and he receives visitors almost every day, while maintaining the Wikileaks organisation.

And Assange reiterated his defence for founding Wikileaks: "Secrecy is, yes, sometimes necessary, but healthy democracies understand that secrecy is the exception, not the rule," he said.

"Our publications have never jeopardized the "national security" of any nation. When secrecy is a cover-all for endemic official criminality, I suggest to you, it bespeaks a strange set of priorities to ask journalists to justify their own existence."

Veterans for Peace UK Visit Swedish Embassy Over Grave Concerns For Assange

19 June 2014

EMBASSY OF SWEDEN
11 MONTAGU PLACE
LONDON

A delegation from Veterans For Peace UK are visiting the Swedish embassy today to voice grave concerns arising from the ongoing situation of Wikileaks Editor Mr Julian Assange.

Veterans For Peace UK recognise Wikileaks as an organisation that reveals to the public the true nature of war. Mr Assange has published the Afghan War Diaries, The Iraq War Logs, Cablegate and The Collateral Murder video. As a result of his fearless action he faces persecution from the United States of America.

To protect Mr Assange from political persecution and human rights violations Ecuador has granted Mr Assange political asylum. He has now been inside the Ecuadorian embassy in London for two years. Mr Assange cannot leave the embassy at present because he will be arrested by the Metropolitan Police and extradited to Sweden. Swedish authorities have refused to guarantee not to extradite Mr Assange to the United States of America.

We want to know why it is that the relevant Swedish authority refuses to guarantee not to extradite Mr Assange to the the United States of America where he would face political persecution and human rights violations.

We think it is unacceptable that the British public are picking up the bill to surround the Ecuadorian Embassy with police officers in order to facilitate the Swedish extradition request. It has been estimated that the cost of this operation is over £6 million and rising daily.

We propose that the relevant Swedish authority guarantees not to extradite Mr Assange to the United States of America or that the Swedish extradition demand is dropped.

In the meantime it is only right that Sweden covers the full cost of the police operation outside the Embassy of Ecuador.

We wait for a response...

Ben Griffin
Coordinator, VFP UK

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2014-06-19

A new website was created, freeassangenow.org, to inform people of Assange's situation and offer ways to support him including signing a petition and uploading support photos.

<http://freeassangenow.org>

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2014-06-19

WikiLeaks legal adviser Jen Robinson appeared on ABC News to discuss the 2-year mark.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHcm3VeJJ0A>

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2014-06-19

Director and author John Pilger spoke outside the Ecuadorian Embassy about the US threat to Assange and why the UK should respect his asylum.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wncKZxDND68>

Ricardo Patino's speech on Assange, 19 June 2014

Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, Ricardo Patiño

(Google Translation. Original Spanish document: www.scribd.com/doc/230511535/Discurso-Del-Ministro-de-Relaciones-Exteriores-y-Movilidad-Humana-Quito-19-de-junio-del-2014)

On June 19, 2012, exactly two years ago, journalist Julian Assange appeared at the Embassy of Ecuador in London, and requested the protection of the Ecuadorian State. He stated then he was being politically persecuted as a result of exercising his right to inform the public about relevant facts relating to serious violations of human rights in Iraq and elsewhere in the world.

Through a detailed case study, it was determined that there was a well-founded fear of persecution on political activities as a journalist. Ecuador is a signatory to several international instruments binding, among which include the Status of Refugees of 1951 and its 1967 Protocol, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1967, the Convention against Torture 1984, as well as the American Convention on Human Rights of 1969 and the Caracas Convention on Diplomatic Asylum 1954. This commits our country to defending the human rights of persons; to protecting them against the policy are subject to prosecution, regardless of power that have trackers. It is not an option; is a must. But it is also a right which we as a country, according to all international instruments accepted by the countries.

On the basis of our principles and our responsibilities to international law, loyal to the tradition proudly protective of the right of asylum in our country and in our Latin America, the Ecuadorian government made the sovereign — and legal — decision to grant political asylum to citizen Julian Assange. Consequently, we request the pass, which should allow Assange to travel safely Ecuador.

On the other hand, from the beginning, the government wanted to be too faithful to the spirit of judicial cooperation between countries, so it has kept the door open for prosecutors in Sweden, so you can continue the preliminary investigation, interviewing Assange ; or through video conference, either through physical presence in our Swedish Embassy officials. The ability to collaborate with the Swedish authorities would extend Ecuadorian territory, if necessary. The interview below is perfectly under consideration, both the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters of 2000, and the Act itself Swedish Criminal Procedure, which opens this option, provided that the other state permits. In fact, Swedish authorities recently traveled to Poland to be an investigation into the death of 69 cows in the Swedish town of Stjärnhov.

Swedish legislation, like the rest of the laws of the world respectful of human rights, establishing a universal principle, which is that of effective judicial protection. This principle, enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of the United Nations, is clearly recognized in the same Swedish Criminal Procedure Act, which establishes the obligation of the prosecution to instruct trial without undue delay. Thus, it seeks to ensure access to justice plaintiffs, but was also designed to prevent people stay too long in a state of uncertainty about their fate. And, in case you are in custodial situation of freedom, to ensure that such deprivation is no longer than necessary. Two years later, the preliminary investigation is stalled, but the Office of Sweden has taken any of the mechanisms that, under the law, you have at your disposal for further investigation.

Meanwhile, the UK Government has reiterated its intention to comply with the commitments under the European arrest warrant, issued against Assange. He has also insisted that his country is not a signatory to the Caracas Convention on Diplomatic Asylum, which, however, it is obliged Ecuador.

Given this apparent legal impasse, our Government has sought from the outset, a solution compatible with the interests of the people involved, and consistent with legal rules and principles of international law concerning all countries involved.

First, the Government of Ecuador understands that the decision to give Mr. Assange the Kingdom of Sweden is part of the concept of judicial cooperation in criminal matters between the Member governing countries of the European Union. But the fact remains that paragraph 12 of the Framework Decision of the European Council of 13 June 2002 on the European arrest warrant and the surrender procedures between Member States, states that "This Framework Decision respects the rights fundamental and observes the principles recognized by Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union and reflected in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, "adding that the application is" the surrender of a person against whom it has issued an order European arrest warrant if there are objective reasons to believe that the arrest warrant has been issued for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing a person on account of political opinion or that that person's position may be prejudiced for any of these reasons. " From this emerge two important legal implications:

Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 states that "everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy it." After two years of confinement of Julian Assange in a small embassy in central London, it is ironic that it was the UK that suggested the word "enjoy" in historical debates that led to the final draft of the Declaration of 48.

"Not only asylum," then said the British delegates. "Enjoy the asylum they" insisted that put in the text. How angry would those British representatives today if they knew what their country is doing with Julian Assange.

The passage of time has not only exacerbated the lack of access to effective judicial protection, to the extent that — as I said before, each increasing procrastination is a case that keeps a person without freedom of movement. Failure to leave the Embassy deteriorating quality of life and physical health of Julian Assange. You imagine, for a moment, they are confined for a week at a closed space with no chance of being outdoors. Now, multiply that time by a hundred, and imagine the anguish of the inmate, his family, and their children. As a consequence, there is a responsibility to the infringement of the right of the journalist to enjoy freedom, and an adequate standard of living, as stipulated in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ("Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for himself and his family, health and wellness... medical care and necessary social services"). Moreover; of complex care needed in a serious situation, Assange could end up paying with life the service rendered to humanity; the audacity to open the eyes of all of us, to a reality — to a crime — which was hidden for so long.

Now, I ask you to pay attention to this information. Look you; in 1998, USA, UK, Sweden and Ecuador agreed to fully sponsor a statement to which today we are forced to appeal. Because the statements are not just for photos, or for easy applause; statements are agreed to comply. Let's hear this Declaration on Human Rights

Defenders, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Your article 9, 3, letter a) states that everyone has the right to "complain about the policies and actions of individual officials and governmental bodies with regard to violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms ...". Similarly, Article 12.3 states that "Everyone has the right to be protected effectively under national law in reacting against or opposing, through peaceful means, activities and acts, including those by omission, attributable to States that result in violations of the rights human rights and fundamental freedoms."

I call upon the States involved in this case; its leading authorities, that we act according to multiple binding instruments which I have quoted above, and of which we are part. Specifically, I call that address the universal principles that inspired them. I also call on the authorities to defend the UN Human Rights Council (Geneva, rapporteurs, etc.), To all human rights organizations, and the public in general to defend the rights of Julian Assange. In particular their right to disseminate relevant information to the public when human rights are violated, as a journalist, an advocate for human rights and citizenship, as well as their freedom.

I also address the major media. In particular, the daily El Pais, Le Monde, The Guardian, Der Spiegel and The New York Times, who took advantage of the unique information that Wikileaks organization provided them for publication, and get business revenues. But mostly, I mean the deafening silence which we have witnessed by the journalist community, with few exceptions. You, journalists who claim, with reason, the social function of journalism; underlining the importance of precisely public attacks and violations of human rights as a means to safeguard; you who often cite Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold not their opinions, receive and impart information and ideas and impart, regardless of frontiers, by any means of expression. "

You, journalists, political persecution witness today against a militant in the cause of freedom of information; and they know it. They also know that this opens the way to that in the future, retaliation against those who make public these violations multiply. In your case, no warning of this avoidable future involves his companions betray those who suffered repression and death as a result of its commitment to the human species. You can not afford it - all of us, we can not allow, that these sacrifices have been in vain.

http://twitlonger.com/show/n_1s26qrb

The Six and a Half Million Pound Man

Hazel Press

June 19, 2014

On 19 June 2014 Julian Assange will have spent two years living within Ecuador's London embassy. The summer of 2012 witnessed extraordinary scenes with the Metropolitan Police (Met) surrounding the embassy, issuing a "surrender notice" and carrying orders to arrest Assange "under all circumstances". The UK government considered violating the Vienna Convention in order to "forcefully enter the Ecuadorian embassy" and Ecuador granted Assange diplomatic asylum.

While the threat to raid the embassy receded, the police presence remained. During the aborted raid (15 August) one hundred officers were deployed. The next day numbers fell to fifty, falling again to twenty the following day and then remaining at eight officers present at any one time for the next two years. In October 2012, London's mayor Boris Johnson stated that the cost of police operations between 20 June and 10 September had reached £905,000. According to a FOI request (PDF link) the cost from 19 June 2012 to 31 January 2013 was £2.9 million, or £12,832 per day.

A recent Daily Mail FOI request has revealed the long-term cost of the siege. It seems that by 19 June 2014 it will have reached £6,350,000 — or, to put it another way, it is costing UK taxpayers £3,175,000 per year.

There is some confusion as to precisely what this money is being spent on. Four teams of eight police officers, plus logistics, waiting to arrest Assange around-the-clock for two years should not cost more than £3,234,176 — which leaves £3,115,824 unaccounted for. That the Met has refused to release a “break down” of the policing costs “on national security grounds” adds to concerns that this money is being used to surveil the embassy.

With half of the stated police operations figure remaining unexplained and apparently related to “national security”, one is left wondering what the costs of other (British) interested parties are, specifically the MoD, MI5, MI6 and GCHQ, and what they make of the whole affair. If the U.S. spy agencies diverted their 2012 “black budget” towards an “emergency response” to WikiLeaks, is it more than likely that UK agencies followed suit.

There are other costs to the UK stemming from Sweden's unusual handling of the Assange case. Although the Crown Prosecution Service is yet to provide a final figure for the legal costs of the extradition bid, such cases generally cost British taxpayers £125,000. According to the European Parliament, a European Arrest Warrant (EAW) costs British taxpayers £20,170 to process. The Serco monitoring fees incurred during the 551 days Assange spent under house arrest comes to £7,240 and the nine days Assange spent in jail cost £900. Adding these figures to the policing expenses brings the total cost of the Swedish prosecution authority's preference to extradite rather than question Assange in the UK to £6,503,310.

Sweden's extradition decision and ongoing refusal to question Assange in the UK, may well be based political concerns that are unrelated to the plight of a case that has already been dismissed once. Either way, the impasse has already dearly affected the people of the UK.

It has cost the British public 23,360 hours of “frontline policing” by diverting officers from their usual duties. How many crimes are solved or prevented over the course of 23,360 hours? How many Londoners have been harmed by the Swedish prosecution authority's intransigence?

Not only are the resources of London's police force being wasted at the embassy, but the cost of maintaining them there has potentially reduced police numbers annually by 110 officers. At a time of critical shortages of personnel, this sort of cavalier disregard for the safety of Londoners is criminal.

Since the 2008 financial crisis, every public service in the UK has been cut back due to austerity. Rather than paying for the embassy siege, taxpayers could have contributed to the NHS receiving the resources needed for 4,536 days of intensive care coverage, or 120 new nurses, either of which would have reduced shortages. The Borough of Kensington and Chelsea could have been provided with 451 extra secondary school places, or employed 114 newly qualified teachers, either would have reduced shortages.

At roughly the same time that Marianne Ny (the Swedish prosecutor responsible for the Assange case), began to refuse to question Assange under the EU Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA), Swedish police travelled to Serbia to question Alexander Eriksson about the Västberga helicopter robbery, in 2011 police travelled to Poland to question a suspect about 69 missing cows and in 2012 they travelled to Serbia to question a man about the Uppsala murder case.

The Swedish Code of Judicial Procedure (Section 4, Chapter 23) states: “The investigation should be conducted so that no person is unnecessarily exposed to suspicion, or put to unnecessary cost or inconvenience. The preliminary investigation shall be conducted as expeditiously as possible. When there is no longer reason for pursuing the investigation, it shall be discontinued.”

Not only has Assange clearly been “put to unnecessary cost or inconvenience”, but the UK has also been adversely affected. Equally clearly, the investigation has not been “conducted as expeditiously as possible”.

The most likely explanation for breaking the Procedural Code is that using an EAW to extradite and question avoids a UK judicial authority reviewing Ny's evidence and judging (to UK standards) whether there are “reasonable grounds” for questioning, something that would happen under an MLA application. If a request to question under MLA was rejected by the UK, the case against Assange would likely collapse. Further, if the case against Assange is so weak that it cannot be tested in the UK, why is it being pursued in the face of such costs to the UK?

After cycling through a variety of excuses— during which time Sweden made about fifty MLA requests to the UK— Ny stated (February 2011) that she could not use MLA because “it is necessary to interrogate Assange in person”. However, as we have seen, this is not only covered by MLA (Section 4: Foreign Officers in the UK], it is also regularly used by Swedish prosecutors. Ny then stated (March 2014) that: “there is a need, during interviews with Mr Assange, to be able to present, and question him about, the evidence that has emerged in the investigation to date..” But besides testimony, which has been leaked to the public, the only other evidence is a torn condom handed to police by one of the complainants (12 days after the alleged incident) and found to contain absolutely no traces of chromosomal DNA. The forensic report on this condom was also leaked. All of this evidence is digital and there is no reason why Ny cannot present it during questioning.

Three months later Ny changed her reasoning yet again, stating: “Clearly any follow-up enquiries can be swiftly conducted and further questioning resumed afterwards.”

Ny continues: “A case of this type would normally be expected to require further lines of inquiry e.g. the questioning of others involved. These new lines of inquiry would normally be performed in conjunction and simultaneously with the questioning of the suspect.”

However, the Swedish Code of Judicial Procedure (Section 2, Chapter 21) clearly states that it is for a court to decide “when the suspect is bound to appear in person”. Once again, Ny's reasoning exposes an abuse of process. Furthermore, before a court can reach a decision on attendance a “notice of prosecution” must be issued; and there are only fourteen months remaining before the notice period expires and the case must be dismissed. Recently, the UK extradition law has been reformed to require “a decision to charge” to be made before extradition proceedings can begin. If it were applied retroactively, Ny's EAW would be invalidated. The pressure is growing on Sweden's prosecution authority to either question, charge or dismiss the case.

Ecuador's UK Ambassador Juan Falconi has stated that: “it's as simple as the Sweden prosecutor questioning [Assange] at the embassy. Anyone from Sweden would be very welcome.”

It is a catch-22: if Ny accepts Ecuador's invitation, as well as the danger of UK rejection, there is the possibility that the case will be dismissed for a second time— after all, it appears that progression is very much dependent on what Assange has to say— or Ny would have charged him in absentia years ago, and it is highly unlikely that Assange's answers will assist Ny— at which point the inevitable investigations into the conduct of the Swedish police and prosecution will begin.

Marianne Ny has no reason not to question Assange and every reason never to question him. Of course, if Assange were extradited and held incommunicado in a Swedish remand prison before facing a trial held behind closed doors, the unwelcome possibilities mentioned above might be avoided. Especially if, regardless of the outcome of any part of the process, its end begins the delivery of Assange to U.S. authorities. Something that would certainly please some sections of Sweden and America's polity.

The only other extradition case to cost the UK taxpayers six millions pounds was that of Augusto Pinochet (October 1998). Inverse to the Assange case, the UK government paid for Pinochet's police protection and legal fees (despite the fact that Pinochet was worth twenty-one million dollars). After the House of Lords (the UK's highest court at the time) ruled that Pinochet could be extradited to Spain, the UK government's (reciprocal) assistance then extended to allowing him to return to Chile on “compassionate” grounds. Nevertheless, important precedents were set.

The cases of Assange and Pinochet share something else in common that is quite revealing: the international arrest warrant (based on charges of genocide, murder, torture, and hostage taking) for Pinochet was issued by Baltasar Garzón; and Garzón is leading Assange's legal team. And once again, the UK government will not be assisting him, but doing quite the opposite.

While new legal proceedings aimed at removing Sweden's extradition warrant are due to begin on 24 June, the danger of extradition to the U.S. from the UK is currently too high for Assange to safely leave the embassy. And yet, there are significant advantages in challenging a U.S. extradition from London. It is one of the world's legal and human rights hubs and has a notoriously fickle press that politicians loathe getting on the wrong side of. The UK public's patience with the U.S. and the UK's inept politicking has become thin enough to be noticed. And as everyone knows, the one thing governments fear most is an audience deciding to participate. Amidst the UK's atmosphere of discontent it may become prudent not to rattle the cages from the outside.

Time is on Assange's side. Over the last two years, the instruments needed to overcome or deter a U.S. extradition bid have been gathered together. An increasing circle of political allies stands ready to enter that fray, whilst continuing to apply pressure to the distortions of law and process that are often employed against Assange and WikiLeaks. Recently, the National Lawyers Guild and 58 other NGOs submitted a report to the UNHCR's Universal Periodic Review detailing Sweden's human rights and procedural violations in the Assange case.

During this period, the frame in which WikiLeaks is perceived has shifted. It is no longer a matter of the shock of the new being kicked off the stage into a U.S. prison. What was once so startling has since (to varying degrees) been widely adopted. The value of WikiLeaks has been recognised and it is hard to imagine a world without it. At the same time, the revelations of Edward Snowden have focused attention on the imbalance between the interests of the state and the interests of the people. The world is changing and every counterpoint is needed to keep our future secure.

To that end, the work of WikiLeaks continues.

<http://hazelpress.org/six-pounds-one-minute/4585062453>

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Nordic News Network
19 June 2014

Assange: Still Under Siege in London

Today marks the second anniversary of Julian Assange's forced confinement in the London embassy of Ecuador, which has granted him asylum for an indefinite period. Under heavy pressure from the United States, but claiming to be motivated by its legal obligations to Sweden, the U.K. government has refused to grant safe passage of Assange from the embassy to the country of Ecuador.

There is strong reason to believe that Sweden has also been acting on behalf of the United States in this matter, and would subsequently extradite Assange to the United States where he is threatened with severe punishment for committing acts of journalism. That belief appears to have been confirmed by the behaviour of Swedish officials during the past year....

Article in PDF format (ca. 450 KB):
<http://www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/siege.pdf>



Julian Assange: Two Years in Exile

The WikiLeaks chief faces a daily battle inside his embassy room

Louise Talbot June

WHO Magazine (Australia)

June 20, 2014

Two years after he checked into the Ecuadorian embassy in London on June 19, 2012, Julian Assange can no longer imagine what the outdoors feels like. As he continues his work as the head of WikiLeaks, Assange, 42, undergoes periods of torment living in a single room in the embassy with police watching the Knightsbridge building 24 hours a day.

"After two years in here, my spatial awareness is changing," says Assange, who sought refuge in the embassy to avoid an extradition order to Sweden, where he is wanted over sexual-misconduct allegations. "I grew up in the country, but even so, it's hard to guess what it would feel like to be in a big open space now."

Inhabiting a single room for most of the time, Assange keeps fit by boxing. "I had a great spar with [Australian] boxing champion Solomon Egberime, and Father Dave Smith [a Sydney Anglican priest and boxer], who visited me recently." But his stay at the embassy, which is across the road from Harrods department store, often takes a toll on the staff. "There have been enormous pressures on them with the building having been surrounded by British police for over two years. The UK is spending a lot of money on a police surveillance team, which they admit now has cost the taxpayer over £6 million [\$10.8 million]."

Meanwhile, his celebrity support base grows. "There's a range of good people who are not afraid to help, from [rapper] M.I.A. to Maggie Gyllenhaal and [her actor husband] Peter Sarsgaard to Graham Nash from Crosby, Stills and Nash," says Assange. "Every day I'm surprised to see where I have allies."

<https://au.lifestyle.yahoo.com/who/latest-news/a/24283389/julian-assange-two-years-in-exile/>

Interview with Wikileaks founder Julian Assange

"Ecuador can be proud of helping to save Snowden"

The Australian journalist highlights the work of the consul in London to help the ex-US intelligence whistleblower. Assange's fate lies in the hands of Britain and Sweden.

Orlando Pérez
El Telegrafo (Ecuador)
20 June 2014

Despite being 2 years holed up in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, Julian Assange's position and beliefs haven't changed. So revealed he in an interview with EL TELEGRAFO.

How does the legal process develop? Is it stuck? How do you foresee your stay at the Embassy?

The United States says it is a matter for the UK; the UK says it is a matter for Sweden. Sweden says it is a matter for the UK. Ecuador says (correctly) that it is a matter for UK and Sweden. Neither the UK nor Sweden will ever say "no" to the US and the US will never say no to its military industrial complex, and so the US will never drop the case. Nonetheless, my time will come.

In Sweden, there are increasingly more voices, even from important lawyers, questioning the legal action against you. Is it possible that in the short term for the Swedish to rectify and take your declaration at the Embassy?

The US investigation against me and my organization proceeds and is the first priority. My alleged source for the cables, the young US intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning, was sentenced to 35 years in prison; Her lawyer, David Coombs, said that he felt like he had "two defendants" in the military court room and I was one of them. So the threat is serious. However it is much easier to not have to fight on two fronts, so if Sweden drops the matter that would help. Alternatively, Sweden could recognize my asylum and commit to protecting me against the US investigation. On top of that, they could accept Ecuador's invitation to pick up the phone and talk me like every other case. But I predict that a lot more people will have to speak out before that happens.

Is Snowden's temporary asylum about to finish? Is Wikileaks still providing him advice? Will he stay in Russia or will he try to go to Latin America?

Mr. Snowden's temporary asylum will expire in September. Last week I co-launched a new foundation Courage, (<https://couragefound.org/>) to fight for his asylum to be renewed. Russia did the right thing in granting Mr. Snowden asylum in the first place. Russia is very proud of its independence and would not tolerate Mr. Snowden's extradition to the United States under normal circumstances. I would expect the asylum to be renewed without difficulty, however US threats to Russian interests in Ukraine, Syria, Iran, Moldova and elsewhere make the situation harder to predict.

Snowden left from Hong Kong to Moscow, in his attempt to get to Ecuador, with an Ecuadorian safepass not authorized by Ecuador. Being you the first one to made public Snowden's travel with the document, some people saw it as an interference into ecuadorian foreign policy. What was your intention in that ocassion?

Ecuador can be proud of helping to save Mr. Snowden's life and liberty. The subsequent revelations are an important contribution to the long term sovereignty of all latin American states, including Ecuador. They show not only that the United States was running a mass interception station in Ecuador, but that it is intercepting 98% of Latin America's communications with the world, infiltrating many of its major companies and presidential communications and placing interception backdoors its computers, mobile phone chips, Gmail, Facebook and dozens of other US companies. The revelations also show that the NSA had me on a "man hunting" list as early as 2010, that Britain's GCHQ was spying on WikiLeaks in 2012 and that Sweden is a secret mass interception and hacking partner of the United States for more than a decade.

Those Ecuadoreans who acted to secure Mr. Snowden's safety can be confident of their place in history and should be awarded the highest honours in Ecuador for helping to expose a serious threat to Ecuador's safety and security.

As to the specific issues with Mr. Snowden's travel letter, the press in Hong King had sources at the airport and broke the story. Subsequently I explained how Snowden had left with an approved purpose of travel (to seek asylum) in order to prevent his flight path being closed down by skittish airlines and intermediate jurisdictions on his flight plan in complete ignorance of how the government whished to approach the matter. Opportunistic elements, seeking to undermine President Correa and Ricardo Patino's authority then disgracefully spun the issue of whether a Consul in London had used the right bureaucratic form in a situation of life and death occurring on the weekend. I don't know, but I do know that if he hadn't acted Edward Snowden would be now dead or in a US prison and not telling the world about how 98% of Latin America's communications are being mass intercepted. Sovereignty in Ecuador and all of South America would be impoverished as a result. The then Ecuadorean consul here in London, Fidel Narvaez, a decent and cultivated man, is a hero and his children can be proud of him.

What is your position regarding the debate about the neutrality of the internet?

Net neutrality is a more complex issue for internet freedom than many believe. I am generally against governments regulating the internet, because once the government is given a foothold in regulating the internet, it provides a ground for all sorts of regulatory interventions that I don't necessarily approve of. However, I do think that where you have a few huge powerful players, like giant telcos and huge data giants like Google and others, whose power has grown to the point that they perform quasi-governmental roles online, then there is a strong case for regulatory intervention to prevent those giant players doing their own "regulation" by company policy and stealth: filtering some content, slowing other content, spying on their users and so on. These are common problems with monopolies across all sectors, such as the problem of the concentration of media ownership. So net neutrality is important to ensure fairness and equality online for individuals and small organizations.

How to protect the internet from the interest of the big powers and the giants .com? Why is neutrality important?

It is a difficult question, because many states have an understandable worry: that the overwhelming influence that the big powers have over the internet translates into a geopolitical challenge, and could be used to undermine sovereignty at home. But they are trying to respond to this worry in a way that is not positive for the internet: they are trying to introduce laws that allow them to perform deep packet inspection and content filtering, and other technical measures which are starting to cut off their national internet from the global internet. This is the wrong path. Instead, these states should embrace the cause of internet freedom, and create hospitable jurisdictions for publishers and other forms of internet commerce and services provision. We need to create a competition between states over the embrace of internet freedom. This way we can pull the centre of gravity for the internet away from the United States, and ensure the geopolitical hazards are not as great.

How is Latin America's internet vulnerable, given that all the optic fiber telecom cables go through USA?

The answer is in the question. Everyone understands that if all of the oil that drives your national industry and economy comes through oil pipelines that traverse the territory of another state, that other state has a strategic hold over you. The same principal applies with internet infrastructure. For one thing, in the event of a serious geopolitical confrontation, if Latin America's entire connection to the global internet relies on infrastructure within US territory, the US could potentially cut Latin America off by severing fiber optic lines. Latin America would have other means of accessing the global network, but its bandwidth would be crippled. But that's a hypothetical. What do we know is happening now? We know, from Mr. Snowden's disclosures (although I wrote a preface to the Latin American edition of my book, *Cypherpunks*, in 2012 saying the same thing) that the NSA is mass intercepting the communications of Latin Americans as they flow over those fiber optic lines into the wider internet. Whole civilizations are having the most private communications of each of their citizens caught and stored by US spy agencies. US law says that, because they are not US citizens, they have no rights to privacy. If a foreign country is able to steal the private communications of a whole civilization like that, think of how much strategic influence that gives the US over Latin American countries: not just their governments, but their populations too.

What is your view about the idea of Brazil of launching it's own satellite, enforcing the multinational technological companies to have a base in that country and for Brazil to have its own cables? Could be that a solution against the mass spionage from USA?

These measures constitute part of the solution in the short term. However, it is a delicate game. Brazil has an expanding military industrial telecommunications complex. It should not be allowed to become the regional "internet hegemon" in Latin America either.

What are the alternatives for small nations like Ecuador, so they can face the spionage not only coming from USA, but also from big corporations like Chevron?

I think the best model for small nations like Ecuador is the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative— which was a programme of law reform I introduced into a very small country (Iceland) in 2010, which aimed to make Iceland into a competitive jurisdiction among the market of jurisdictions for companies wishing to provide internet services.

I think it comes— first and foremost— from the embrace of the values of the internet, and the embrace of the liberty of expression in the online space: giving a voice to individuals which, in aggregate, can overcome large concentrations of private media power and supplant entrenched interests. In the shorter term, Ecuador can pursue the cessation of US mass espionage against its citizens at a diplomatic level within international bodies to which it is a party, and can pass laws to mandate that companies providing services within Ecuador use audited, industrial standard encryption by default.

How has USA reached such a technological capacity, to be able of hearing all human communications?

It may seem inconceivable, but if you are used to thinking in computer engineering terms, it is not surprising. If you are familiar with mathematical predictions of growth and scale which address technological advancement, such as Moore's Law, you understand that we are in the middle of a period of exponential growth. I was a member of a group of thinkers— the cypherpunks— back in the 1990s, and we predicted most of what has happened would happen. You can read about it in my book, "Cypherpunks", which was published by Duesto in Spain, by Grupo Planeta in Mexico, by Ediciones Trilce in Uruguay, by Marea in Argentina, by Icono Editorial in Colombia, and by Lom Ediciones in Chile.

Do you think USA has already stopped tapping personal phones of ally leaders as Dilma Rousseff and Angela Merkel?

The White House says that they have instructed that Angela Merkel's phone is not to be explicitly targeted anymore. But the NSA and GCHQ bulk intercept the world's telecommunications. In most cases there is no targeting. Their philosophy, detailed in their own documents is "collect it all, store it all, search it all, exploit it all.". At the time I said the NSA would just target all the people Merkel talks to anyway. Subsequently it was revealed in the German press that this is exactly what has happened— increase surveillance on Merkel's associates. She can't talk to herself.

What is actual Wikileaks situation? How do you face the economic blockade of donations by credit cards?

WikiLeaks is funded by donations from supporters. Since December 2010 we have been blockaded like Cuba. Major banking and financial institutions, including VISA, MasterCard, PayPal, and Bank of America, bowed to unofficial US pressure and began to deny financial services to WikiLeaks. They blocked bank transfers and all donations made with major credit cards. While these are American institutions, their ubiquity in world finance meant that willing donors in both America and around the world were denied the option of sending money to WikiLeaks to support its publishing activities.

The "banking blockade," as it has become known, is being conducted outside of any judicial or administrative procedure. WikiLeaks has been pursuing major court cases in different jurisdictions across the world in order to break the blockade. The Supreme Court in Iceland found in favor of WikiLeaks in a case against the VISA and MasterCard subsidiary Valitor. A case has been brought to the European Commission, which launched an investigation into the abuse of market dominance by institutions involved in the blockade. The investigation is ongoing.

The European Parliament initiated legislation aimed at regulating the financial services market in response to the blockade. A court case in Denmark is in progress. The blockade has been significantly eroded as a result of concerted effort by WikiLeaks and its allies. WikiLeaks has managed to arrange ways to donate money via proxy payment gateways, which have not yet been shut down. Some parties to the blockade have quietly executed a partial or wholesale withdrawal, opening a front for compensation. In short, we are surviving, and eventually we will win, but it is a slow process, and we have been nearly four years under an unjust attack by these banks.

Does the recent recent film about your life affect the image of Wikileaks and its cause?

It wasn't a film about my life. It was supposed to be about WikiLeaks, but most of it was fantasy. In general, huge Hollywood films with multi-million dollar budgets can affect public perception, and we were concerned about this film affecting our image and our cause. But we campaigned against the film, and, as the Hollywood Reporter has noted, we were successful in making sure this film was a catastrophic flop. Let that be a lesson to propagandists against WikiLeaks.

www.telegrafo.com.ec/politica/item/ecuador-can-be-proud-of-helping-snowden.html

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'The best of journalism relies on whistleblowers'

RT

June 20, 2014

Journalism has always relied on whistleblowers who should be praised for their extraordinary courage, journalist and filmmaker John Pilger told RT, adding the case against Julian Assange is a ridiculous attempt at retaliation for WikiLeaks disclosures.

RT: It's been two years now, he's been holed up in the Ecuadorian Embassy, how much longer do you think Assange will remain in that diplomatic limbo?

John Pilger: Well, I don't know, as long as the British government continues to ignore its obligations under international law to do with political asylum. Britain last month, or I think it was in March, amended the law that meant that Julian Assange would be extradited to Sweden. So if he went to the court now, he wouldn't be extradited. The whole thing is farcical and that's what the whole Swedish episode is. It's like a red herring.

It's rather grotesque actually because really the main game of this, or the main crime that Julian Assange has committed, is that WikiLeaks revealed to the world the extent of United States' war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan and it revealed numerous conspiracies by the US against governments throughout the world. They didn't like this. They didn't like that obviously.

This siege of Assange in the embassy, and that's what it is, is his punishment, and it shouldn't be so. He's been given political asylum under international law and the British government ought to respect international law and give him safe passage out of that embassy to Ecuador. That's what this is really about. If that doesn't happen, what he faces, if he leaves, what he faces is the prospect of the kind of sentence that Chelsea Manning has had, 35-years in an American hell hole.

RT: Is there more to the story of the UK not letting him come out? Is there more to him just being Assange, a whistleblower, is there more to this?

JP: Is there more to it? Well yes of course there's more to it. As I've said Julian Assange is effectively imprisoned in that embassy because of WikiLeaks' disclosure, historic disclosure of the way our world has been run: with war crimes by major powers, with conspiracies against governments.

The whole situation in Sweden is almost a farce, right at the beginning of that the Swedish prosecutor in Stockholm threw out the case against Assange, there was no case to answer. He waited around in Stockholm to answer any allegations. In the UK his lawyers have told the Swedish authorities that he will answer any questions. First he offered to do it in Scotland Yard, then the embassy, the Swedish embassy, now the Ecuadorian embassy. He has made every offer possible.

The whole idea that he is evading being questioned by the Swedish authorities is just absurd. It is absurd because this has really nothing to do with this. This has been about the WikiLeaks, about the threat that Assange and somebody that he helped, and WikiLeaks helped, to escape, to get into Russia, and that is Edward Snowden.

We know that last month under the freedom of information search that the FBI has opened a full prosecution case, a massive case, of probably 50,000 pages of files in it, which they intend, if they can get their hands on him to prosecute Assange. And to prosecute him under a law of 1917 that does not even apply. He has committed no crime in the US and what they are trying to do is a crime against the American constitution.

RT: And do you think the Assange's fate is putting whistleblowers from speaking out?

JP: Yes. Whistleblowing has always been a very dangerous occupation. Often you are really unloved for telling the truth. But journalism, the best of journalism has always relied on whistleblowers. In my own career that has been the main source of truth telling—whistleblowers.

The public have a right to hear honest voices telling us how governments are really run, what they really say in private when they say something very different in public. The kind of life and death conspiracies that mean many people in great danger of death throughout the world. We have the right to know these things.

I think what we see in Julian Assange, and we saw it in Edward Snowden as we saw it in Chelsea Manning—extraordinary courage. Instead of a kind of ridiculous vilification that comes from a media, which WikiLeaks have shamed for not doing its job properly, there should be extraordinary praise for someone like Assange.

<http://rt.com/op-edge/167200-assange-whistleblower-hero-journalism/>

The Assange legacy is deserving of our respect

*Paola Totaro
The Drum (Australia)
20 June 2014*

Say what you like about him—and let's face it, bagging Julian Assange has become a national sport—but the man has guts. He showed great courage four years ago when WikiLeaks released the avalanche of material on the Iraq War taken by the whistleblower, Chelsea (previously Bradley) Manning—and it's a brave man who would countenance a life spent in exile for a principle.

Before the howls of protest begin, nobody would argue that Assange's decision to remain in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London is driven solely by altruism: of course he's also there to save his own bacon.

However, on the second anniversary of his numbing, self-imposed exile, it would be correct also to acknowledge the enormous impact Assange has had— and continues to have— on the world of journalism, on state-held information, on the role of modern whistleblowers and most importantly, on questions of publication and the test of public interest.

Instead, it seems to have become de rigueur to use the personal— Assange's mercurial character, egotism, burning of friendships— as a vehicle to dismiss his work or write off the revolutionary effects of WikiLeaks, the Iraq files and other revelations.

The former Labor foreign minister, Bob Carr, candidly admitted this impulse in his recent memoirs, confessing he wasn't sure of the veracity of his public statement in 2012 that Assange had received more consular time than any other Australian but had made the claim to "needle" his "self righteousness".

For similar reasons, Assange seems always to be hammered with the same hostile question— as occurred at his press conference call in London this week— demanding to know why a spear carrier for transparency refuses to face questions from Swedish prosecutors.

This disingenuously ignores Assange's answers, repeated *ad nauseum* by his lawyers over the years that he has always been available to talk to Swedish officials at any time. He offered himself for questioning in the UK four years ago, when the sexual misconduct claims first came to light, and again after he sought asylum. Meanwhile, Ecuador has invited Sweden to send its investigators at any time should they wish to resolve the stand-off and question him in the Embassy.

It is Sweden alone that has refused to do this while Assange remains on British soil.

It is a little known fact that the British extradition law under which Assange was ordered to Sweden was recently amended: the claims that originally secured his extradition order to Sweden would no longer be enough and a charge would be necessary.

Just how Assange will be viewed by history is of course dependent on who writes that history.

Andrew Fowler, author of the biography "The Most Dangerous Man in the World" believes he will be seen as a significant figure in the modern battle for freedom of information. He told *The Drum*:

"Chelsea Manning's revelations could not have been made without WikiLeaks. And Edward Snowden has pointed to the significance of WikiLeaks. WikiLeaks has also exposed the failings of journalism— and journalists— who have been only too prepared to toe the line instead of exposing government wrongdoing."

There's little doubt that since Assange entered the fray, the media's interaction with whistleblowers has changed irrevocably. Manning turned to Wikileaks pretty much because the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*— the newspapers he turned to first— refused to do so.

And yet this month, *The New York Times* new executive editor, Dean Baquet, spoke out about how these unprecedented exchanges of secret, state-held information have fundamentally changed the business of investigative journalism: "I am much, much more skeptical of the government's entreaties not to publish today than I was ever before" he said.

He also admitted just how "painful" it was for the paper to miss out on the Snowden leaks— and what would earn the *Washington Post* and *Guardian* a joint Pulitzer Prize—not to mention "getting beat by your biggest overseas competitor and your biggest national competitor".

Today, several major news organisations the world over, including *The Guardian*, have established encrypted, anonymous "drop" sites for whistleblowers to hand over information while specialised analysis of metadata in leaked caches of documents is a *raison d'être* for the new, \$US250 million independent media venture launched by eBay founder, Pierre Imidiyar and led by Snowden leak journalists, Glenn Greenwald and Laura Poitras.

Jen Robinson, the London-based Australian Human Rights lawyer who has been both a friend and legal adviser to Assange, believes there has been a perceptible change in public understanding about Assange's legacy and there is now greater acceptance of the very real reasons behind his resolute decision to remain in the embassy. She told *The Drum*:

"Both Julian and WikiLeaks have had a material, a large impact not only on the media but also in inspiring other whistleblowers to come forward. Chelsea Manning has been a stated inspiration as has Julian on Edward Snowden and the NSA revelations.

"The "right to know" has become a term of common parlance. WikiLeaks and what followed has meant that people are talking about it. There is a sense that we have a right to know what governments know. I don't think it would have happened without WikiLeaks. People do forget."

Imprisoned in the US, living in forced exile in Russia or holed up in a small embassy in London, Manning, Snowden and Julian Assange are polarising figures. However, all three gave up their lives and their liberty in the passionate pursuit and a heartfelt belief in freedom of information. For this alone, they deserve respect.

• *Paola Totaro is an Australian journalist, writer and correspondent specialising in European affairs, politics, social policy and the arts. She is president of the Foreign Press Association in London.*

www.abc.net.au/news/2014-06-20/totaro-the-assange-legacy-is-deserving-of-our-respect/5537644

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Links to other parts of the series

Part 1: 14 August 2010 – 16 December 2010
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case1.pdf

Part 2: 17 December 2011 – 17 February 2011
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case2.pdf

Part 3: 20 February 2011 – 17 July 2011
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case3.pdf

Part 4: 8 August 2011 – 30 June 2012
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case4.pdf

Part 5: 1 July 2012 – 27 October 2012
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case5.pdf

Part 6: 28 October 2012 – 30 June 2013
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange/docs/case6.pdf

For more and better-organized information:
www.nnn.se/nordic/assange.htm