



Report Information from ProQuest

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Dept. of Justice Continues Push to Extradite Assange

Savage, Charlie; Peltier, Elian . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]13 Feb 2021: A.16.

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FULL TEXT

Advocates of press freedoms had urged the new administration to instead drop a Trump-era effort to prosecute the WikiLeaks founder.

WASHINGTON -- The Biden administration has signaled that for now it is continuing its predecessor's attempt to prosecute Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder, as the Justice Department filed a brief this week appealing to a British court to overturn a ruling that blocked his extradition to the United States.

This week, human rights and civil liberties groups had asked the acting attorney general, Monty Wilkinson, to abandon the effort to prosecute Mr. Assange, arguing that the case the Trump administration developed against him could establish a precedent posing a grave threat to press freedoms.

The Justice Department had been due to file a brief in support of its appeal of a judge's ruling last month blocking the extradition of Mr. Assange on the grounds that American prison conditions are inhumane.

The appeal was lodged on Jan. 19 -- the last full day of the Trump administration -- so the decision to proceed with filing the brief was the first opportunity for the Biden administration to reconsider the disputed prosecution effort. A spokeswoman from the Crown Prosecution Office said on Friday that the American government filed the brief on Thursday.

The brief itself was not immediately available. Filings in British court, unlike in the United States, are not public by default. Marc Raimondi, a Justice Department spokesman, said the American government was not permitted to distribute it, but confirmed its filing.

"We are continuing to seek extradition," he said.

The case against Mr. Assange is complex and does not turn on whether he is a journalist, but rather on whether the journalistic activities of soliciting and publishing classified information can be treated as a crime in the United States. The charges center on his 2010 publication of diplomatic and military files leaked by Chelsea Manning, not his later publication of Democratic Party emails hacked by Russia during the 2016 election.

Prosecutors have separately accused him of participating in a hacking conspiracy, which is not a journalistic activity. The immediate issue at hand in the extradition case, however, is neither of those things, but rather whether American prison conditions are inhumane.

In January, a British judge, Vanessa Baraitser of the Westminster Magistrates' Court, denied Mr. Assange's extradition -- citing harsh conditions for security-related prisoners in American jails and the risk that Mr. Assange might be driven to commit suicide if held under them. She held that "the mental condition of Mr. Assange is such that it would be oppressive to extradite him to the United States."

In its new brief, the Justice Department was expected to defend how the federal Bureau of Prisons handles security inmates and to argue that such conditions were not a legitimate reason for the close American ally to block an otherwise valid extradition request.

Rebecca Vincent, the director of international campaigns for Reporters Without Borders, said the group was

"extremely disappointed" that the Biden Justice Department had pressed on with the effort to bring Mr. Assange to the United States for prosecution.

"This marks a major missed opportunity for President Biden to distance himself from the Trump administration's terrible record on press freedom," Ms. Vincent said.

She warned: "The U.S. government is creating a dangerous precedent that will have a distinct chilling effect on national security reporting around the world. No journalist, publisher or source can be confident that they wouldn't be criminally pursued for similar public interest reporting."

Ms. Vincent also characterized the case against Mr. Assange as "political." In January, however, Judge Baraitser had rejected Mr. Assange's arguments that the American charges against him were politically motivated, ruling that they had been brought in good faith. The Justice Department had said that it was "gratified" by that part of her ruling.

During the Obama administration, Justice Department officials weighed whether to charge Mr. Assange. But they worried that doing so would raise novel First Amendment issues and could establish a precedent that could damage press freedoms in the United States, since traditional news organizations like The New York Times also sometimes publish information the government has deemed classified.

The Obama administration never charged Mr. Assange. But the Trump administration moved forward with a prosecution. Its first indictment merely accused Mr. Assange of a hacking conspiracy, but it then filed a superseding indictment charging him under the Espionage Act in connection with publishing classified documents.

In 2019, as Mr. Biden was seeking the Democratic Party's nomination for president, The Times asked whether he would keep or jettison the novel Espionage Act charges against Mr. Assange the Trump administration had brought.

In a written answer, Mr. Biden demurred from taking a position on the case but drew a line between journalistic activities and hacking.

"Journalists have no constitutional right to break into a government office, or hack into a government computer, or bribe a government employee, to get information," Mr. Biden wrote, adding, "We should be hesitant to prosecute a journalist who has done nothing more than receive and publish confidential information and has not otherwise broken the law."

Charlie Savage reported from Washington, and Elian Peltier from London.

Photograph

A British judge blocked Julian Assange's extradition citing inhumane prison conditions. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDY RAIN/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

DETAILS

Subject:	Freedoms; Indictments; Journalists; Conspiracy; Prosecutions; Espionage; Extradition; Political parties
Location:	United States-US
People:	Assange, Julian Paul
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Civil-Liberties Groups Ask U.S. to Drop Assange Case

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FULL TEXT

A Friday deadline in the London extradition case may force the Biden administration to decide whether to keep pursuing a Trump-era policy.

WASHINGTON -- A coalition of civil liberties and human rights groups urged the Biden administration on Monday to drop efforts to extradite the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange from Britain and prosecute him, calling the Trump-era case against him "a grave threat to press freedom."

The coalition sent a letter urging a change in course before a Friday deadline for the Justice Department to file a brief in a London court. American prosecutors are due to explain in detail their decision -- formally lodged on Jan. 19, the last full day of the Trump administration -- to appeal a ruling blocking their request to extradite Mr. Assange.

The litigation deadline may force the new administration to confront a decision: whether to press on with the Trump-era approach to Mr. Assange, or to instead drop the matter.

Democrats like the new Biden team are no fan of Mr. Assange, whose publication in 2016 of Democratic emails stolen by Russia aided Donald J. Trump's narrow victory over Hillary Clinton. But the charges center instead on his 2010 publication of American military and diplomatic documents leaked by Chelsea Manning, and they raise profound First Amendment issues.

"The indictment of Mr. Assange threatens press freedom because much of the conduct described in the indictment is conduct that journalists engage in routinely -- and that they must engage in in order to do the work the public needs them to do," the letter said, adding: "News organizations frequently and necessarily publish classified information in order to inform the public of matters of profound public significance."

The Freedom of the Press Foundation organized the letter. Other signers -- about two dozen groups -- included the American Civil Liberties Union, Amnesty International USA, the Center for Constitutional Rights, the Committee to Protect Journalists, Demand Progress, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, Human Rights Watch, the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University, the Project on Government Oversight and Reporters Without Borders.

"Most of the charges against Assange concern activities that are no different from those used by investigative journalists around the world every day," Kenneth Roth, the executive director of Human Rights Watch, said in a separate statement. "President Biden should avoid setting a terrible precedent by criminalizing key tools of independent journalism that are essential for a healthy democracy."

For now, the Justice Department remains committed to appealing the denial of its request to extradite Mr. Assange, said Marc Raimondi, a spokesman for its National Security Division.

The deadline to either continue working to extradite Mr. Assange by filing the brief or drop the matter reflects a common legal policy dilemma when a new administration takes over and confronts matters inherited from its predecessor. Newly installed officials face too many issues to make careful decisions on all at once, so some get punted.

But litigation calendars can force early decisions about whether to proceed or shift direction in some cases. It is often easier to stay the course, based on an argument that the issue can be revisited later when there is more time. But once the new administration has started down that path, it owns the policy as a matter of political and bureaucratic reality and so can effectively get locked in.

Complicating matters for making any decision to keep or jettison the Trump-era policy to go after Mr. Assange with criminal charges, the Biden administration's intended leadership team is not yet in place at the Justice Department. The Senate has yet to confirm Mr. Biden's nominee to be attorney general, Judge Merrick B. Garland. In the meantime, the department is being temporarily led by a caretaker career official, Monty Wilkinson, the acting attorney general to whom the letter was addressed.

After Mr. Assange published the documents provided by Ms. Manning in 2010, the Obama administration engaged in extensive deliberations under Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. over whether to prosecute Mr. Assange but

never charged him with a crime.

By contrast, Ms. Manning, a low-level Army intelligence analyst who downloaded the archives of documents and sent them to WikiLeaks, was convicted at a court-martial trial in 2013 of leaking the documents and sentenced to 35 years in prison. President Barack Obama commuted most of the remainder of her sentence in 2017.

But law enforcement officials under Mr. Obama shied away from bringing charges against Mr. Assange. They feared that there was no legally meaningful way to distinguish his actions from those of conventional investigative national-security journalism as practiced by mainstream news organizations like The New York Times. The Obama team did not want to create a precedent that could chill or cripple traditional journalism, according to people familiar with its deliberations.

In March 2018, however, under Attorney General Jeff Sessions, the Trump Justice Department obtained a grand jury indictment against Mr. Assange. It initially sidestepped press freedom issues by narrowly accusing him of participating in a hacking-related criminal conspiracy with Ms. Manning, rather than focusing on his publication of government secrets.

That indictment was unsealed in April 2019, when Mr. Assange was dragged out of the Ecuadorean Embassy in London and arrested. (He had taken refuge there in 2012, initially to avoid extradition to Sweden to face questions about sexual assault accusations, which he has denied. Sweden had rescinded its arrest warrant for Mr. Assange in 2017.)

The Justice Department – by then under Attorney General William P. Barr – then obtained a superseding indictment expanding the charges against Mr. Assange to include allegations that his journalistic-style activities violated the Espionage Act. A second superseding indictment later added more allegations related to the notion of a hacking conspiracy.

Notably, there is some overlap in personnel from earlier internal debates about the dilemma raised by Mr. Assange. The top national security official in the Trump Justice Department, John C. Demers, remains in place atop its National Security Division for now; the Biden transition asked him to temporarily stay on for continuity purposes even as most other Trump political appointees resigned.

Mr. Demers's predecessor from 2013 to 2016, John Carlin, has returned to the Justice Department and is currently serving as the acting deputy attorney general. Mr. Carlin's predecessor, Lisa O. Monaco, who ran the National Security Division from 2011 to 2013, is Mr. Biden's nominee to be deputy attorney general but has not yet been confirmed.

The letter from the rights groups portrayed the Trump-era Justice Department's decision to proceed against Mr. Assange as jeopardizing journalism "that is crucial to democracy" more broadly, and noted that the Trump administration had "positioned itself as an antagonist to the institution of a free and unfettered press in numerous ways."

They added: "We are deeply concerned about the way that a precedent created by prosecuting Assange could be leveraged – perhaps by a future administration – against publishers and journalists of all stripes."

Since the original indictment was unsealed, lawyers for Mr. Assange have fought the extradition request, arguing that the United States was prosecuting him for political reasons.

A British judge in January largely rejected those arguments, holding that he had been charged "in good faith." But she denied his extradition anyway – citing harsh conditions for security-related prisoners in American jails and the risk that Mr. Assange might be driven to commit suicide. It is that rationale that the brief due on Friday would appeal.

Elian Peltier contributed reporting from London.

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Photograph

Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder, left court in 2019 in London. The Trump administration sought to have him extradited for trial on charges of violating the Espionage Act. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT DUNHAM/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

DETAILS

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Supporters Push for Pardon for Assange as the President's Term Comes to a Close

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FULL TEXT

Supporters of the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange have enlisted a lobbyist with connections to the president and filed a clemency petition with the White House.

WASHINGTON -- Allies of the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange have ramped up a push for a last-minute pardon from President Trump, enlisting a lobbyist with connections to the administration, trying to rally supporters across the political spectrum and filing a clemency petition with the White House.

The effort comes at a delicate moment for Mr. Assange and during a period of tension between the United States and Britain over a case that his supporters say has substantial implications for press freedoms.

The Justice Department announced last week that it would appeal a British judge's ruling blocking the extradition of Mr. Assange to the United States to face trial on charges of violating the Espionage Act and conspiring to hack government computers. The charges stemmed from WikiLeaks's publication in 2010 of classified documents related to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Mr. Assange's supporters had been optimistic about the prospects of a pardon from Mr. Trump, who has issued dozens of contentious clemency grants since losing his re-election bid. But they now worry that pressure over his supporters' ransacking of the Capitol last week could derail plans for additional clemencies before he leaves office on Jan. 20.

As unlikely as the prospect of a pardon from Mr. Trump might be, Mr. Assange's supporters are eager to try before President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. takes office.

As vice president, Mr. Biden called the WikiLeaks founder a "high-tech terrorist." Some of his top advisers blame Mr. Assange and WikiLeaks for helping Mr. Trump win the presidency in 2016 by publishing emails from Democrats associated with Hillary Clinton's campaign, which U.S. officials say were stolen by Russian intelligence to damage her candidacy. Mr. Trump has long downplayed Russia's role in the 2016 election.

For Mr. Assange's supporters and press freedom advocates, though, the issues at stake transcend him or politics. "This is so much bigger than Julian," said Mark Davis, a former journalist who worked with Mr. Assange in Australia, where they are from. If Mr. Assange is prosecuted, "it will have a chilling effect on all national security journalism," Mr. Davis said, adding: "If we can get Julian off, then the precedent hasn't been set. If Julian goes down, then it's bad for all of us."

Mr. Davis, who is now a lawyer specializing in national security and whistle-blower cases, is on the board of

Blueprint for Free Speech, an Australia-based nonprofit group that advocates for press freedoms and whistleblower protections. The group, which was started by Suelette Dreyfus, a former journalist who is an old friend and collaborator with Mr. Assange, signed a pro bono contract on Saturday with the lobbyist Robert Stryk to seek a pardon for Mr. Assange.

During Mr. Trump's presidency, Mr. Stryk, who is well connected in Trump administration circles, has developed a lucrative business representing foreign clients in precarious geopolitical situations.

He has worked for a jailed Saudi prince who had fallen out of favor with his country's powerful de facto leader, as well as the administration of President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela, which the Trump administration considers illegitimate. Mr. Stryk also worked for Isabel dos Santos, the daughter of Angola's former president, who is accused of embezzling millions of dollars from a state oil company she once headed, as well as the government of the former Congolese president Joseph Kabilé, which had faced American sanctions for human rights abuses and corruption.

Mr. Stryk said that he was representing Blueprint for Free Speech to seek a pardon for Mr. Assange without pay because of his belief in free speech, and that he would continue pushing for the pardon in the Biden administration if Mr. Trump did not grant it.

"This is not a partisan issue," Mr. Stryk said.

The contract, which he said he had disclosed to the Justice Department under the Foreign Agents Registration Act, calls for his company, Stryk Global Diplomacy, to "facilitate meetings and interactions with the president and the president-elect's administrations" to "obtain a full pardon" for Mr. Assange.

Mr. Davis said Mr. Stryk had been chosen partly because of his entree into Mr. Trump's administration, which the group sees as its best chance to secure a pardon.

Mr. Davis noted that Mr. Assange, 49, was indicted during Mr. Trump's presidency. "We are unabashedly reaching out to the Republican Party on this issue in the final weeks to correct something before it's too late, and before it become part of Trump's legacy," Mr. Davis said.

He said, "If Joe Biden is sympathetic, that's well and good, and we certainly hope he is." But, he added, "it's a far simpler process for an outgoing president than an incoming president."

Mr. Assange's cause has been taken up by a range of media freedom and human rights organizations, public officials and celebrities, including the actress Pamela Anderson.

Blueprint for Free Speech is working to harness some of that support, including from Ms. Anderson, a friend of Mr. Assange, who said in an interview that she had been trying to connect with Mr. Trump to plead the case. "I just hate to see him deteriorate in jail right now," she said of Mr. Assange, describing the pardon push as "a last-ditch effort for all of us who are Julian Assange supporters."

Asked about the effort by Blueprint, Jennifer Robinson, a lawyer representing Mr. Assange, said he "is encouraged by and supports efforts" by a variety of prominent supporters around the world.

Mr. Davis stressed that Blueprint's push was independent of parallel efforts by Mr. Assange's family and his lawyers, though Mr. Stryk has been in contact with Barry J. Pollack, Mr. Assange's Washington-based lawyer, who is representing him against the criminal charges.

Prosecutors have argued that Mr. Assange unlawfully obtained secret documents and put lives at risk by revealing the names of people who had provided information to the United States in war zones.

Mr. Assange's lawyers have framed the prosecution as a politically driven attack on press freedom.

Last month, Mr. Pollack filed a petition for a pardon with the White House Counsel's Office, which has been vetting clemency requests for Mr. Trump, arguing that Mr. Assange was "being prosecuted for his news gathering and publication of truthful information."

Mr. Pollack declined to comment on the petition, which was obtained by The New York Times, except to say that it was pending.

The petition appears to be geared toward appealing to Mr. Trump, who has wielded the unchecked presidential clemency power to aid people with personal connections to him or whose causes resonate with him politically,

including a handful of people ensnared in the special counsel's investigation of Russia's interference in the 2016 election and ties to his campaign.

The petition highlighted that the charges against Mr. Assange stemmed from WikiLeaks's publication of material that "exposed misconduct committed in Iraq and Afghanistan during wars initiated by a prior administration." And it notes that the Democratic emails published by WikiLeaks in 2016, which showed some in the party apparatus conspiring to sabotage the campaign of Senator Bernie Sanders, Independent of Vermont and Mrs. Clinton's rival for the Democratic presidential nomination, resulted in the resignations of party officials.

The petition does not address the United States government's findings about Russia's role in the theft of the emails as part of its effort to undermine Mrs. Clinton, which has long been a sore spot for Mr. Trump.

The petition notes that the sentence of Chelsea Manning, the former Army intelligence analyst who provided the military and diplomatic documents to WikiLeaks that led to the charges against Mr. Assange, was commuted by President Barack Obama in the final days of his term.

Like Mr. Assange's lawyers in Britain, Mr. Pollack's petition raises concerns about Mr. Assange's health, noting that the prison in which he is being held has been under lockdown after a coronavirus outbreak.

Photograph

The effort comes at a delicate moment for Julian Assange; the Justice Department announced last week that it would appeal a British judge's ruling blocking his extradition to the United States. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Henry Nicholls/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

DETAILS

Subject:	Journalism; Whistleblowing; National security; Attorneys; Freedom of the press; Speeches; Indictments; Political campaigns; Presidents; Clemency; Lobbyists; Petitions; Human rights; Extradition
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LINKS

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Assange Bid to Be Released On Bail Is Denied by Judge Who Blocked His Extradition

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A.9.

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FULL TEXT

The decision came two days after the judge blocked the extradition of the WikiLeaks founder to the United States, citing risks of suicide.

LONDON -- A judge in London on Wednesday declined to release Julian Assange on bail while he awaits a final resolution in the case to extradite him to the United States to face charges of violating espionage laws.

On Monday, the judge ruled that Mr. Assange could not be extradited to the United States because he would be at risk of suicide, and his lawyers sought to have him released on bail while the appeals process plays out. The decision on Wednesday was a setback for the WikiLeaks founder, who has sought for years to avoid a trial in the United States on charges that his supporters say pose a threat to press freedom.

The judge, Vanessa Baraitser of Westminster Magistrates' Court, said Wednesday that Mr. Assange -- who spent

seven years holed up in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London to avoid another extradition order -- still had an incentive to abscond, and that he needed to remain in prison while U.S. prosecutors challenged her decision on his extradition.

Mr. Assange, 49, was indicted by the United States authorities in 2019 on 17 counts of violating the Espionage Act and one count of computer misuse over his role in obtaining and publishing secret military and diplomatic documents related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. If found guilty on all counts, he could face a sentence of up to 175 years.

On Monday, Judge Baraitser ruled that Mr. Assange, who suffers from depression and has an autism spectrum disorder, could not be extradited because "it would be unjust and oppressive" given his mental condition.

But the judge rejected arguments by Mr. Assange's legal team that the charges against him were an attack on press freedom and were politically motivated.

Claire Dobbin, a lawyer representing the United States, said on Wednesday that American prosecutors would appeal the extradition ruling, which is likely to keep Mr. Assange's case in British courts for at least several months. The case could eventually land in front of Britain's Supreme Court.

Stella Moris, Mr. Assange's partner, reiterated her calls that the charges against the WikiLeaks founder be dropped and that he be granted a presidential pardon.

"It's a huge disappointment," Ms. Moris said in a brief statement outside the court after Mr. Assange was denied bail. "Julian shouldn't be in Belmarsh prison in the first place."

The editor in chief of WikiLeaks, Kristinn Hrafnsson, said Mr. Assange's lawyers would most likely appeal the denial of bail.

In 2010 and 2011, Mr. Assange published confidential military and diplomatic documents related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and provided by the former U.S. Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning. In 2012, he took refuge at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London to escape extradition to Sweden, where he faced an inquiry into rape accusations. That inquiry was later dropped.

During his seven years at the embassy, he continued to run WikiLeaks as a self-proclaimed political refugee. The British police arrested him in 2019.

Since then, Mr. Assange, an Australian citizen, has been held at Belmarsh, a high-security prison in London where he served a 50-week sentence for skipping bail when he entered the Ecuadorian Embassy to avoid extradition to Sweden. He has completed that sentence but has remained at the prison while the American extradition case makes its way through the British courts.

Doctors and experts who have examined Mr. Assange in prison said during the extradition hearings that he suffered from depression and memory loss.

"I can attest to the fact that his health has seriously deteriorated, to the point where his life is now in danger," Nils Melzer, the United Nations special rapporteur on torture and ill treatment, said last month in urging President Trump to pardon Mr. Assange. Mr. Melzer, who visited Mr. Assange in prison, said last year that his incarceration amounted to "psychological torture."

Lawyers argued during the hearings that Mr. Assange's mental health would deteriorate if he were extradited, and have pointed out that Mr. Assange and other detainees at Belmarsh have been isolated for months after a coronavirus outbreak at the prison.

Rebecca Vincent, the director of international campaigns at Reporters Without Borders, called the judge's decision to deny bail unnecessarily cruel and reiterated calls for Mr. Assange's release.

"We fully believe that his mental and physical health are at high risk over a prolonged detention at Belmarsh prison," Ms. Vincent said. "He has endured 10 years of hell for simply publishing information in the public interest." Should Mr. Assange ultimately lose in Britain, his legal team could also try to take the case to the European Court of Human Rights.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison of Australia said on Tuesday that should higher courts in Britain ultimately blocked Mr. Assange's extradition to the United States, he "would be able to return to Australia like any other Australian."

Photograph

A protest on Wednesday outside Westminster Magistrates' Court in London, while a bail request by Julian Assange, right in 2019, was heard. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HENRY NICHOLLS/REUTERS; MATT DUNHAM/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

DETAILS

Subject:	Appeals; Attorneys; Diplomatic &consular services; Criminal sentences; Indictments; Court hearings &proceedings; Espionage; Extradition
Location:	Sweden United States-US United Kingdom-UK Iraq Afghanistan Australia
People:	Assange, Julian Paul
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Document 5 of 35

Citing Mental Health, Judge Blocks Extradition for Assange

Peltier, Elian; Specia, Megan . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]05 Jan 2021: A.6.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

U.S. officials want the WikiLeaks founder to face charges of violating the Espionage Act. But a judge in London ruled that he was at extreme risk of suicide.

LONDON -- A British judge ruled on Monday that the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange cannot be extradited to the United States to face trial on charges of violating the Espionage Act, saying he would be at extreme risk of suicide. The decision in the high-profile case grants Mr. Assange a major victory against the U.S. authorities who charged him over his role in obtaining and publishing secret military and diplomatic documents related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Rights groups and advocates applauded the ruling, but many expressed concern about the its rationale. The judge focused on Mr. Assange's mental health issues, but rejected the defense argument that the charges were an attack on press freedom and were politically motivated.

Mr. Assange, 49, who was present at Monday's hearing and wearing a face mask, was indicted in 2019 on 17 counts of violating the Espionage Act and conspiring to hack government computers in 2010 and 2011. If found guilty on all counts, he could face a sentence of up to 175 years in prison.

The judge, Vanessa Baraitser of Westminster Magistrates' Court, said in Monday's ruling that she was satisfied that the American authorities had brought forth the case "in good faith," and that Mr. Assange's actions went beyond simply encouraging a journalist. But she said there was evidence of a risk to Mr. Assange's health if he were to face trial in the United States, noting that she found "Mr. Assange's risk of committing suicide, if an extradition order were to be made, to be substantial."

She ruled that the extradition should be refused because "it would be unjust and oppressive by reason of Mr. Assange's mental condition," pointing to conditions he would most likely be held under in the United States. The ruling on Monday at the Central Criminal Court in London, known as the Old Bailey, was a major turning point in a legal struggle that has lasted nearly a decade. But that battle is likely to drag on, as U.S. prosecutors indicated they would appeal. They have two weeks to do so.

A crowd of supporters outside the court erupted in cheers when the verdict was delivered.

"Today, we are swept away by our joy at the fact that Julian will shortly be with us," Craig Murray, a former British diplomat and rights activist who has been documenting the hearing, told reporters outside the courthouse. He said that while he was "delighted we have seen some humanity," the ruling on mental health grounds was an "excuse to deliver justice."

Rights groups also applauded the denial of the extradition request, but some expressed concerns about the substance of the ruling. Among them was Rebecca Vincent, the director of international campaigns for Reporters Without Borders.

"We disagree with the judge's assessment that this case is not politically motivated, that it is not about free speech," Ms. Vincent said. "We continue to believe that Mr. Assange was targeted for his contributions to journalism, and until the underlying issues here are addressed, other journalists, sources and publishers remain at risk."

Stella Moris, Mr. Assange's partner, echoed the sentiment, saying that while she was pleased that the extradition request had been rejected, the charges had not been dropped. She called on President Trump to "end this now." In a statement, the Justice Department said it was "extremely disappointed" by the decision but "gratified that the United States prevailed on every point of law raised," and noted that it would still seek to extradite Mr. Assange. Mr. Assange, who is Australian, rose to prominence in 2010 by publishing documents provided by the former U.S. Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning. He then took refuge at the Ecuadorean Embassy in London to escape extradition to Sweden, where he faced an inquiry into rape allegations that was later dropped. In the meantime, he kept running WikiLeaks as a self-proclaimed political refugee. He spent seven years there before his arrest by the British police in 2019.

During the extradition hearing, which began in February but was postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic, lawyers representing the United States argued that Mr. Assange had unlawfully obtained secret documents and put lives at risk by revealing the names of people who had provided information to the United States in war zones. "Reporting or journalism is not an excuse for criminal activities or a license to break ordinary criminal laws," James Lewis, a lawyer representing the U.S. government, told the court last year.

Mr. Assange's lawyers framed the prosecution as a politically driven attack on press freedom.

"The greatest risk for him in the U.S. is that he won't face a fair trial," said Greg Barns, an Australian lawyer and adviser to Mr. Assange. "Then he could spend the rest of his life in prison, in solitary confinement, treated in a cruel and arbitrary fashion."

The hearing was stymied by multiple technical glitches and restricted access for observers, which rights groups and legal experts said hurt the court's credibility and hampered their ability to monitor the proceedings.

Mr. Assange has been held at Belmarsh, a high-security prison in London, since 2019. Mr. Assange remained in custody after the ruling was announced on Monday, but his defense team said they planned to file an application for bail on Wednesday as the appeals process continued.

Many have hailed Mr. Assange as a hero for transparency who helped expose U.S. wrongdoings in Iraq and Afghanistan. But he has also been criticized as a publicity seeker with an erratic personality. The publication by WikiLeaks of emails associated with Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, which U.S. officials have said were hacked by Russian intelligence to damage her candidacy, also undermined his reputation with many previous supporters.

Mr. Assange jumped bail in 2012 and fled into the Ecuadorean Embassy in London. During his years there, he gave news conferences and hosted a parade of visitors, including the singer Lady Gaga and the actress Pamela Anderson. He had also angered embassy workers by riding his skateboard in the halls.

By the time he was dragged away, Mr. Assange had become an unwelcome guest. Weeks later, he was indicted in the United States.

Mr. Assange's mental and physical health deteriorated while he was held in prison in Britain, experts warned. Nils Melzer, the United Nations special rapporteur on torture and ill treatment, said in November 2019 that the

punishment against Mr. Assange amounted to "psychological torture."

Doctors said that his health had worsened during the hearing.

News and press freedom organizations, as well as rights groups, have long warned that Mr. Assange's indictment and a potential trial in the United States would set a dangerous precedent for press freedom.

Prosecutors have never charged a journalist under the Espionage Act, but legal experts have argued that prosecuting a reporter or news organization for doing their job – making valuable information available to the public -- would violate the First Amendment. Mr. Assange's actions remain difficult to distinguish in a legally meaningful way from those of traditional news organizations.

Jameel Jaffer, the executive director at the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University, warned that the charges that Mr. Assange still faces "cast a dark shadow" over journalism. The charges focused on pure publication of the material were of particular concern, he said.

"Those counts are an unprecedented attack on press freedom," he said in a statement, "one calculated to deter journalists and publishers from exercising rights that the First Amendment should be understood to protect."

Charlie Savage contributed reporting.

Charlie Savage contributed reporting.

Photograph

Supporters of Julian Assange outside a London court on Monday after hearing that he would not be sent to the United States. U.S. prosecutors plan to appeal. (PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANK AUGSTEIN/ASSOCIATED PRESS); Above right, Julian Assange leaving court in January 2020. His partner Stella Moris, above left, spoke Monday, calling on President Trump to "end this now." (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS J RATCLIFFE/GETTY IMAGES; DOMINIC LIPINSKI/PRESS ASSOCIATION, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

DETAILS

Subject:	Journalism; Appeals; Freedom of the press; Trials; Diplomatic & consular services; Indictments; Political campaigns; Court hearings & proceedings; Mental health; Presidential elections; Espionage; Extradition
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U.K. Judge Set to Consider Whether to Send Assange To U.S. for Espionage Trial

Peltier, Elian . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]04 Jan 2021:
A.12.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

A British judge plans to rule on Monday whether the WikiLeaks founder should be sent to the U.S. to face charges of violating the Espionage Act and hacking government computers.

A judge in London plans to rule on Monday whether Britain should extradite Julian Assange to the United States, where the WikiLeaks founder faces charges of conspiring to hack government computers and violating the Espionage Act by obtaining and releasing confidential documents in 2010 and 2011.

A ruling in favor of the U.S. extradition request could pave the way for a high-stakes trial that Mr. Assange has sought to avoid for years, and which his supporters say poses a dangerous threat to press freedom. Mr. Assange faces up to 175 years in prison if found guilty of all charges.

If the judge, Vanessa Baraitser, rejects the extradition request, however, it would give Mr. Assange a major victory at a time when recent U.S. administrations have increasingly used the Espionage Act against journalists' sources. Here is what you need to know about the ruling.

What are the possible outcomes?

Judge Baraitser will not rule on whether Mr. Assange is guilty of wrongdoing, but she will decide whether the U.S. extradition request meets requirements set out under a 2003 extradition treaty with Britain -- namely, that the alleged crime for which Mr. Assange is wanted could also lead to trial in Britain, had he done it there.

If Judge Baraitser rules in favor of the extradition, the case would go to Britain's home secretary, who makes the final decision on extraditions. And it would be a politically delicate choice: Mr. Assange is such a high-profile figure, and the charges he faces in the United States so serious, that a decision by the British authorities will have long-lasting consequences.

Yet before moving to the home secretary, appeals are likely to keep the case in courts for months. And if Mr. Assange were to lose, his legal team could also attempt to take the case to the European Court of Human Rights. If he were to win on appeal, he could be freed.

President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. could play a critical role in determining the fate of Mr. Assange. "If the British judge rules in favor of an extradition, and the U.S. is able to extradite, it will likely fall to the new president to make a decision as to whether the government should continue with the prosecution," said Carl Tobias, a professor of law at the University of Richmond.

As vice president, Mr. Biden called the WikiLeaks founder a "high-tech terrorist" in 2010, but it remains unclear what he would do as president. Mr. Biden could pardon Mr. Assange, or the Justice Department could drop the charges against him, or carry on with the prosecution.

Calls for President Trump to pardon Mr. Assange have also grown in recent weeks as Mr. Trump has issued a wave of pardons and commutations before his term ends.

Britain has turned down several extradition requests from the United States in recent years. In 2012, it refused to extradite Gary McKinnon, a British hacker who breached U.S. government computers in 2002, on the basis that he was too ill. In 2018, a high court ruling also blocked the extradition of Lauri Love, who was accused of breaking into U.S. government websites.

What is at stake with the ruling, and any U.S. trial?

A ruling in favor of extradition could subject Mr. Assange to life in prison.

The U.S. government considers Mr. Assange an individual who has put lives at risk by revealing names of U.S. personnel and informants who provided valuable information in dangerous places like war zones.

"Reporting or journalism is not an excuse for criminal activities or a license to break ordinary criminal laws," James Lewis, a lawyer representing the U.S. government, told the British court last year.

But news organizations and right groups say the charges Mr. Assange faces pose a serious threat to press freedom.

"The future of journalism and press freedom is at stake here," said Rebecca Vincent, the London-based director of international campaigns at Reporters Without Borders.

"If the U.S. government is successful in obtaining Mr. Assange's extradition and prosecuting him in the U.S., then it could prosecute any journalist and news organizations under similar charges," Ms. Vincent added.

Greg Barns, an Australian lawyer and adviser to Mr. Assange, said, "The greatest risk for him in the U.S. is that he won't face a fair trial." Mr. Barns added: "He could spend the rest of his life in solitary confinement, treated in a cruel and arbitrary fashion."

Why is Mr. Assange in a British prison?

In 2012, Mr. Assange entered the Ecuadorian Embassy in London to escape an extradition request from Sweden,

where he faced rape accusations. He spent seven years in the embassy, but was arrested by the British police in 2019, and later sentenced to 50 weeks in prison for skipping bail when he entered the embassy.

The charges in Sweden have been dropped, and Mr. Assange has completed his 50-week sentence. He is not accused of any crime outside the United States, but he remains at the Belmarsh prison in London as Britain decides on his extradition. His bail requests have been rejected.

Several doctors have said that Mr. Assange suffers from depression and memory loss and could attempt to commit suicide if he were extradited.

Nils Melzer, the United Nations special rapporteur on torture and ill treatment, who has examined Mr. Assange in prison, said last year that his incarceration amounted to "psychological torture."

"I can attest to the fact that his health has seriously deteriorated, to the point where his life is now in danger," Mr. Melzer said last month in urging Mr. Trump to pardon Mr. Assange.

Why is Mr. Assange wanted in the United States?

Mr. Assange, 49, was indicted in 2019 on 17 counts of violating the Espionage Act for obtaining and publishing secret military and diplomatic documents. He was later charged with violating the Computers Fraud and Abuse Act.

Mr. Assange's promotion of government transparency has made him a hero to many, but he has also been criticized as a publicity seeker with an erratic personality.

The publication of the material exposed various crimes and wrongdoings committed by the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan, and rights groups have hailed their release as valuable information for the public. Right groups like Reporters Without Borders and Amnesty International have called for all charges to be dropped.

"The activities that Julian Assange engaged in are activities that journalists engage in all the time," said Julia Hall, Amnesty International's expert on counterterrorism and criminal justice in Europe. "We wouldn't have information without them."

What happened during the extradition hearings?

The hearings were delayed by the coronavirus pandemic and technical glitches that rights groups said hampered their ability to monitor them.

In February, Mr. Assange appeared in a glass box, where he could not hear properly, according to observers. In September, after an outburst from Mr. Assange, the judge warned that he would be removed from the courtroom if he kept interrupting prosecutors. Mr. Lewis, acting for the U.S. government, argued that Mr. Assange faced extradition over the publication of informants' names, not for handling leaked documents.

In their closing remarks, lawyers for Mr. Assange argued that accusations of espionage constituted a political offense, and that an extradition on the basis of a political offense was barred by the extradition treaty between the Britain and the United States.

Asked whether he would consent to extradition to the United States, Mr. Assange replied: "No."

Photograph

Supporters of Julian Assange outside a London court last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LEON NEAL/GETTY IMAGES)

DETAILS

Subject: Journalism; Trials; Diplomatic & consular services; Presidents; Court hearings & proceedings; Espionage; Extradition

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People: Assange, Julian Paul

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Document 7 of 35

At Assange's Hearing, Many Can't Be Heard

Specia, Megan . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]17 Sep 2020:
A.13.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

The WikiLeaks founder's high-profile case was delayed for months by the coronavirus. Now it is being hobbled by faulty livestreams and other technical issues.

LONDON -- As Mark Feldstein, the first witness on the first day of the high-stakes extradition hearing for Julian Assange, appeared by video link from his home recently, reporters following the case remotely and those watching in an adjoining court could see and hear him.

The judge and others in the main courtroom, however, had no idea what he was saying.

The hearing, taking place in the Central Criminal Court in London this month to decide whether the embattled WikiLeaks founder should be extradited to the United States, is one of the most crucial junctures yet in a legal fight that began nearly a decade ago.

But since it began in February the case has been stymied, first by the pandemic, which pushed it back by several months, and now by a string of technical glitches. Since the high-profile hearing resumed last week, the court has been forced to adjourn on several occasions while staff members try to address problems with the livestream and video conferencing.

With the onset of the pandemic, the court, known as the Old Bailey, began conducting much of its proceedings online. Because of travel restrictions, several witnesses were unable to testify in person, and limited seating because of social distancing has forced many court observers to witness the hearing through video streamed to overflow areas outside the courtroom.

The technical difficulties have drawn complaints from court observers and rights advocates who say that their ability to monitor the proceedings has been hampered.

The problems are all the more vexing in a trial that is centered around the technically sophisticated world of hacking and the release of a trove of secret documents on the internet.

The court took a break to try to fix the problems with the witness's video link, but the difficulties only worsened, forcing another adjournment. Some days later, the hearing was delayed further over fears that a lawyer for the prosecution might have come into contact with someone with the coronavirus.

The lawyer ultimately tested negative for the virus and the trial resumed on Monday. But technical difficulties again hampered the day's agenda, with another witness inaudible on the livestream.

Rebecca Vincent, the director of international campaigns for Reporters Without Borders, who was in the court this week, said there had "constantly been problems," with the livestream of the main courtroom cutting out and witness testimony frequently garbled.

Ms. Vincent explained how Eric Lewis, a United States-based attorney acting as a witness for the prosecution, was inaudible during his testimony on Monday, with the court trying and failing for two hours to establish a usable video connection before adjourning for the day.

Things were little improved on Tuesday.

"There was rarely an extended stretch of time when I could adequately hear what was going on," Ms. Vincent said, owing to a buzzing noise in the public gallery and an echo on the livestream in the viewing area.

On Wednesday, the first witness testimony conducted by video link – with John Goetz, an investigative journalist – began with some shaky moments but eventually settled down, and his testimony was largely audible.

The afternoon testimony of Daniel Ellsberg, the former military analyst who leaked the Pentagon Papers in 1971, was also smooth for the most part.

But Ms. Vincent noted that the issues had already affected the proceedings in a number of ways, making the situation "insufficient for observation and to ensure open justice."

From the start, press freedom advocates and rights groups have denounced the charges against Mr. Assange, saying that they raise profound First Amendment issues because the publication of the classified material is indistinguishable from the practices of traditional news organizations.

Mr. Assange, 49, was arrested in London last year after being expelled from the Ecuadorean Embassy, where he had spent seven years behind a veil of diplomatic immunity.

The United States has indicted Mr. Assange on 18 counts of violating the Espionage Act for soliciting, obtaining and sometimes publishing material that the government deemed classified, in connection with the release to WikiLeaks of archives of military and diplomatic documents by Chelsea Manning, a former Army intelligence analyst.

Mr. Assange is not facing charges over the later publication by WikiLeaks of Democratic emails stolen by Russian hackers in the 2016 U.S. election.

In addition to the technical problems, rights groups complained that a number of international observers had been denied access to the courtroom in an official capacity and that their access to the remote livestream had been revoked.

Some, like Ms. Vincent, have been allowed to sit in an overflow courtroom open to the public, where the witnesses are shown on video. But she said she worried that the technical issues were just the tip of the iceberg.

"What we are seeing now, this week, you can't really divorce the tech issue from the other restrictions on observers," she said.

During the first phase of the hearing in February, Amnesty International and other observers had been granted permission to attend the hearing as official monitors.

This time around, that has changed, according to Julia Hall, Amnesty International's expert in counterterrorism, criminal justice and human rights in Europe. Her organization requested access to the courtroom, she said, but was initially allowed access only to a livestream to view the hearing remotely. But last week, that was abruptly revoked when the hearing began.

"This situation that we are in right now is quite disturbing, and it's unique," Ms. Hall said. "This court has failed dramatically to recognize a key component of open justice, and that is how international trial monitors monitor a hearing for its compliance with domestic law and international law."

Barring further delays, the hearing is expected to be finished by early October.

When asked about the issues during Mr. Assange's hearing, a spokesman for Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service, which administers the court, offered only a general statement.

"We work hard to ensure that any technical issues are identified and repaired as soon as possible," the spokesman said. The Ministry of Justice, when asked for comment, directed requests back to the courts service.

In June, the ministry announced plans for an additional 142 million pounds, about \$183 million, to help speed up technological improvements and modernize courtrooms.

Several requests for comment from lawyers for the prosecution and from Mr. Assange's defense lawyers on the impact of the technology issues have gone unanswered. But rights groups assert that, because of the implications for press freedom, the issues must be resolved immediately.

"This case is of tremendous international public interest as it has ramifications in not just the U.S. and U.K. but internationally," Ms. Vincent said.

Charlie Savage contributed reporting from Washington.

Photograph

Faulty livestreams and other glitches have hampered Julian Assange's extradition trial. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL LEAL-OLIVAS/A.F.P. -- GETTY IMAGES); The situation at the Central Criminal Court in London is "insufficient for

observation and to ensure open justice," one critic said. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NIKLAS HALLE'N/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

DETAILS

Subject:	Testimony; Pandemics; Diplomatic & consular services; Trials; Indictments; Court hearings & proceedings; Coronaviruses; Prosecutions; Extradition; COVID-19
Location:	United States--US
People:	Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: Amnesty International; NAICS: 813311; Name: WikiLeaks.org; NAICS: 519130
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Document 8 of 35

A Canary Who Just Keeps Breathing Fire

Paton, Elizabeth . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]23 July 2020: D.4.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

The British fashion designer came out of lockdown to perch inside a giant bird cage, suspended 10 feet in the air, outside the Old Bailey criminal court in London.

LONDON -- Four months after Britain went into lockdown, most office workers have yet to return to the City of London. The once heaving thoroughfares of this global financial hub, also known as the "Square Mile," have remained largely empty since March.

But just after 8 a.m. Tuesday, a yelling scrum of photographers, reporters and protesters spilled across the sidewalks and into the road outside London's central criminal court, the Old Bailey, to watch a 79-year-old woman dressed in a yellow trouser suit and baseball cap suspend herself inside a bird cage 10 feet in the air, squawking at the top of her lungs.

"I am the canary in the coal mine," shrieked Dame Vivienne Westwood, the flamboyant British fashion designer, couturier to everyone from supermodels to world leaders, punk icon, eco-warrior and political activist. She held a megaphone aloft and said to the cheering crowd: "If I die down the coal mine from poisonous gas, then that's the signal."

Ms. Westwood had been lured out of 16 weeks in isolation by the plight of the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, who is fighting extradition from Britain to the United States.

Mr. Assange, 49, is wanted by U.S. authorities to stand trial on 18 charges, including conspiring to hack government computers and espionage. Last year, the United States began extradition proceedings after he was dragged from the Ecuadorian embassy in London, where he had been holed up for almost seven years.

"I am Julian Assange," Ms. Westwood continued, legs swinging in the breeze, as a garbage truck pulled over and started to reverse loudly down a small side street. Several bemused members of the court staff peered through the Old Bailey's large archways to get a look at the unfolding commotion, while a white van driver tooted his horn in appreciation.

"And I am a canary. I am half poisoned already from government corruption and gaming of the system and legal system by governments," Ms. Westwood said. The designer -- who used salty language throughout her speech -- said she was "still whistling away" while the world's 7 billion people did not know what was going on.

Ms. Westwood, who made her name by defining the rebellious aesthetic of London in the 1970s, has dressed the Sex Pistols, supermodels like Naomi Campbell and Kate Moss, and celebrities like Harry Styles and Helena

Bonham Carter, translating the rigor and shock value of punk music into more commercially palatable tartan offerings and iconoclastic ball gowns with safety pins, tulle and slogans.

She is no stranger to headline-grabbing stunts, from dressing up as Margaret Thatcher for a Tatler cover in 1989, accepting an Order of the British Empire from Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace with no panties on and driving a tank to then-Prime Minister David Cameron's Oxfordshire home in an anti-fracking protest in 2015.

Mr. Assange first made headlines in 2010 when he began publishing secret American military and diplomatic documents that were provided by the former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning, who was convicted at a court-martial in 2013 of leaking the documents.

For the last year Mr. Assange has been held at Belmarsh Prison in London, and, if he is successfully extradited, he could face as many as 175 years in prison if found guilty on all charges.

After several minutes on the megaphone and then being carefully winched to safety, Ms. Westwood pretended to be a bird by screeching at her cage for photographers as protesters held up "Free Assange" banners nearby. Later, she explained that her activist son, Joe Corré, a "captain" of a campaign in defense of Mr. Assange, was the mastermind behind the protest.

Mr. Corré, who founded the underwear label Agent Provocateur, turned down a Member of the Order of the British Empire honor in 2007 in a protest against Britain's participation in the Iraq war.

"There's no time to spare now whatsoever," Ms. Westwood said as she pulled on a face mask. "If Julian gets sent to America, it is the worst thing that could happen in the world for justice and freedom of speech. This could happen to every journalist."

Ms. Westwood also said that, despite being a designer in business for more than 50 years, she hadn't spent that much time fashioning her canary outfit.

"It was the only thing I could find that was yellow, though I did try hard to make my eyes look like that of a bird -- can you see," she said, widening them to show off the wild multicolored plumes of crayon swirls that swept up her temples. "Are you looking closely enough?"

Photograph

Outside the Old Bailey court in London, Vivienne Westwood protested the extradition of the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT DUNHAM/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (D5)

DETAILS

Subject:	Coal mining; Fashion designers; Extradition; Diplomatic & consular services; British Empire
Location:	United States--US United Kingdom--UK
People:	Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130
URL:	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/21/style/vivienne-westwood-julian-assange.html
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Copyright:	Copyright New York Times Company Jul 23, 2020
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LINKS

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Document 9 of 35

Roger Stone Was in Contact With Julian Assange in 2017, Documents Show [With graphic(s)]

LaFraniere, Sharon . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]29 Apr 2020.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT



[Enlarge this image.](#)

WASHINGTON — One of the enduring mysteries left unsolved by the Mueller inquiry was whether Roger Stone, President Donald Trump's longtime friend and political adviser, ever communicated during the 2016 presidential campaign with Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks.

Federal investigators chased the question for months to figure out who, if anyone, in Trump's world knew that WikiLeaks was going to release a trove of damaging Democratic emails in an effort to bolster his chances of winning.

Now hundreds of pages of court documents from the federal investigation of Stone, released late Monday, show that at least after the election, the two men had maintained a personal relationship. Stone had repeatedly denied that fact after federal and congressional inquiries got underway.

Records show he exchanged messages with Assange in June 2017, seven months after Trump's election victory. The men discussed a different federal inquiry into the release by WikiLeaks in 2010 of classified American documents, a decade-long saga that resulted in criminal charges against Assange.

"If the US government moves on you I will bring down the entire house of cards," Stone wrote in a private Twitter message to Assange. In another message, Stone said that he was trying to intercede "at the highest level of government" on Assange's behalf. "Fed treatment of you and WikiLeaks is an outrage," he wrote.

Assange is now in a London prison, fighting extradition to the United States.

The records shed no new light on whether Stone, 67, directly communicated with Assange before the election. Investigators for the special counsel, Robert Mueller, failed to resolve that question at least in part because both Stone and Assange refused to cooperate. The team found insufficient evidence to charge anyone associated with the Trump campaign of conspiring with Russia to influence the results of the election.

Questioned by a congressional committee about his contacts with WikiLeaks in September 2017, Stone lied repeatedly under oath. He was convicted last year of obstructing a congressional inquiry, lying to federal authorities and witness tampering and was later sentenced to 40 months in prison. He has yet to begin serving his prison term, and has repeatedly and publicly implored Trump to pardon him.

In a statement, Stone reiterated his protests that he was wrongly prosecuted and said that the documents showed "the baseless overreach of the Mueller witch hunt and exonerate me from the crazed left-wing media charges of Russian collusion, WikiLeaks collaboration and the receipt and dissemination of stolen emails, false narratives that ruined my life for the last three years."

The hundreds of pages of search warrants and affidavits were released in response to a lawsuit filed by The New York Times and other news media organizations.

Prosecutors said that Stone lied to the House Intelligence Committee about his efforts to contact WikiLeaks before the 2016 election because the truth would have embarrassed Trump and his campaign.

This month, Judge Amy Berman Jackson of U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, who oversaw Stone's case, rejected his request for a new trial. Federal authorities are expected to order him to begin serving his sentence soon.

Stone's explanations of his relationship with Assange have varied widely. Before the 2016 election, he first said he was in direct touch with Assange, then said he was communicating with him through an intermediary. Later, when those claims became a political liability for Trump, he said he was only bluffing.

"I have never met with, nor spoken to Julian Assange, either in person, by telephone or email or any other means," he said on his website in April 2018. "Assange himself has repeatedly and publicly said the same thing."

The June 2017 exchange of messages shows that Stone tried to reassure Assange that he would escape criminal prosecution. "With the trumped-up sexual assault charges dropped, I don't know of any crime you need to be pardoned for," he wrote. He was apparently referring to a decision by Swedish authorities to drop a sexual assault investigation that focused on Assange.

Assange replied: "Between CIA and DoJ they're doing quite a lot. On the DoJ side that's coming most strongly from those obsessed with taking down Trump trying to squeeze us into a deal."

Six days later, Stone wrote: "I am doing everything possible to address the issues at the highest level of Government," adding that he had to be circumspect because his communications were monitored. The records also reveal that before the 2016 election, Stone created hundreds of fake Facebook accounts. One of his assistants told investigators that he created "a couple hundred" Facebook accounts for Stone and that aides helped Stone shape them to appear real.

Stone apparently wanted fake accounts so he could call greater attention to stolen emails, released by WikiLeaks, that proved damaging to Hillary Clinton's campaign. Facebook requires users to provide their real names and information, but it is not a crime to create fake accounts.

DETAILS

Subject:	Politics; Political campaigns; Election results; Criminal investigations; Presidential elections; Sex crimes; Congressional committees
Location:	United States-US New York
People:	Trump, Donald J Stone, Roger J Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: New York Times Co; NAICS: 511110, 511120, 515112, 515120; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130
Identifier / keyword:	Elections Corporations Legal Profession Education Humanities History (Academic Subject) Two Thousands (Decade) Courts And The Judiciary Politics And Government Presidential Elections (Us) Science And Technology Media Medicine And Health Criminal Justice Crime And Criminals Washington (Dc) United States Sweden Russia London (England) Twitter Facebook Inc Wikileaks New York Times House Committee On Intelligence Trump, Donald J Stone, Roger J Jr Mueller, Robert S Iii Lafraniere, Sharon Jackson, Amy Berman Clinton, Hillary Rodham Assange, Julian P Extradition Quarantines Special Prosecutors (Independent Counsel) Sex Crimes Robberies And Thefts Search And Seizure Decisions And Verdicts Mergers, Acquisitions And Divestitures News And News Media Two Thousand Seventeen Social Media Computers And The Internet Ex Convicts Presidential Election Of 2020 Elections, House Of Representatives Classified Information And State Secrets Rumors And Misinformation Russian Interference In 2016 Us Elections And Ties To Trump Associates United States Politics And Government
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LINKS

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Document 10 of 35

United States Lawyers Present Case for Extraditing WikiLeaks Founder From Britain

Santora, Marc . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]25 Feb 2020: A.5.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

The WikiLeaks founder appeared in a London court to fight attempts by the American authorities to make him answer charges of espionage.

LONDON -- The United States government began laying out its extradition case against Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder, in court on Monday by arguing that he had put lives at risk and was no better than an "ordinary" criminal.

"Reporting or journalism is not an excuse for criminal activities or a license to break ordinary criminal laws," James Lewis, a lawyer representing the U.S. government, told the court.

Mr. Assange has been indicted on 17 counts of violating the Espionage Act for his role in obtaining and publishing secret military and diplomatic documents and he could face as many as 175 years in prison if found guilty on all

charges.

His lawyers will begin presenting their defense later in the week.

Mr. Assange's appearance in Woolwich Crown Court was the latest twist in a saga that stretches back to 2010, when he began publishing secret American military and diplomatic documents that were provided by the former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning, who was convicted at a court-martial in 2013 of leaking the documents.

From the outset, Mr. Assange's case has raised profound First Amendment issues.

He is accused of conspiring with Ms. Manning to break into a classified military network under another user's identity. The subsequent disclosures included a classified military video showing a 2007 attack by Apache helicopters in Baghdad that killed a dozen people, including two employees of the Reuters news agency.

To his defenders, dozens of whom gathered outside the courtroom in a show of support, Mr. Assange, 48, is the victim of a politically driven prosecution.

Mr. Lewis, the lawyer for the U.S. government, told the court on Monday that the charges against Mr. Assange were not connected to the publication of materials demonstrating wrongdoing by American military forces or "embarrassing" officials, but for "publishing specific classified documents that contained unredacted names of innocent people who risked their safety and freedom to aid the United States and its allies."

"These are ordinary criminal charges and any person, journalist or source who hacks or attempts to gain unauthorized access to a secure system or aids and abets others to do so is guilty of computer misuse," he said.

Mr. Assange has largely receded from public view after he was dragged out of the Ecuadorian Embassy in London in April. He had found refuge in the embassy for seven years to avoid extradition to Sweden over rape allegations. He denied those charges, and the case has since been dropped.

His strange existence at the embassy, where he lived with his cat in a small corner room, helped him become perhaps the world's most famous self-proclaimed political refugee.

He continued to run his internet group, hold news conferences and wave to admirers from an embassy balcony. But with the departure in 2017 of Ecuador's leftist president, Rafael Correa, who had granted him asylum, Mr. Assange's days in the embassy were numbered.

By the time the Metropolitan Police in London dragged him from the embassy in April, he looked haggard and disheveled.

For the last year, he has been held at Belmarsh Prison, which is next to the courtroom where his extradition case will be heard over the next month.

Mr. Assange's lawyers, in pretrial motions, suggested that they would cast the prosecution as politically motivated and argue that their client was simply acting as a journalist and publisher.

Mark Summers, one of Mr. Assange's lawyers, has said that prosecuting his client could have a chilling effect on press freedom.

"This is part of an avowed war on whistle-blowers to include investigative journalists and publishers," Mr. Summers told the court last year.

Mr. Assange's legal team has also sought to tie their client to President Trump, telling the court that former Representative Dana Rohrabacher of California, an ally of the president, had offered a pardon to Mr. Assange on Mr. Trump's behalf if the WikiLeaks founder were to say that Russia had nothing to do with the 2016 hacking of the Democratic National Committee.

The White House press secretary, Stephanie Grisham, has called the suggestion of a pardon offer "a complete fabrication and a total lie."

Photograph

A protest in support of the WikiLeaks founder, Julian Assange, outside a court in London where he appeared on Monday. He could face as many as 175 years in prison if found guilty on all charges in the United States.

(PHOTOGRAPH BY Daniel Leal-Olivas/Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

DETAILS

Subject:	Journalism; Attorneys; Publishing; Diplomatic &consular services; Espionage; Extradition; Armed forces
Location:	Sweden Russia United States--US United Kingdom--UK Baghdad Iraq California France Ecuador
People:	Trump, Donald J Grisham, Stephanie Manning, Chelsea Assange, Julian Paul Rohrabacher, Dana Correa, Rafael
Company / organization:	Name: Democratic National Committee; NAICS: 813940; Name: WikiLeaks.org; NAICS: 519130
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Copyright:	Copyright New York Times Company Feb 25, 2020

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Document 11 of 35

White House Denies Claim Of a Pardon For Assange

Savage, Charlie . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]20 Feb 2020: A.14.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

A statement in a London court put a twist on a previously known attempt by a Republican congressman to get the WikiLeaks founder to absolve Russia of election meddling.

WASHINGTON -- The White House on Wednesday denied an allegation that President Trump had offered to pardon Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder who is fighting extradition to the United States, if he absolved Russia of hacking Democratic emails during the 2016 campaign.

Mr. Assange's legal team told a court in London on Wednesday that Mr. Trump had made the offer in 2017 through Dana Rohrabacher, who at the time was a Republican congressman from California.

Stephanie Grisham, the White House press secretary, dismissed the accusation.

"The president barely knows Dana Rohrabacher, other than he's an ex-congressman," Ms. Grisham told reporters.

"He's never spoken to him on this subject or almost any subject. It is a complete fabrication and a total lie."

It is not a new revelation that the congressman tried to broker a deal in which Mr. Trump would make Mr. Assange's legal troubles with the United States go away if he provided evidence disproving that the Russians had hacked the Democratic emails WikiLeaks published.

But the claim, which came the day after Mr. Trump pardoned numerous high-profile white-collar criminals, grabbed attention because a lawyer for Mr. Assange portrayed Mr. Rohrabacher as acting on Mr. Trump's instructions.

Previous accounts have described Mr. Rohrabacher as freelancing an idea that he came up with on his own.

On Wednesday, a lawyer for Mr. Assange, Edward Fitzgerald, referred in court to a statement by another lawyer for Mr. Assange, Jennifer Robinson, describing a purported quid-pro-quo offer conveyed by Mr. Rohrabacher, according to a Daily Beast account of a hearing on what evidence could be admitted at an upcoming extradition hearing.

The statement by Ms. Robinson, he said, described "Mr. Rohrabacher going to see Mr. Assange and saying, on instructions from the president, he was offering a pardon or some other way out" of his legal troubles if Mr. Assange "said Russia had nothing to do with the D.N.C. leaks."

The Wall Street Journal reported in September 2017 that Mr. Rohrabacher – who lost his seat in the 2018 midterm elections – was trying to broker a deal for a pardon if Mr. Assange produced evidence absolving Russia of the

hack. That would have also absolved the Trump campaign of suspicions that it conspired with Russia. But that article portrayed Mr. Rohrabacher as approaching the White House with an idea that he had come up with, not acting as Mr. Trump's envoy. It said that he spoke with John F. Kelly, Mr. Trump's chief of staff at the time, about the possibility of "a meeting between Mr. Assange and a representative of Mr. Trump, preferably someone with direct communication with the president," but that Mr. Kelly had not passed that message on to the president. After the Journal article, a local news program for a CBS affiliate in Los Angeles, KCAL, interviewed Mr. Rohrabacher. He confirmed the account, saying that "The Wall Street Journal has the whole thing." Mr. Rohrabacher also said in that interview that Mr. Assange "repeatedly told me that the Russians were not involved at all."

But a later indictment of Russian officials and a lengthy narrative report by the special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III, provided extensive details about how the Russian government went about hacking the Democratic emails. Mr. Mueller, however, did not find evidence proving any conspiracy with the Trump campaign.

Mr. Assange, who was holed up in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London to avoid extradition to Sweden for a sexual abuse investigation, was arrested and extracted from the embassy in April 2019. It was the same day that the Justice Department unsealed a narrow charge accusing him of a hacking conspiracy with Chelsea Manning, the former Army intelligence analyst who leaked archives of military and diplomatic documents to WikiLeaks.

The next month, the Justice Department significantly expanded the case against Mr. Assange by adding charges under the Espionage Act that he solicited, acquired and published classified information. The decision to bring criminal charges for such journalistic activities – a separate question from whether Mr. Assange counts as a journalist – was groundbreaking and has surrounded his potential trial with novel First Amendment issues.

But Mr. Assange is fighting the United States' request that Britain extradite him, arguing that the Trump administration has brought charges against him for political reasons.

Photograph

Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, is fighting extradition to the United States. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Henry Nicholls/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

DETAILS

Subject:	Diplomatic &consular services; Indictments; Presidents; Conspiracy; Extradition
Location:	Sweden Russia United States--US United Kingdom--UK California Los Angeles California
People:	Trump, Donald J Grisham, Stephanie Mueller, Robert S III Manning, Chelsea Assange, Julian Paul Rohrabacher, Dana Kelly, John F
Company / organization:	Name: Daily Beast; NAICS: 519130; Name: Wall Street Journal; NAICS: 511110, 519130; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: Department of Justice; NAICS: 922130
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Document 12 of 35

The New Threat to Journalists

Risen, James . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]27 Jan 2020: A.23.

[🔗 ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

The cases against Julian Assange and Glenn Greenwald may be models for a crackdown.

When Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder, was charged last year by the Trump administration in connection

with the publication of secret United States government documents nearly a decade earlier, many journalists expressed deep concern about the dangerous precedent the case could set for investigative reporting in America. But few seemed to consider that the case might also serve as a model for other nations eager to clamp down on press freedom.

On Tuesday, Glenn Greenwald, an American journalist living and working in Brazil, was charged, in a criminal complaint brought by Brazilian prosecutors, with cybercrimes in connection with his stories on private messages among Brazilian officials that revealed corruption and abuses at the highest levels of the government. Brazilian prosecutors asserted that Mr. Greenwald was part of a criminal organization that hacked the cellphones of government officials. He has denied the charges. (Full disclosure: Mr. Greenwald is a co-founder of The Intercept, where I work as a reporter; I also run the First Look Press Freedom Defense Fund, part of the nonprofit organization that includes The Intercept.)

The case against Mr. Greenwald is eerily similar to the Trump administration's case against Mr. Assange. Last April, the Justice Department charged Mr. Assange with aiding a source, the former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning, to gain access to a United States military computer database. In May 2019, the charges against him were broadened, and he was indicted under the Espionage Act in connection with the publication of American military and diplomatic documents by WikiLeaks.

Both cases are based in part on a new prosecutorial concept – that journalism can be proved to be a crime through a focus on interactions between reporters and their sources. Prosecutors are now scrutinizing the processes by which sources obtain classified or private information and then provide it to journalists. Since those interactions today are largely electronic, prosecutors are seeking to criminalize journalism by turning to anti-hacking laws to implicate reporters in the purported criminal activity of their sources in gaining access to data on computers or cellphones without authorization.

This blunt approach gives the government enormous leverage over journalists and, in the United States, provides them with a detour around First Amendment concerns. If these cases become templates that prosecutors in the United States and other nations follow, virtually every investigative reporter will become vulnerable to criminal charges and imprisonment.

Both the Trump administration and the right-wing Brazilian government of President Jair Bolsonaro seem to have decided to experiment with such draconian anti-press tactics by trying them out first on aggressive and disagreeable figures.

In fact, by the time of his indictment last year, there was still an ongoing debate within the media about whether Mr. Assange should even be considered a journalist at all.

In 2010, when WikiLeaks began publishing the huge leaks of United States government documents it had obtained from Ms. Manning, Mr. Assange suddenly emerged as a strange new player in the modern journalistic landscape. Under his leadership, WikiLeaks both published the documents itself and also shared many of the leaked documents with other major news organizations, including The New York Times.

Mr. Assange was both a publisher and an intermediary between sources and reporters, which made it difficult to define his journalistic role. His later involvement in the Trump-Russia case – in 2016, WikiLeaks obtained and released emails and other documents from the Clinton presidential campaign and the Democratic National Committee from a hacker believed to be a front for Russian intelligence – transformed Mr. Assange into an even more incendiary character with little public support. (The federal charges against Mr. Assange are not related to his involvement in the 2016 campaign.)

Mr. Greenwald revels in his divisiveness and his disdain for the mainstream media, and he and I have publicly clashed over our differing views of the Trump-Russia case. But he is also a zealous journalist who came to prominence in 2013 for his Pulitzer Prize-winning coverage of a giant trove of documents from the National Security Agency that were leaked by the former N.S.A. contractor Edward Snowden.

Last year, Mr. Greenwald obtained another big leak, the private messages of Brazilian government officials concerning a major corruption case in Brazil that had led to the conviction of the former Brazilian president Luiz

Inácio Lula da Silva.

Mr. Greenwald's reporting revealed that the investigation that led to Mr. da Silva's conviction was deeply politicized and corrupt. The stories were explosive in Brazil, and ultimately helped lead to Mr. da Silva's release from prison in November.

But Mr. Greenwald's reporting enraged President Bolsonaro, who had been leveling threats against the journalist for months before the complaint issued on Tuesday.

In an interview with me on Thursday, Mr. Greenwald agreed that there are parallels between his case and Mr. Assange's, and added that he doesn't believe that Mr. Bolsonaro would have taken action against an American journalist if he had thought President Trump would oppose it.

"Bolsonaro worships Trump, and the Bolsonaro government is taking the signal from Trump that this kind of behavior is acceptable," he said.

The State Department has not issued any statement of concern about Brazil's case against Mr. Greenwald, which in past administrations would have been common practice.

"This is all about targeting reporters who are publishing information that is embarrassing, and not like the 90 percent of the leaks coming out of Washington that are official leaks designed to support the people in power," said Joshua Dratel, a criminal defense attorney in New York who has represented prominent whistle blowers and who also represented WikiLeaks in a civil suit brought against it by the Democratic National Committee.

In fact, Mr. Trump's anti-press rhetoric and actions have encouraged authoritarian regimes around the world to prosecute and jail journalists, and to impose new anti-press laws and other measures designed to curtail negative coverage.

Joel Simon, the executive director of the Committee to Protect Journalists, said in an interview that one of the latest tactics spreading around the globe is the creation of vaguely worded "fake news" laws that criminalize news that government officials deem to be wrong. "Fake news" is, of course, a phrase that Mr. Trump has helped popularize.

"Qatar just promulgated a fake news law this week," Mr. Simon said, noting that Singapore also has one. "These fake news laws are absolutely correlated with the Trump administration."

The most tragic evidence that Mr. Trump is enabling a global crackdown on the press has been his failure to hold Saudi Arabia's leader, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, accountable for the brutal 2018 murder of the Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi. "The Trump administration is an accessory after the fact to the Khashoggi murder," Mr. Simon said.

While the Bush and Obama administrations were "inconsistent" on press issues, "they were still willing to discuss concerns about press freedom with another country in the framework of the bilateral relationship," he added.

"That's gone now with Trump."

It will be tragic if journalists shrug off the attack on the contrarian Mr. Greenwald and don't see his case for what it truly signifies -- that Trump-like attacks on the press are spreading like a virus around the globe.

James Risen is the senior national security correspondent for The Intercept. As a reporter for The New York Times, he and another former Times reporter, Eric Lichtblau, received the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for national reporting on secret domestic eavesdropping by the federal government.

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Photograph

Glenn Greenwald at a news conference in July before a rally on his behalf. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RICARDO BORGES/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

DETAILS

Subject:	Journalism; Journalists; Criminalization; Pulitzer prizes; Corruption; Freedom of the press; Indictments; Presidents; Government documents; Convictions; Cellular telephones; National security; Publishing; Reporters; Committees; Public officials; Threats; News media
Location:	Russia Qatar Brazil United States–US Saudi Arabia Singapore
People:	Trump, Donald J Mohammed bin Salman, Prince of Saudi Arabia Khashoggi, Jamal A Manning, Chelsea Bolsonaro, Jair Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: Democratic National Committee; NAICS: 813940; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: New York Times Co; NAICS: 511110, 511120, 515112, 515120; Name: Committee to Protect Journalists; NAICS: 813910; Name: National Security Agency; NAICS: 928110; Name: Department of Justice; NAICS: 922130
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Document 13 of 35

Assange to Testify at Trial Over Illegal Recordings at Ecuador's Embassy

Minder, Raphael . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]02 Dec 2019: A.8.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

Recordings have emerged of private conversations that Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder, had while living in the Ecuadorean Embassy. He and a Spanish prosecutor blame the United States.

MADRID – This much has become clear in recent weeks: When Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder, was living in Ecuador's embassy in London, someone was spying on him, recording his private conversations. The question is: Who ordered the surveillance?

Mr. Assange – in jail in Britain and facing prosecution in the United States – is scheduled to testify remotely later this month before a Spanish judge in a criminal case accusing a Spanish security company of eavesdropping on him illegally.

The Spanish court case has revealed a new set of secrets in the international saga of Mr. Assange, 48, showing that his claims of being spied on were not just paranoia or a publicity stunt. But as with all things related to someone who has been labeled a villain and a hero, a prophet and a crank, the revelations are subject to conflicting interpretations.

In Spain's National Court, a public prosecutor and Mr. Assange's lawyers have presented a raft of evidence that he was recorded while in the Ecuadorean Embassy, which they say violated his right to privacy. The material includes video recordings, reviewed by The New York Times, in which his conversations with visitors are audible.

The prosecutor and Mr. Assange's allies argue that the C.I.A. was behind the spying. A spokesman for the agency declined to comment.

After President Trump took office in 2017, the C.I.A. began espionage aimed at Mr. Assange, WikiLeaks and their ties to Russian intelligence, and the Justice Department began building a criminal case against him. But it remains unclear whether it was the Americans who were behind bugging the embassy.

The case adds another layer of complexity to the legal travails of Mr. Assange, who has been indicted in the United States on charges of espionage and hacking that exposed classified national security secrets. The Justice Department has asked Britain to extradite him, and British courts have begun considering the request.

His lawyers plan to introduce evidence from the Spanish case into the extradition case, arguing that it should block the British government from turning him over to the Americans. They say that the surveillance includes recordings of privileged conversations Mr. Assange had with his lawyers and doctors, and proves that he cannot receive a fair trial in the United States.

The British courts are unlikely to accept that argument, according to Amy Jeffress, a lawyer at Arnold & Porter in Washington and a former Justice Department attaché at the American Embassy in London. She said the legal standard is whether extradition would comply with Britain's Human Rights Act, which protects the right to privacy but balances it against considerations like national security and fighting crime.

Mr. Assange is scheduled to testify on Dec. 20 by videoconference from Westminster Magistrates' Court before Judge José de la Mata some 800 miles away, in Spain's National Court in Madrid. The judge is handling the investigation into UC Global, a Spanish firm that was in charge of security at the Ecuadorean Embassy during Mr. Assange's long stay there.

David Morales, who founded UC Global after many years in the Spanish military, was indicted in October, charged with privacy violation, bribery and money laundering. He denied wrongdoing, and Judge de la Mata released him pending a trial, but ordered him to surrender his passport and report regularly to the authorities.

One of Mr. Morales's early security jobs was protecting the daughters of Rafael Correa, the president of Ecuador at the time, who were living in Europe. That paved the way for a contract with Ecuador's embassy in London.

In 2017, Mr. Morales overhauled the security equipment and procedures at the embassy, replacing surveillance cameras with new ones that had microphones, according to a 61-page court filing by the public prosecutor. Mr. Assange was repeatedly assured by Ecuadorean officials that he was not being recorded.

In reality, he was. He took precautions like using a white noise device in an attempt to mask conversations, and the Spanish prosecutor says UC Global took steps to counteract them.

The company put microphones in embassy restrooms, where Mr. Assange sometimes held meetings for greater privacy, the court filing says. And it states that UC Global placed a microphone in a meeting room, hidden in a fire extinguisher, that could record up to 12 hours of sound.

Recordings were sent to the company's headquarters in Jerez de la Frontera, in southern Spain, the prosecution says -- a charge that Mr. Morales denies. When he was detained, the police also raided his home and company, and have since been decrypting emails and information from his confiscated cellphone.

The court case also relies on the testimony of some former employees of UC Global who have been granted witness protection. They said that Mr. Morales traveled to the United States once or twice a month, carrying with him hard disks containing recordings from inside the London embassy.

Mr. Morales repeatedly ordered them not to talk with Ecuadorean officials about his trips, they said.

In the court filing, the prosecution asserts that Mr. Morales returned from a security fair in Las Vegas in 2015, gathered his employees and told them that UC Global was going to work "for the dark side," which he explained as referring to the United States authorities.

He signed a contract with Las Vegas Sands, the casino and resort company of Sheldon Adelson, and the prosecution contends that Mr. Morales passed information about Mr. Assange to security officials at the company, saying it acted as a go-between with the C.I.A.

In his hearing before the Spanish judge, Mr. Morales said that any secret recording made at the London embassy was done on behalf of Ecuador's secret service and with the knowledge of the ambassador. The Ecuadorean government has flatly denied spying on Mr. Assange.

Asked by the judge why his company had set up a remote access server to allow the transfer of information gathered within the embassy, Mr. Morales said that "there was absolutely no outside access."

Mr. Morales is accused of bribing an embassy official, paying the official about \$22,000 monthly to send positive reports about UC Global's surveillance work back to the authorities in Quito.

WikiLeaks gained worldwide attention in 2010, when it published a vast cache of classified material taken from American military computer systems, most of it about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

That year, Swedish prosecutors sought to arrest and question Mr. Assange on sexual assault accusations, which he said were fabricated as a pretext for handing him to the United States. Mr. Assange, who was in Britain at the time, surrendered to the British police, posted bail and fought extradition to Sweden.

But in 2012, fearing that he would lose that case, he sought asylum in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London, and Mr.

Correa's government granted it. Mr. Assange stayed there for nearly seven years, skipping court appearances, forfeiting his bail and continuing to run WikiLeaks.

Recently, the Swedes dropped their investigation, saying that the evidence was too weak for a prosecution.

In 2016, WikiLeaks published stolen Democratic Party emails that damaged the presidential campaign of Hillary Clinton. Russian spies had hacked the party's computers, according to Robert S. Mueller III, the special counsel, but Mr. Assange denies any link to Russian intelligence.

As Mr. Assange's relations with his Ecuadorean hosts deteriorated, President Lenín Moreno, who succeeded Mr. Correa in 2017, pressured him to leave. In April this year, Ecuador revoked Mr. Assange's asylum, and the British police arrested him. He was convicted of bail-jumping and sentenced to 50 weeks in prison.

Mr. Assange contends he is a journalist, publishing what he receives from his sources, and not responsible if they have obtained it illegally. The Obama administration reluctantly accepted that argument. The Trump administration rejects it, and charges that in addition, he aided the illegal 2010 hacking.

David D. Kirkpatrick contributed reporting from London, and Charlie Savage and Julian E. Barnes from Washington.

Photograph

Julian Assange at the Ecuadorean Embassy in London in 2017. Spanish officials say he was spied on during his seven-year stay. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT DUNHAM/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

DETAILS

Subject:	Bail; Evidence; Attorneys; Diplomatic & consular services; Court hearings & proceedings; Sex crimes; Right of privacy; Extradition; National security; Trials; Political campaigns; Surveillance; Criminal investigations; Presidential elections; Prosecutions; Espionage
Location:	United Kingdom--UK Iraq Afghanistan Ecuador Las Vegas Nevada Europe Sweden Spain United States--US New York
People:	Trump, Donald J Mueller, Robert S III Clinton, Hillary Rodham Assange, Julian Paul Adelson, Sheldon Correa, Rafael
Company / organization:	Name: Arnold & Porter; NAICS: 541110; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: New York Times Co; NAICS: 511110, 511120, 515112, 515120; Name: Las Vegas Sands Inc; NAICS: 721120; Name: Democratic Party; NAICS: 813940
URL:	https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/01/world/europe/assange-spying-embassy-Ecuador.html
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Last updated:	2019-12-04
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Document 14 of 35

Assange 'Could Die' in U.K. Jail, Doctors Say

Ceylan Yeginer . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]26 Nov 2019: A.7.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

More than 60 physicians signed a letter saying that the WikiLeaks founder might not survive until February unless he receives an urgent expert medical assessment.

LONDON -- The mental and physical condition of Julian Assange has so deteriorated that he could die in a British jail before his February hearing on extradition to the United States, a group of international doctors has warned. In an open letter to Britain's home secretary, Priti Patel, more than 60 doctors called for Mr. Assange, the 48-year-old founder of WikiLeaks, to be transferred from the high-security Belmarsh prison in London to a university teaching hospital to receive an expert medical assessment.

"Were such urgent assessment and treatment not to take place, we have real concerns, on the evidence currently available, that Mr. Assange could die in prison," the letter said. "The medical situation is thereby urgent. There is no time to lose."

Their assessment is based on witness accounts from an October hearing at Westminster Magistrates' Court, in which Mr. Assange was described as "exhibiting the symptoms of a torture victim." The analysis was corroborated this month by Nils Melzer, the United Nations special rapporteur on torture, who wrote a report about Mr. Assange's health, warning that his life was at risk.

"What we have seen from the U.K. government is outright contempt for Mr. Assange's rights and integrity," Mr. Melzer wrote in the report. "Despite the medical urgency of my appeal, and the seriousness of the alleged violations, the U.K. has not undertaken any measures of investigation, prevention and redress required under international law."

The doctors' letter describes how, over the years, Mr. Assange was threatened with arrest if he left the Ecuadorean Embassy in London to seek treatment for a series of ailments, including a cracked molar and shoulder stiffness. In 2015, a trauma and psychosocial expert who assessed Mr. Assange's condition at the embassy concluded that he was suffering from moderately severe depression.

Mr. Assange is serving a 50-week prison sentence for jumping bail, imposed after he took refuge in Ecuador's Embassy seven years ago. He faces espionage charges in the United States for publishing classified military and diplomatic documents.

Last week, the Swedish authorities dropped a long-running investigation into a rape allegation against Mr. Assange after prosecutors concluded that too much time had elapsed since the events in question.

Richard Galpin, a BBC journalist present at Mr. Assange's court hearing in October, described the WikiLeaks founder as "frail-looking" and said Mr. Assange had struggled to remember when he was born.

Doctors who carried out medical assessments on Mr. Assange last year while he was in the Ecuadorean Embassy warned that his time there was "dangerous to his physical and mental health" and a "clear infringement to his human right to health care."

The doctors who signed the open letter to Ms. Patel this week said they had done so out of a professional duty to report suspected torture.

"We wish to put on record, as medical doctors, our collective serious concerns and to draw the attention of the public and the world to this grave situation," they wrote.

Photograph

The doctors asked that Julian Assange be taken to a hospital. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRY NICHOLLS/REUTERS)

DETAILS

Subject:	Criminal sentences; Torture; Diplomatic & consular services
Location:	United States-US Ecuador United Kingdom-UK
People:	Assange, Julian Paul Patel, Priti
Company / organization:	Name: United Nations-UN; NAICS: 928120; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130
URL:	https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/25/world/europe/julian-assange-health.html
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Document 15 of 35

After 9 Years, Sweden Closes Its Rape Investigation of WikiLeaks Founder

Publication info: New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]20 Nov 2019: A.4.

[🔗 ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

"The evidence is not strong enough to form the basis of an indictment," the country's deputy director of public prosecutions said.

LONDON -- The Swedish authorities announced on Tuesday that they would end an investigation into allegations of rape and sexual assault made against Julian Assange, the embattled WikiLeaks founder, that date from 2010.

"The evidence is not strong enough to form the basis of an indictment," said Eva-Marie Persson, Sweden's deputy director of public prosecutions. "In such a situation, the preliminary investigation should be discontinued, and that is what has happened."

Mr. Assange, 48, is still in a British prison awaiting a United States extradition hearing, raising questions about whether the end of the Swedish investigation would clear the path for that process to continue.

"This clears one hurdle away for Julian Assange," said Carl Tobias, a law professor at the University of Richmond.

"It brings the focus on the extradition process, and what British authorities will be willing to do."

Sweden began investigating Mr. Assange in 2010, after two women accused him of assaulting them during separate sexual encounters while he was visiting Stockholm.

When the Swedish authorities issued a European arrest warrant in 2012 seeking his extradition from Britain for questioning over "suspicion of rape, three cases of sexual molestation and illegal coercion," he fled to the Ecuadorian Embassy in London. Mr. Assange and his lawyers said they feared that if he returned to Sweden, he would then be extradited to the United States from there.

He remained in self-imposed exile in the embassy for seven years, until his arrest in April after Ecuador revoked his asylum status.

Ms. Persson said that investigators had questioned again the individuals who had been interviewed in 2010 and spoken to two additional people who had not previously been interviewed. She said that the investigators had found the accusers credible and their statements reliable but that some parts of the testimonies were contradictory.

In 2010, Anna Ardin, a Swedish woman who later spoke publicly about the incident, accused Mr. Assange of forcing her to have unprotected sex. A second woman said Mr. Assange had penetrated her without a condom as she was sleeping during the same trip to Stockholm.

"Memories fade for natural reasons," Ms. Persson said, but she emphasized that the "injured party has submitted a credible and reliable version of events."

"Her statements have been coherent, extensive and detailed," Ms. Persson said about one of the complainants.

"However, my overall assessment is that the evidential situation has been weakened to such an extent that there is no longer any reason to continue the investigation."

Asked by reporters about the length of the procedure -- almost 10 years -- Ms. Persson said that the extensive news coverage could have affected the case's viability.

"You have to consider how much the witnesses will have read and heard from the media," she said.

The Swedish authorities dropped the investigation in 2017, but it was reopened this year after Mr. Assange was arrested in London and a lawyer for one of the alleged victims asked for it to be revisited, the prosecutor said. Mr. Assange, who is Australian, has always denied the accusations, and his lawyers have repeatedly accused the complainants of trying to unjustly slur the WikiLeaks founder.

Mr. Assange was detained last year and jailed for jumping bail after Ecuador abruptly withdrew its protection of him. The United States is seeking his extradition over accusations that he tried to assist in a breach of classified data.

In September, a British court ruled that Mr. Assange must stay in a British jail until his extradition hearing, which is planned for early next year.

The Justice Department has indicted Mr. Assange on a slew of charges including 17 counts of violating the Espionage Act, accusing him of the solicitation, acquisition, and publication of classified information from the former army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning.

The charges raised questions about press freedom, and critics have expressed concern that the case could set a precedent to criminalize future acts of national security journalism.

The end of the Swedish investigation into the sexual assault allegations simplifies matters for the United States government in its effort to extradite him to American soil. Put simply, it means there is now only one country, not two, that would like the British authorities to transfer custody of him for further legal proceedings.

The Justice Department declined to comment on how the end of the Swedish investigation would affect its case. But Mr. Assange's lawyers welcomed the Swedish decision on Tuesday and said that it was time to turn to the American extradition request. Kristinn Hrafsson, the editor in chief of WikiLeaks, echoed that sentiment in a statement published by the group.

"Sweden has dropped its preliminary investigation into Mr. Assange for the third time, after reopening it without any new evidence or information," he said. "Let us now focus on the threat Mr. Assange has been warning about for years: the belligerent prosecution of the United States and the threat it poses to the First Amendment."

Elisabeth Massi Fritz, a lawyer for one of the women who made allegations against Mr. Assange, said in an emailed statement that she and her client do not share the prosecutor's assessment.

She said there are logical reasons why the oral evidence from nine years ago has changed and said that if the earlier investigation had included more detailed questioning, "then the interviews would have been of higher quality and we would have been able to use them today."

"Unfortunately, that is not the case," Ms. Massi Fritz said. "The only right decision would have been to interview the suspect in London."

Megan Specia contributed reporting from London, Christina Anderson from Stockholm and Charlie Savage from Washington.

Julian Assange, founder of WikiLeaks, at the Ecuadorean Embassy in London in 2017. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Frank Augstein/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

DETAILS

Subject:	Investigations; Attorneys; Assaults; Rape; Diplomatic & consular services; Indictments; Sex crimes; Extradition
Location:	Sweden United States–US United Kingdom–UK Ecuador
People:	Manning, Chelsea Tobias, Carl Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: University of Richmond; NAICS: 611310; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130
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Copyright:	Copyright New York Times Company Nov 20, 2019
Last updated:	2019-11-20
Database:	New York Times

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Document 16 of 35

Judge's Ruling Keeps Assange In a U.K. Jail Until Hearing

Palko Karasz . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]14 Sep 2019:
A.6.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

LONDON -- Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, must remain in prison until an extradition hearing next year, a judge in London ruled on Friday, citing a "history of absconding," according to British news agencies. Mr. Assange had been scheduled to be released next week, after serving a 50-week sentence for jumping bail in 2012 and taking refuge in Ecuador's London embassy rather than accepting extradition to Sweden to face a rape accusation.

But he is wanted in the United States, where he faces charges of conspiracy to hack government computers, and of obtaining and publishing secret documents in 2010.

Mr. Assange has also been under attack for WikiLeaks' release during the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign of thousands of Democratic Party emails stolen by Russian hackers, in what investigators say was an effort to damage the presidential campaign of Hillary Clinton.

But Mr. Assange, who denied that the emails were stolen, has not been charged in connection with their release. At the hearing Friday, District Judge Vanessa Baraitser told Mr. Assange that as a person facing extradition, he would have to remain in prison, the BBC reported. "In my view I have substantial ground for believing if I release you, you will abscond again," she said.

When asked if he understood what was going on, Mr. Assange, who appeared via video link from Belmarsh Prison in Southeast London, wearing a loosefitting T-shirt, said, "Not really."

"I'm sure the lawyers will explain it," he said, according to the British television network ITV.

Lawyers for Mr. Assange and other supporters have described him as in deteriorating physical and mental health. He was said to be too unwell to attend one previous hearing even by video link.

Mr. Assange's legal team did not immediately respond to questions. According to ITV, his lawyers declined to make an application for bail on Friday.

Mr. Assange has been relying on the support of lawyers for years, as he fought multiple charges in different countries. Hailed as a hero for transparency by some, and cursed as a criminal by others, his latest appearances in the limelight have all been connected to those judicial proceedings.

While his role in publishing classified details of the United States' military actions in Iraq and Syria have earned him praise, WikiLeaks' publication of Democratic Party emails alienated many supporters.

The United States has had Mr. Assange in its sights since 2010, when his organization published a giant trove of classified documents, mostly about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Last year an indictment, accidentally unsealed, revealed a single count of computer hacking, saying he had conspired with the former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning to hack into a Pentagon computer network.

After British police arrested Mr. Assange in April, dragging his frail, unkept figure out of Ecuador's Embassy, where he had been living for seven years, the United States moved to formally request Mr. Assange's extradition.

The Obama administration held back from pressing more serious charges against Mr. Assange. But things appeared different under President Trump. In May, the United States added 17 charges to the list, including violating the Espionage Act, a move that has raised profound First Amendment issues.

Mr. Assange's extradition promises to be a long and difficult process, decided by the courts but complicated by questions of high-level diplomacy and politics.

In May, a United Nations expert who had visited Mr. Assange in prison said his punishment amounted to "psychological torture," and accused Britain and the United States of "ganging up" on him.

A further complication came in May when Swedish prosecutors said they would reopen an investigation into the rape allegation against Mr. Assange.

If Sweden issued an arrest warrant, it would be up to Home Secretary Priti Patel -- the British cabinet minister in charge of policing and security matters -- to decide whether the American or Swedish request should have precedence.

Photograph

Assange

DETAILS

Subject:	Diplomatic &consular services; Political parties; Indictments; Political campaigns; Prisons; Presidential elections; Extradition
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Location:	Sweden United States–US United Kingdom–UK Iraq Afghanistan Syria Ecuador
People:	Trump, Donald J Manning, Chelsea Patel, Priti Clinton, Hillary Rodham Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: United Nations–UN; NAICS: 928120; Name: Democratic Party; NAICS: 813940; Name: WikiLeaks.org; NAICS: 519130
URL:	https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/13/world/europe/julian-assange-arrest.html
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LINKS

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U.S. Extradition Hearing for Assange Is Scheduled for February by British Court

Specia, Megan . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]15 June 2019: A.4.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

LONDON -- A British court on Friday set February 2020 as the date for the full extradition hearing on whether Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, should be sent to the United States to face a slew of charges, including several under the Espionage Act.

Mr. Assange, 47, appeared by video link from Belmarsh Prison on the outskirts of London for his first hearing since the United States formally requested his extradition. He had skipped a previous hearing because, his lawyer said, he was too ill to appear. Some experts, including a United Nations official, said he had exhibited signs of a deteriorating physical and mental condition.

Mr. Assange's hearing came days after Britain's home secretary, Sajid Javid, signed the extradition request from the United States and expressed his support for Mr. Assange's detention.

"He's rightly behind bars," Mr. Javid told BBC's Radio 4.

Protesters holding signs that read "Hands off Assange" outside Westminster Magistrates Court in London on Friday denounced Mr. Javid's decision and demanded Mr. Assange's release. If the court rules in the United States' favor, the extradition process is expected to be a long and complicated one.

Prosecutors from the United States had initially charged Mr. Assange with a single count of computer hacking, and said he had conspired with the former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning to hack into a Pentagon computer network, a crime punishable by up to five years in an American prison.

But in May, prosecutors added 17 charges to the list, including violating the Espionage Act, a move that has raised profound First Amendment issues. Most of the new charges were related to obtaining the secret document archives as opposed to publishing them, Justice Department officials said. But some worry it could set a precedent to criminalize future acts of national-security journalism.

The charges stem from Mr. Assange's purported involvement in a 2010 leak of hundreds of thousands of classified documents, mostly related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, that proved damaging and embarrassing for the United States and its allies.

In a brief court appearance on Friday, Mr. Assange, wearing glasses and a gray T-shirt, denied cracking a Pentagon network password as prosecutors read out the accusations against him, according to Reuters.

"It is important that people aren't fooled into believing that WikiLeaks is anything but a publisher," Mr. Assange told the court. "The U.S. government has tried to mislead the press."

Mr. Assange is serving a 50-week sentence for jumping bail in Britain and is still appealing that sentence. He was removed from the Ecuadorian Embassy in London in April and promptly arrested, seven years after first seeking refuge there to avoid extradition in a Swedish investigation into allegations made in 2010 by a woman who said Mr. Assange had sexually assaulted her.

Last month, Sweden announced it would be reopening the investigation into allegations of rape. A Swedish court has ruled that Mr. Assange should not be extradited to Sweden for the investigation, though he would still be

questioned in the case while he is imprisoned in Britain.

That decision removed the potential for dueling extradition requests from the United States and Sweden, at least for now.

Outside the courtroom on Friday, Jennifer Robinson, a lawyer for Mr. Assange, said her client was being held in the hospital's health care ward and "continues to suffer the permanent and difficult adverse health impacts" of his long-term stay in the Ecuadorian Embassy, and now in prison.

"He's under a huge amount of pressure, and we are very concerned about him," she told reporters.

Last month, a United Nations expert on torture said that an examination of Mr. Assange showed an alarming deterioration in his mental and physical state, and that he was suffering from psychological torture as a result of the cases brought by Britain, Sweden and the United States.

The United Nations special rapporteur on torture and ill treatment, Nils Melzer, said in an interview that Mr. Assange was "extremely jumpy and stressed."

Credit: By MEGAN SPECIA; Nick Cumming-Bruce contributed reporting from Geneva.

Photograph

Journalists and supporters of Julian Assange gathered on Friday outside a London court, where he was scheduled to appear at a hearing by video link. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LEON NEAL/GETTY IMAGES)

DETAILS

Subject:	Torture; Diplomatic & consular services; Criminal sentences; Sex crimes; Espionage; Extradition; Rape; Court hearings & proceedings; Demonstrations & protests; Classified information
Location:	Sweden United States--US United Kingdom--UK Iraq Afghanistan
People:	Manning, Chelsea Javid, Sajid Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: United Nations--UN; NAICS: 928120; Name: WikiLeaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: Department of Justice; NAICS: 922130
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LINKS

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Document 18 of 35

U.N. Expert Says Assange Is Suffering From Torture

Cumming-Bruce, Nick . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]01 June 2019: A.9.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

GENEVA -- A United Nations expert on torture said on Friday that an examination of the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in a British prison showed an alarming deterioration in his mental and physical state, and he sharply rebuked Britain, Sweden and the United States for "ganging up" on Mr. Assange.

The United Nations special rapporteur on torture and ill treatment, Nils Melzer, said the examination in early May revealed that Mr. Assange's "capacity to focus and coordinate have been clearly affected" by his imprisonment. "He was extremely jumpy and stressed," Mr. Melzer said in an interview. "It's difficult to have a structured conversation with him. There's so much going on in his mind it's difficult to have a dialogue with him."

Furthermore, he said in a statement, Mr. Assange should not be extradited the United States, where he faces

charges of conspiracy to hack into a Pentagon computer. He said that the cumulative effects of Mr. Mr. Assange's punishment can only be described as "psychological torture."

The United Nations official said he had sent his findings to the governments of Britain, Sweden and the United States, along with Ecuador. A spokesman for the British government said on Friday that the nation supported the important work of the special rapporteur's mandate but disagreed with some of his observations and would reply. Ecuadorean, Swedish and American officials could not immediately be reached for comment on Friday.

Mr. Assange, 47, hailed by many as a champion of transparency, has been sought by prosecutors around the globe on a variety of charges. He jumped bail in Britain and sought refuge in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London as Sweden was in the middle of investigating a rape accusation against him. The United States has accused him of helping an Army private to illegally download and leak classified information in 2010, much of it about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

After he lived in the Ecuadorean Embassy in the British capital for seven years, his relationship with his hosts soured over his arguments with the embassy's staff, his skateboarding indoors and what the nation's officials described as threats and leaks meant to embarrass Ecuador. The country's vice president, who blamed WikiLeaks, called the actions "despicable" and vowed to take action.

In April, the Ecuadorean government – which had granted him asylum and, eventually, citizenship – withdrew its protection. The British police then hauled Mr. Assange out of the embassy and placed him under arrest. A British court later sentenced him to 50 weeks in jail for violating the terms of his bail.

The United States is seeking his extradition to face multiple counts of espionage for his part in the release of thousands of classified military and diplomatic cables in 2010. And he faces possible extradition to Sweden in connection with the rape investigation.

On Thursday, Mr. Assange was to appear by video link from Belmarsh Prison in East London at a court hearing on the United States' application for his extradition. But his British lawyer, Gareth Peirce, said her client was not well enough to participate. The presiding magistrate set June 12 for the next hearing and suggested it could be held in Belmarsh.

WikiLeaks said on Thursday that Belmarsh Prison authorities had moved Mr. Assange to its hospital wing after he experienced drastic weight loss and other health problems. It also said that when Mr. Assange's Swedish lawyer, Per Samuelson, visited him in Belmarsh on Friday, he found "that it was not possible to hold a normal conversation with him."

Mr. Melzer is not the first United Nations expert to criticize the conditions of Mr. Assange's detention. The United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention condemned the 50-week sentence for jumping bail as excessive and said that sending him to a high-security prison was akin to a conviction for a more serious crime.

Mr. Melzer said he had initially been skeptical about Mr. Assange's case and had turned down a request from Mr. Assange's lawyers in December to investigate. But he said that what he found after having accepted a second request from the lawyers in March, changed his mind.

"Wherever I delved into the case, I found a lot of dirty stuff," he said in a phone interview.

In 20 years of working with victims of war, violence and political persecution, Mr. Melzer added in his statement, he had "never seen a group of democratic states ganging up to deliberately isolate, demonize and abuse a single individual for such a long time and with so little regard for human dignity and the rule of law."

Mr. Melzer said that Britain should not extradite Mr. Assange to the United States or to any other country that did not provide reliable guarantees that it would not transfer him to the United States. He cited the treatment experienced by Chelsea Manning, the former Army intelligence analyst who sent WikiLeaks classified cables on events in Iraq and Afghanistan, as grounds for concern about the conditions in which Mr. Assange would be held. He also said that he was convinced Mr. Assange would not receive a fair trial. He challenged the conduct of Sweden's prosecutors and criticized Britain's limitations on Mr. Assange's access to lawyers and to the complex documents relating to the charges, which he said severely impaired his ability to prepare his defense.

In his statement, Mr. Melzer cited what he called systematic abuse of judicial powers; arbitrary confinement in

Ecuador's London Embassy; harassment and surveillance inside the embassy; and a "relentless and unrestrained campaign of public mobbing, intimidation and defamation" outside it.

But John Demers, the head of the Justice Department's National Security Division, addressing the leaks of Pentagon records linked to Mr. Assange, condemned him in May, telling reporters: "No responsible actor, journalist or otherwise, would purposefully publish the names of individuals he or she knew to be confidential human sources in a war zone, exposing them to the gravest of dangers."

During the 2016 presidential race, WikiLeaks also released thousands of emails hacked from the Democratic National Committee and the personal account of John D. Podesta, the chairman of Hillary Clinton's campaign, in an effort to harm her candidacy. The special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III, concluded that the emails had been stolen by Russian intelligence agents, which Mr. Assange has denied.

Photograph

Assange

DETAILS

Subject:	Investigations; Attorneys; Diplomatic & consular services; Rape; Convictions; Prisons; Extradition
Location:	Sweden United States–US United Kingdom–UK Iraq Afghanistan Ecuador
People:	Mueller, Robert S III Manning, Chelsea Clinton, Hillary Rodham Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: United Nations–UN; NAICS: 928120; Name: Democratic National Committee; NAICS: 813940; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130
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Document 19 of 35

An Assault on Press Freedom

Publication info: New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]24 May 2019: A.28.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

On Thursday, the Justice Department charged Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, with multiple counts of violating the 1917 Espionage Act for his role in publishing tens of thousands of classified military and diplomatic documents in 2010. The indictment supersedes an indictment unsealed in April on narrow grounds of attempting to help an Army private surreptitiously break into a government computer to steal classified and sensitive documents.

The new indictment goes much further. It is a marked escalation in the effort to prosecute Mr. Assange, one that could have a chilling effect on American journalism as it has been practiced for generations. It is aimed straight at the heart of the First Amendment.

The new charges focus on receiving and publishing classified material from a government source. That is something journalists do all the time. They did it with the Pentagon Papers and in countless other cases where the public benefited from learning what was going on behind closed doors, even though the sources may have acted illegally. This is what the First Amendment is designed to protect: the ability of publishers to provide the public with the truth.

President Trump has waged a relentless campaign against the news media, going so far as to repeatedly label it the "enemy of the people." But with this indictment his administration has moved well beyond dangerous insults to

strike at the very foundation of the free press in the United States. The Espionage Act has been used against those who disclose classified information only rarely, for good reason. It has never before been used against a journalist. There is much to be troubled by in Mr. Assange's methods and motives, which remain murky. He released numerous documents without removing names of confidential sources, putting their lives in jeopardy. The government notes in its charging document that those put at risk included "journalists, religious leaders, human rights advocates, and political dissidents" living in repressive regimes who provided information to the United States.

Mr. Assange shared much of the material at issue with The New York Times and other news organizations. The resulting stories demonstrated why the protections afforded the press have served the American public so well; they shed important light on the American war effort in Iraq, revealing how the United States turned a blind eye to the torture of prisoners by Iraqi forces and how extensively Iran had meddled in the conflict. The Times treated Mr. Assange as a source, not a partner, and the relationship was not an easy one; his indifference to the risks of exposing intelligence sources was a particular source of friction.

The Times does not condone breaking into government computers or irresponsibly publishing the identities of sources. While Mr. Assange may not be the figure one would choose as the tribune of free speech, this is the case the government has brought.

Mr. Assange, who was arrested in London last month after years of being given sanctuary in the Ecuadorean Embassy since 2012, is currently in jail and fighting an extradition request from the United States.

Invoking the Espionage Act in this case threatens to blur the distinction between a journalist exposing government malfeasance – something that news organizations do with regularity – and foreign spies seeking to undermine the nation's security.

The Obama administration considered charging Mr. Assange with violations of the Espionage Act, a step that might have recalibrated for the digital age who is a cybercriminal and who is a whistle-blower. But Barack Obama's Justice Department refrained, worried that such a prosecution could ultimately threaten the robust exercise of the First Amendment.

With this indictment, the Trump administration has chosen to go well beyond the question of hacking to directly challenge the boundaries of the First Amendment. Mr. Assange is no hero. But this case now represents a threat to freedom of expression and, with it, the resilience of American democracy itself.

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Credit: THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Photograph

Cameras were reflected on a window of a car carrying Julian Assange as he arrived at court in London on May 1. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NEIL HALL/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

DETAILS

Subject:	Journalism; Publishing; Diplomatic & consular services; Espionage; Editorials; Journalists; News media; Freedom of the press; Freedom of speech; Intelligence gathering; First Amendment-US; Classified information; Publishing industry
Location:	United States-US Iraq Iran
People:	Trump, Donald J Assange, Julian Paul

Company / organization:	Name: Department of Defense; NAICS: 928110; Name: WikiLeaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: Department of Justice; NAICS: 922130
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Assange Indicted Over Leak as U.S. Expands Charges



Savage, Charlie . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]24 May 2019: A.1.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

WASHINGTON -- Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks leader, has been indicted on 17 counts of violating the Espionage Act for his role in obtaining and publishing secret military and diplomatic documents in 2010, the Justice Department announced on Thursday -- a novel case that raises profound First Amendment issues.

The new charges were part of an expanded indictment obtained by the Trump administration that significantly raised the stakes of the legal case against Mr. Assange, who is already fighting extradition proceedings in London based on an earlier hacking-related count brought by federal prosecutors in Northern Virginia.

The charges are the latest twist in a career in which Mr. Assange has morphed from a crusader for radical transparency to fugitive from a Swedish sexual assault investigation, to tool of Russia's election interference, to criminal defendant in the United States.

Mr. Assange vaulted to global fame nearly a decade ago as a champion of openness about what government secrets do. But with this indictment, he has become the target for a case that could open the door to criminalizing activities that are crucial to American investigative journalists who write about national security matters.

The case has nothing to do with Russia's election interference in 2016, when Mr. Assange's organization published Democratic emails stolen by Russia as part of its covert efforts to help elect President Trump. Instead, it focuses on Mr. Assange's role in the leak of hundreds of thousands of State Department cables and military files by the former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning.

Justice Department officials did not explain why they decided to charge Mr. Assange under the Espionage Act -- a step also debated within the Obama administration but ultimately not taken. Although the indictment could establish a precedent that deems actions related to obtaining, and in some cases publishing, state secrets to be criminal, the officials sought to minimize the implications for press freedoms.

[Press freedoms and the case against Julian Assange, explained.]

They noted that most of the new charges were related to obtaining the secret document archives, as opposed to publishing them. In the counts that deemed the publication of the files a crime, prosecutors focused on a handful of documents revealing the names of people who provided information to the United States in dangerous places like war zones.

"Some say that Assange is a journalist and that he should be immune from prosecution for these actions," John Demers, the head of the Justice Department's National Security Division, said at a briefing with reporters. "The department takes seriously the role of journalists in our democracy and we thank you for it. It is not and has never been the department's policy to target them for reporting."

But Mr. Assange, he said, was "no journalist." Mr. Demers accused him of conspiring with Ms. Manning to obtain classified information. "No responsible actor, journalist or otherwise, would purposefully publish the names of individuals he or she knew to be confidential human sources in a war zone, exposing them to the gravest of dangers," he said.

For the purposes of press freedoms, what matters is not who counts as a journalist, but whether journalistic activities -- whether performed by a "journalist" or anyone else -- can be crimes in America. The Trump administration's move could establish a precedent used to criminalize future acts of national-security journalism, said Jameel Jaffer of the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University.

"The charges rely almost entirely on conduct that investigative journalists engage in every day," he said. "The indictment should be understood as a frontal attack on press freedom."

Mr. Demers left the press briefing without taking questions. And a Justice Department official who stayed behind to answer questions on the condition that he would not be named would not address any about how most of the basic actions the indictment deemed felonies by Mr. Assange differed in a legally meaningful way from ordinary national-security investigative journalism – encouraging sources to provide secret information of news value, obtaining it without the government's permission and then publishing portions of it.

Notably, The New York Times, among many other news organizations, obtained precisely the same archives of documents from WikiLeaks, without authorization from the government – the act that most of the charges addressed. While The Times did take steps to withhold the names of informants in the subset of the files it published, it is not clear how that is legally different from publishing other classified information.

Barry J. Pollack, a lawyer for Mr. Assange, said his client was being charged with a crime "for encouraging sources to provide him truthful information and for publishing that information." That dramatic step, he said, removed the "fig leaf" that the case about his client was only about hacking.

"These unprecedented charges demonstrate the gravity of the threat the criminal prosecution of Julian Assange poses to all journalists in their endeavor to inform the public about actions that have been taken by the U.S. government," he said.

For most of American history, it was rare for the government to treat the leaking of its secrets to the news media as a crime. But starting in the second half of the George W. Bush administration and accelerating during the Obama administration, the Justice Department began making much more routine use of the Espionage Act to go after officials who provided information to the public through reporters, as opposed to actual spies. The World War I-era law criminalizes the disclosure of potentially damaging national security secrets to someone not authorized to receive them.

On its face, the Espionage Act could also be used to prosecute reporters who publish government secrets. But many legal scholars believe that prosecuting people for acts related to receiving and publishing information would violate the First Amendment.

That notion has never been tested in court, however, because until now the government has never brought such charges. The closest it came was indicting two lobbyists for a pro-Israel group in 2005 who received classified information about American policy toward Iran and passed it on. But that case fell apart after several skeptical pretrial rulings by a judge, and the charges were dropped.

Though he is not a conventional journalist, much of what Mr. Assange does at WikiLeaks is difficult to distinguish in a legally meaningful way from what traditional news organizations like The Times do: seek and publish information that officials want to be secret, including classified national security matters, and take steps to protect the confidentiality of sources.

The Obama administration had also weighed charging Mr. Assange, but rejected that step out of fears that it would chill investigative journalism and could be struck down as unconstitutional. A Justice Department official declined to address whether there was any new evidence that had come to light recently or whether the Trump administration had simply decided to take a step the Obama administration had shied away from.

The three charges that squarely addressed Mr. Assange's publication of government secrets were focused on a handful of files that contained the names of people who had provided information to the United States in dangerous places like the Afghanistan and Iraq war zones, and authoritarian states like China, Iran and Syria.

The evidence laid out in the indictment against Mr. Assange mapped onto information presented by military prosecutors in the 2013 court-martial trial of Ms. Manning. Prosecutors in her case also alleged that her actions endangered the people whose names were revealed in the documents when Mr. Assange published them, though they presented no evidence that anyone was killed as a result.

A Justice Department official declined to say whether any such evidence now exists, but stressed that prosecutors would need to prove in court only what they say in the indictment: that publication put people in danger.

Ms. Manning was sentenced to 35 years in prison -- by far the longest punishment for a leak case in American history. But in one of his last acts in office, President Barack Obama commuted most of the remainder of her

sentence in January 2017.

She is now back in jail again, after a judge held her in contempt for refusing to testify about her interactions with Mr. Assange before the grand jury in the Eastern District of Virginia that indicted him.

Ms. Manning's disclosure via WikiLeaks was one of the most extraordinary leaks in American history -- the bulk disclosure of hundreds of thousands of State Department cables that revealed many secret things about the world, dossiers about Guantánamo Bay detainees being held without trial, and logs of significant events in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars that divulged, among other things, that civilian casualties were far higher than official estimates.

When Ms. Manning's disclosures initially vaulted Mr. Assange and WikiLeaks to global fame, he was seen as a villain by the Obama administration and the permanent bureaucracy of law-enforcement and national-security officials, but treated as an icon by transparency and antiwar activists.

His image later transformed significantly when WikiLeaks published archives of Democratic emails that had been stolen and provided to him by the Russian government as part of its covert efforts to help Mr. Trump win the 2016 election. But the legal case against Mr. Assange has nothing to do with those subsequent events.

Mr. Assange was indicted in March 2018 in federal court in Alexandria, Va., on a charge of conspiring to commit unlawful computer intrusion. Prosecutors accused Mr. Assange of agreeing to help Ms. Manning crack an encoded portion of a passcode that would have enabled her to log on to a classified military network under a different user name than her own, which would have masked her tracks better. That came after she had already started sending files, and they have not alleged that his efforts succeeded.

That charge was unveiled in April, when Mr. Assange was arrested in London after being dragged out of the Ecuadorian Embassy, where he had lived for years to avoid capture. The United States has asked Britain to extradite Mr. Assange, who is fighting the move, and the filing of the new charges clears the way for British courts to weigh whether it would be lawful to transfer custody of him to a place where he will face Espionage Act charges. Follow Charlie Savage on Twitter: @charlie_savage.

Credit: CHARLIE SAVAGE; Adam Goldman contributed reporting.

Photograph

Chelsea Manning, a former Army intelligence analyst, is back in jail for refusing to testify about interactions with Julian Assange. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SHAWN THEW/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK); Mr. Assange in a police van in London after his arrest last month. A Justice Department official said Mr. Assange was "no journalist." (PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRY NICHOLLS/REUTERS) (A8)

DETAILS

Subject:	Journalism; American history; Freedoms; Crime; Journalists; National security; Publishing; Diplomatic & consular services; Reporters; Public prosecutors; Archives & records; Sex crimes; Espionage; Classified information; Leaking of information
Location:	Russia United States-US Virginia
People:	Manning, Chelsea Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: Department of Justice; NAICS: 922130
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Document 21 of 35

'That's Called News Gathering': Charges Alarm Advocates of Press Freedom

Grynbaum, Michael M; Tracy, Marc . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]24 May 2019: A.8.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

Journalists and press freedom groups reacted with alarm on Thursday after the Trump administration announced new charges against Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks leader, for publishing classified information, in a case that legal experts say takes direct aim at previously sacrosanct protections for the news media.

In indicting Mr. Assange for obtaining, accepting and disseminating classified materials, the Department of Justice opened a new front in its campaign against illegal leaks. While past cases involved government employees who provided material to journalists, the Assange indictment could amount to the pursuit of a publisher for making that material available to the public.

"It's not criminal to encourage someone to leak classified information to you as a journalist -- that's called news gathering, and there are First Amendment protections for news gathering," said Theodore J. Boutrous Jr., a lawyer who frequently represents media organizations like CNN. "The ramifications of this are so potentially dangerous and serious for the ability of journalists to gather and disseminate information that the American people have a right to know."

Federal prosecutors under President Trump have drawn criticism for extending a crackdown on leakers that had ramped up during President Barack Obama's administration. The indictment of Mr. Assange -- which related to WikiLeaks' publication of secret documents leaked by Chelsea Manning, a former Army intelligence analyst -- struck some experts as a grave escalation.

"It is one thing to charge a government official who has sworn an oath not to disclose classified information," said Matthew Miller, who served as the Justice Department's chief spokesman under Mr. Obama's attorney general, Eric H. Holder Jr. "It's another thing to charge someone outside the government who published information or solicited information, which is something that reporters do all the time."

The charges against Mr. Assange are likely to face a challenge on First Amendment grounds. And journalists' use of illegally obtained materials has been upheld in Supreme Court cases. But Mr. Miller said prosecutors had now skated to the edge of criminalizing journalistic practices.

"The Espionage Act doesn't make any distinction between journalists and nonjournalists," Mr. Miller said, referring to the law that Mr. Assange is accused of violating. "If you can charge Julian Assange under the law with publishing classified information, there is nothing under the law that prevents the Justice Department from charging a journalist."

A deeply divisive figure, Mr. Assange is in some ways an unlikely martyr for press freedoms. A crusader for radical transparency, he is faulted by many American liberals for releasing hacked emails from the Democratic National Committee at the height of the 2016 presidential race.

"The calculation by the Department of Justice is that here's someone who people don't like," Mr. Boutrous said.

"There's a real element of picking the weakest of the herd, or the most unpopular figure, to try to blunt the outcry." Justice Department officials on Thursday cited Mr. Assange's mixed reputation as they tried to reject the notion that they were interfering with the free press.

"The department takes seriously the role of journalists in our democracy, and we thank you for it," John Demers, the head of the department's National Security Division, said at a briefing with reporters. "It is not, and has never been, the department's policy to target them for reporting."

"Julian Assange is no journalist," Mr. Demers added.

Still, press advocates were quick to condemn the Justice Department on Thursday. The American Civil Liberties Union called the indictment "a direct assault on the First Amendment." The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press described it as "a dire threat."

Alan Dershowitz, the Harvard lawyer who has been a recent ally of Mr. Trump, said the case against Mr. Assange was "really the first time since the Pentagon Papers that the government has gone after publishers."

"We all think there's a difference between The New York Times and Assange from a practical point of view, but

from a constitutional point of view, it's hard to find that difference," Mr. Dershowitz said. "They're both publishing classified, stolen material."

"This is analogous to if The New York Times and The Washington Post had been prosecuted after publishing the Pentagon Papers," Mr. Dershowitz added, referring to the top-secret report on Vietnam whose publication in 1971 was upheld by the Supreme Court. "It's a very, very frightening development."

But Asha Rangappa, a lawyer and former F.B.I. counterintelligence agent, said she believed that the Justice Department had made a crucial distinction between Mr. Assange's activity and the work of traditional journalists. "He wasn't simply a passive recipient of classified information; he actively participated in the breaking of the law," Ms. Rangappa said. She added that Mr. Assange's efforts to help his source, Ms. Manning, illegally obtain documents amounted to "aiding and abetting the criminal act itself."

"That is a meaningful distinction from a bona fide news organization that truly has a public interest goal," Ms. Rangappa said.

Seymour Hersh, the investigative journalist who exposed the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War and misconduct by the C.I.A., among other revelations, wrote in an email that the move against Mr. Assange was troubling.

"Today Assange," Mr. Hersh wrote. "Tomorrow, perhaps, The New York Times and other media that published so much of the important news and information Assange provided."

Credit: MICHAEL M. GRYNBAUM and MARC TRACY; Katie Benner contributed reporting.

Photograph

The British police guarding the Ecuadorean Embassy in London during a demonstration Monday in support of Julian Assange. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALASTAIR GRANT/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

DETAILS

Subject:	Journalism; Journalists; Freedom of the press; Publishing; Public prosecutors; Reporters; Indictments; Classified information
Location:	New York Vietnam
People:	Trump, Donald J Manning, Chelsea Assange, Julian Paul Holder, Eric H Jr Dershowitz, Alan Obama, Barack
Company / organization:	Name: New York Times Co; NAICS: 511110, 511120, 515112, 515120; Name: Department of Justice; NAICS: 922130; Name: CNN; NAICS: 515210; Name: Democratic National Committee; NAICS: 813940; Name: Department of Defense; NAICS: 928110; Name: American Civil Liberties Union--ACLU; NAICS: 541110, 813311; Name: WikiLeaks.org; NAICS: 519130
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Document 22 of 35

Sweden Reopens Rape Case Against WikiLeaks Founder

Specia, Megan . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]14 May 2019: A.11.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

The Swedish authorities announced on Monday that they would reopen an investigation into a rape allegation against Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder, who is serving a prison term in Britain for jumping bail as the

United States seeks his extradition over accusations that he tried to assist in a huge breach of classified data. The United States has already begun trying to extradite Mr. Assange, an effort that was expected to be prolonged and complex even before the announcement in Stockholm on Monday.

British officials will determine which case takes precedence, Swedish prosecutors said, adding that if Mr. Assange were eventually extradited to Sweden, he could not be sent to the United States without the consent of Britain.

The investigation stems from an accusation in August 2010 made by a Swedish woman who said Mr. Assange had sexually assaulted her.

Mr. Assange was removed from the Ecuadorean Embassy in London last month and promptly arrested, seven years after seeking refuge to avoid extradition in an earlier Swedish investigation into the same case. He was then sentenced to 50 weeks for jumping bail.

With Mr. Assange in custody, the United States began the extradition process on a conspiracy charge -- punishable by up to five years in prison -- over his alleged attempt to assist in one of the largest leaks of classified materials in American history.

On Monday, Eva-Marie Persson, Sweden's deputy director of public prosecutions, announced the decision to reopen the Swedish investigation at a news conference in Stockholm. She said the authorities there were acting because there was still probable cause to suspect that Mr. Assange had committed the crime.

"I take the view that there exists the possibility to take the case forward," Ms. Persson said.

The decision to reopen the investigation is not equivalent to making a decision to indict Mr. Assange, she said, but a European arrest warrant will be issued so that the Swedish authorities can take him into custody and question him.

Per Samuelsson, Mr. Assange's Swedish lawyer, said he was surprised by the decision to reopen the investigation. "It's not proportionate," Mr. Samuelsson said. "To force him to concentrate on this old investigation is highly unreasonable."

The Swedish authorities began investigating the WikiLeaks founder in 2010, after two women accused him of assaulting them during separate sexual encounters while he was visiting Stockholm.

The Swedish authorities issued a European arrest warrant in seeking his extradition from Britain for questioning over "suspicion of rape, three cases of sexual molestation and illegal coercion."

Mr. Assange was arrested by the British police in 2011, and after a series of failed appeals while he was out on bail, he fled to the Ecuadorean Embassy to avoid extradition.

Sweden dropped the initial investigation in May 2017, after concluding that there was no way to proceed with the case as long as Mr. Assange was holed up in the embassy. Prosecutors indicated at the time that they reserved the right to reopen their inquiry.

Last month, days after Mr. Assange was removed from the embassy, having worn out his welcome with his hosts, Sweden announced that a lawyer requested that the investigation be reopened into the accusation of rape brought by one of the women.

The prosecution still falls within the country's 10-year statute of limitations; it has already passed for the sexual molestation and unlawful coercion accusations.

The same day Mr. Assange was removed from the embassy, the United States unsealed an indictment against him on a charge that stems from a leak of hundreds of thousands of documents, mostly related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which were published by WikiLeaks.

The American authorities have accused Mr. Assange of conspiring with Chelsea Manning, a former Army intelligence analyst, to crack an encoded password that would have permitted her to log into a classified Pentagon network under someone else's identity.

At Mr. Assange's first hearing in the extradition case, he told the judge that he did not wish to surrender to the United States to be prosecuted for what he called "journalism that has won many awards."

Ms. Persson, the Swedish prosecutor, said that because Mr. Assange has been convicted of a crime in Britain, he would serve at least 25 weeks of his sentence. The Swedish authorities hope to question Mr. Assange while he is

still in British detention, Ms. Persson said, but that would require his consent.
She also said that it would be up to Britain to determine whether the United States' extradition request or the Swedish investigation takes precedence.
Mr. Assange's fate could ultimately lie with Sajid Javid, Britain's home secretary. In the case of multiple extradition requests for one individual, the home secretary may defer proceedings on one of the requests until the other has been completed.
Assuming Sweden submits a European arrest warrant, its claim would most likely take precedence, said Michael O'Kane, a British extradition lawyer. "Arguably the rape allegation is more serious," Mr. O'Kane said.
The arrest warrant and extradition requests will first proceed through the British court system, a process that could take six months to a year.
One of Mr. Assange's accusers in Sweden, Anna Ardin, has publicly identified herself. She told the Swedish newspaper Aftonbladet that Mr. Assange was "a man who has a twisted attitude toward women."
Last month, Ms. Ardin tweeted, "For me this was never about anything else than his misconduct against me/women and his refusal to take responsibility for this."
Mr. Assange and his supporters have long maintained that the accusations were attempts to discredit him and said that the efforts to extradite him to Sweden were a pretext to send him to the United States.
Kristinn Hrafnsson, the editor in chief of WikiLeaks, said in a statement released shortly after the Swedish prosecutors' announcement that reopening the case "will give Julian a chance to clear his name."
Credit: MEGAN SPECIA; Christina Anderson and Iliana Magra contributed reporting.
Photograph
Julian Assange being taken from a London court on May 1. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT DUNHAM/ASSOCIATED PRESS); Eva-Marie Persson, a Swedish prosecutor, at a news conference on Monday in Stockholm about the case against Mr. Assange. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JONATHAN NACKSTRAND/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)
DETAILS
Subject: Assaults; Diplomatic & consular services; Press conferences; Criminal investigations; Sex crimes; Arrest warrants; Extradition
Location: Sweden United States--US United Kingdom--UK Iraq Afghanistan
People: Manning, Chelsea Javid, Sajid Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization: Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: Aftonbladet; NAICS: 511110
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Document 23 of 35

First Hearing For Assange In Long Road To U.S. Trial

Specia, Megan; Magra, Iliana . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]03 May 2019: A.9.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

LONDON -- Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, appeared in a British court on Thursday for an initial hearing on whether he will be extradited to the United States to face prosecution in connection with one of the most serious leaks of classified material in American history.

Mr. Assange, 47, made a brief appearance by video link in Westminster Magistrates Court in London from Belmarsh Prison in another part of the city. A day earlier, he had been sentenced to 50 weeks in prison for bail-

jumping.

The hearing on Thursday lasted just a few minutes, in which Mr. Assange told the judge that he did not wish to surrender himself to be prosecuted in the United States for what he called "journalism that has won many awards," according to The Associated Press. His next hearing, in what promises to be a long extradition fight, is scheduled for May 30.

The American indictment against him stems from a leak in 2010 of hundreds of thousands of classified documents, mostly related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, that proved damaging and embarrassing for the United States and its allies. Mr. Assange faces a charge of conspiring with the former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning to hack into a Pentagon computer network, a crime punishable by up to five years in an American prison.

Around two dozen activists gathered outside the court to protest against his potential extradition, waving signs that read "Free Julian Assange" and "Is this all just about shutting us all up?" as they demanded his release.

The case has fueled debate about whether the prosecution of Mr. Assange infringes on the American Constitution's First Amendment right to freedom of speech. He says that he acted as a journalist in publishing material leaked by Ms. Manning to WikiLeaks and that he had nothing to do with the hacking.

But the Justice Department says Mr. Assange helped Ms. Manning break a code to gain access to the classified network.

Ms. Manning was convicted of espionage in an American court and received a 35-year prison sentence. She spent nearly seven years behind bars before her punishment was commuted by President Barack Obama in 2017.

Legal experts say that Mr. Assange could face additional charges if extradited but that the extradition process could take years. The WikiLeaks founder has long fought against being transferred to the United States, citing comments from officials in Washington calling for the death penalty to be considered for his crimes.

Mr. Assange holed up in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London for seven years to avoid being extradited to Sweden to face sexual assault allegations. He called himself a political refugee, claiming that Sweden would send him to the United States.

Swedish prosecutors have not closed the door on charges there.

Mr. Assange was arrested last month after the government of Ecuador suspended the asylum and citizenship that it had granted him.

Speaking outside the courtroom on Wednesday, a day before the hearing on Mr. Assange's potential extradition to the United States, Kristinn Hrafnsson, WikiLeaks' editor in chief, called it the start of a "big fight."

"What is at stake there could be a question of life or death for Mr. Assange," he told reporters. "It is also a question of life and death for a major journalistic principle."

Cristina Navarrete, 66, was among the crowd of supporters outside the court on Thursday. She called the hearing "a mockery" because no members of the public were allowed into the courtroom, though some journalists were admitted.

"They chose a small court on purpose, it's basically a secret trial," Ms. Navarrete said in the packed foyer outside the guarded doors of the court.

"If he is extradited, we'll be very disappointed in the British justice system," she added.

Ben Brandon, a prosecutor working for the United States government who was in the Westminster court on Thursday, said that even if Mr. Assange were to complete his British prison sentence before a decision on the American extradition request, he would remain in custody. In that situation, he could apply to be released on bail until a final decision on extradition, Mr. Brandon said.

After the hearing, Jennifer Robinson, Mr. Assange's lawyer, said the American charge would cause a "massive chill on investigative journalism."

"No democratic nation would behave this way," she said.

DETAILS

Subject:	Trials; Criminal sentences; Indictments; Court hearings &proceedings; Sex crimes; Extradition
Location:	Sweden United States--US Iraq Afghanistan Ecuador
People:	Manning, Chelsea Assange, Julian Paul Obama, Barack
Company / organization:	Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: Department of Justice; NAICS: 922130
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Document 24 of 35

Assange Is Sentenced to 50 Weeks and Still Faces U.S. Charges

Magra, Iliana . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]02 May 2019: A.6.

[!\[\]\(56d456ce23fbc6d691f6e596f1c162cb_img.jpg\) ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

LONDON -- A British court sentenced Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder, to 50 weeks in prison on Wednesday for jumping bail when he took refuge in Ecuador's Embassy in London seven years ago.

His complex legal travails are far from over: The United States is seeking Mr. Assange's extradition for prosecution there, and an initial hearing on that request is expected on Thursday. Officials in Sweden have left open the possibility that he could face criminal charges in that country, as well.

Mr. Assange faces a charge of conspiracy to hack into a Pentagon computer network; a federal indictment accuses him of helping an Army private to illegally download classified information in 2010, much of it about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which WikiLeaks then made public. He has denied the charge.

Mr. Assange, 47, was arrested on April 11 after the Ecuadorean government withdrew its protection of him and allowed the police to take him out of the embassy in London, where he had lived since 2012. The same day, he appeared in court and was convicted on the charge of skipping bail.

Mr. Assange, who is being held in Belmarsh Prison in East London, argued that he should not be jailed for the offense, because he was effectively imprisoned in the embassy. On Wednesday, in Southwark Crown Court in London, Judge Deborah Taylor rejected that claim.

"It's difficult to envisage a more serious example of this offense," she told Mr. Assange, British news organizations reported. "By hiding in the embassy you deliberately put yourself out of reach, while remaining in the U.K."

Before he was sentenced, the court heard an apology letter by Mr. Assange, in which he said that he was "struggling with difficult circumstances."

"I did what I thought at the time was the best or perhaps the only thing that I could have done," he said, according to British news reports. "I regret the course that that has taken."

His legal odyssey began in 2010, when prosecutors in Sweden sought to question him about alleged sexual assaults there, which he denies. Eventually, he had to post bail to remain free while fighting extradition to Sweden, which he insisted would then send him to the United States.

After exhausting his appeals in the British courts, rather than submit to extradition, Mr. Assange took refuge in Ecuador's embassy, violating the terms of his bail. Ecuador granted him asylum and, eventually, citizenship.

He continued his work from the embassy, and in 2016, WikiLeaks released thousands of emails hacked from the Democratic National Committee and the personal account of John D. Podesta, the chairman of Hillary Clinton's

campaign, intending to harm her candidacy. The special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III, concluded that the emails were stolen by Russian intelligence agents, which Mr. Assange denies.

The 2010 release of Pentagon records was made possible by Chelsea Manning, then known as Bradley Manning, the Army private who would later serve around seven years in prison for taking them. The indictment against Mr. Assange says he did not merely publish the material provided by Ms. Manning, but helped her in the hacking, which he disputes.

Mr. Assange insists that the government is seeking retribution for his exposure of misconduct and deception by American troops and officials.

Swedish prosecutors eventually dropped the case against Mr. Assange, calling it pointless to pursue it, but said they could revive it if he became available. Nevertheless the bail-jumping charge, and the threat of extradition to the United States, still hung over him.

Last month, Ecuador revoked his asylum and citizenship, citing a list of grievances that had made him an unwanted house guest, ranging from recent WikiLeaks releases to alleged ill manners, threats, hacking aimed at Ecuador, and abuse of embassy staff members and facilities.

Ecuador stopped sheltering Mr. Assange after "his repeated violations to international conventions and daily-life protocols," President Lenin Moreno said in a statement on Twitter.

But Mr. Assange didn't go easily: He resisted arrest and had to be restrained by British police officers, who struggled to handcuff him.

"This is unlawful, I'm not leaving," he told them, according to the account given at the Westminster Magistrates Court, where Mr. Assange appeared later that day. In the end, he had to be dragged out of the embassy.

Mr. Assange, a man accustomed to celebrity and internet culture, has long fascinated and divided popular opinion: To supporters, he is a martyr for the cause of free speech, but others see him as a publicity-seeking criminal with strong ties to the Kremlin.

He has indicated that he would fight extradition, and the process promises to be a long one, further extending his saga.

DETAILS

Subject:	Diplomatic &consular services; Criminal sentences; Citizenship; Sex crimes; Extradition
Location:	Sweden United States–US United Kingdom–UK Iraq Afghanistan Ecuador
People:	Mueller, Robert S III Manning, Chelsea Bradley Manning Clinton, Hillary Rodham Moreno, Lenin Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: Democratic National Committee; NAICS: 813940; Name: Twitter Inc; NAICS: 519130; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130
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Document 25 of 35

Julian Assange and the War on Whistle-Blowers

Wasserman, Edward . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]27 Apr 2019: A.23.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

To the journalism mainstream, Julian Assange, newly imprisoned founder of WikiLeaks, is less a hero than a conundrum. True, he was midwife to some of the most sensational and genuinely consequential journalistic

disclosures of recent years. Yet he's a perplexing figure, among the "righteous scumbags" who often figure in free-speech cases, as a headline on the Columbia Journalism Review website puts it, or maybe just "a solid jerk," as the columnist Kathleen Parker suggests.

The underlying question is whether Mr. Assange is too reckless, undiscerning, unprincipled and morally damaged to merit defending for his work in getting hugely significant information to the public, via some of the same news media that now find him distasteful.

Many journalists doubt that he deserves First Amendment consideration, since that belongs mainly to other journalists, which they say Mr. Assange isn't. And it's true that he's plainly not a reporter, since he conveys information unearthed by others, and not a publisher either, since he often works through other news outlets to reach the public.

So he isn't really one of us. Worse, he's a rogue. He even helped the Russians defeat Hillary Clinton in 2016. Until April 11, when his hosts invited the London constabulary to drag him out and put him behind bars, he'd been squatting for nearly seven years in Ecuador's tiny embassy there to avoid extradition to Stockholm, where the Swedes wanted him to answer allegations of sexual wrongdoing. Now, in the aftermath, The Washington Post's editorialists declare he's not "a free-press hero," and the headline on an article by The Post's foreign affairs columnist, David Ignatius, asks whether he's anything more than "an accused thief."

My answer is he's a lot more. News is in danger, and news isn't a person, it's a process, which desperately needs protecting. The element of that process that is most in peril is the source, and for all his sins, real and alleged, Julian Assange has been one of the most extraordinary sources of the new millennium.

WikiLeaks enabled spectacular disclosures of official secrets -- from war crimes, torture and atrocities on civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan to corruption in Kenya and Tunisia, the latter a catalyst of the Arab Spring. His jailing is the latest event in the ferocious reprisal against a decade of digital whistle-blowing -- which has never, to my knowledge, yielded information that was inaccurate or unimportant -- and that has now produced little but misery, banishment or imprisonment for the people who tried to force officialdom to come clean.

So we're in a chilly time for whistle-blowers. While the digital age is endlessly permissive in propagating falsity and racism, authorities are uncompromisingly harsh when the information is accurate, important and inconvenient.

Now that Mr. Assange is in British hands -- awaiting extradition either to Sweden or to Washington, where he has been indicted on a charge of coaching one of his sources, Chelsea Manning, on how to get access to government secrets without detection -- it's a good time to consider what he has done and been accused of, and what that says about the embattled state of journalism.

Let's recall some facts of importance. In 2010 -- and this is when the sin for which Mr. Assange has been jailed was supposedly committed -- WikiLeaks provided some of the world's most respected news organizations with accurate information of deep public importance that exposed outrageous, even murderous, wrongdoing. Mr. Assange then submitted -- perhaps gracelessly, but submitted nonetheless -- to their editorial judgment as to how much of that information should be published and in what form. This included a vast trove exposing the American war effort in Iraq and Afghanistan as killing many more civilians than our government had ever acknowledged. A further batch included a huge number of reports from our own diplomats on the corruption and double-dealing of foreign governments.

Pretty good stuff, on balance. Still, there's little sympathy in the media for the idea that jailing Mr. Assange is a violation of First Amendment press freedom -- while there's broad agreement that prosecuting the news organizations that published the material he provided would be unthinkable. This is bolstered by First Amendment jurisprudence that encourages a myopia that holds expressive freedom in the news realm to be the exclusive property of professional journalists. At first glance, this makes no moral sense: If the handing over of secrets can be prosecuted, why should the publication of those same secrets be protected?

The fabled Pentagon Papers win before the Supreme Court in 1971 stopped the government from halting publication; it didn't forbid prosecuting the publishers afterward. That never happened. But the sources? Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo were left to confront Espionage Act charges for their whistle-blowing that were not

dismissed for nearly two years. They got little help from the same media that were eager to canonize themselves for their courage in publishing the leaks.

Why are whistle-blowers being jailed while reporters who publish their prohibited leaks win awards? Does the government's restraint reflect nothing more than the reluctance of politicians to do battle with the digital equivalent of publishers who buy ink by the barrel?

Perhaps, though that has helped ensure press independence as a powerful force for official accountability. But shouldn't sources also have independent standing as players indispensable to the news and deserving of constitutional protection? Can you have a free press without sources? Isn't the process of news-gathering dependent not just on the skill and tenacity of reporters, but also on the willingness of sources to step forward, sometimes at great risk, and tell what they know?

Ms. Manning, the former Army intelligence analyst who was Mr. Assange's source for the 2010 disclosures, is back behind bars – after serving nearly seven years for espionage for leaking secrets to WikiLeaks – for refusing to incriminate Mr. Assange in the squirrelly case the government is trying to assemble. The former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden, under indictment since 2013, remains exiled in Russia for exposing domestic surveillance that was later ruled illegal by federal courts, as Mr. Snowden himself believed. That's not to mention Thomas Drake, Shamai Leibowitz, John Kiriakou, Stephen Kim, Jeffrey Sterling and, most recently, Reality Winner. All of them were informants who sought not to peddle secrets to the country's enemies but to share information with the public about things they believed we needed to know. All were prosecuted, nearly all were jailed. The wrongs they sought to expose were not trivial.

The permissibility of secrecy violations should depend, in the final analysis, on a judgment as to whether the leaks made things better or worse. The public-benefit defense, which whistle-blowers can offer in many countries, is forbidden in ours. That should change. Yes, letting leakers use it may induce people to do foolish things in the poorly based hope they'll be redeemed by a future consequence they cannot know. But it also offers a powerful promise: that ultimately the wisdom of the disclosure, even if illegal, will be reviewed by a dispassionate tribunal that will do what judges are supposed to do – make a judgment. Was the secrecy warranted? Was wrongdoing properly exposed? Did disclosure leave the public well served?

The media's own de facto immunity from prosecution has been a great success historically, and no breach in that should be tolerated. Importantly, news organizations have responded to the freedom it ensures by following due-diligence practices that apply much the same logic described here – identify and minimize potential harms while serving the public's right to be informed about matters of significance. Aren't the media's indispensable helpmates, their sources, entitled to some of that same deference?

Edward Wasserman is a professor of journalism and dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley.

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(DRAWING BY ADAM MAIDA)

DETAILS

Subject:	Journalism; Immunity from prosecution; Diplomatic & consular services; Espionage; Extradition; Information dissemination; Freedom of speech; First Amendment-US
Location:	United States-US

People:	Kiriakou, John Ellsberg, Daniel Manning, Chelsea Clinton, Hillary Rodham Assange, Julian Paul
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Arrest of Assange Friend Stirs Criticism

León Cabrera, José María . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]22 Apr 2019: A.6.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

QUITO, Ecuador -- Just hours after the British police dragged the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange out of the Ecuadorean Embassy in London, the police in Ecuador made an arrest they suggested was related and involved the nation's security.

But in the days since, the arrest has drawn a wave of protest from human rights activists and digital security advocates who say there is no evidence yet of a crime -- only that of guilt by association.

The man arrested, Ola Bini, a Swedish cybersecurity expert and digital privacy advocate, was detained April 11 on charges that he had attacked computer systems in the country.

As evidence, prosecutors pointed to the laptops, iPads, iPods, encrypted USB sticks and credit cards they found when they searched Mr. Bini's home and possessions. They noted that Mr. Bini traveled often and had spent more than \$230,000 in internet services over the past five years.

Ecuador's officials particularly cited Mr. Bini's contacts with Mr. Assange, who faces extradition to the United States on charges of conspiring to hack an American government computer to obtain national security information.

Last week, President Lenin Moreno of Ecuador said that Mr. Bini was one of "many hackers" who had visited Mr. Assange at the country's embassy in London, where the WikiLeaks founder had sought refuge. "Probably to receive instructions," Mr. Moreno added.

But as news of the detention has spread, human rights and digital security advocates have begun to question the grounds for the detention, arguing that Mr. Bini, 36, worked to prevent illegal access to private information.

Amnesty International and Article 19, an organization that defends free speech, have raised concerns about the arrest.

Mr. Bini "is a highly respected expert in digital security and cryptography and is recognized for major contributions in the field," Article 19 said in a statement. David Kaye, the United Nations' special rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression, said that nothing revealed so far connects Mr. Bini to any crime.

Danny O'Brien, the international director at the Electronic Frontier Foundation, said Mr. Bini's work had helped build a safer internet. The evidence that Ecuadorean authorities presented was simply "the sort of equipment you have when you work in those sort of projects," he said.

"People contributing their free time to protect internet users have their skills and their lifestyle used against them," Mr. O'Brien said, a point of recurring concern among human rights advocates.

Mr. Bini was arrested at the international airport in Quito, Ecuador's capital, on his way to Japan to take part in a martial arts program, said his girlfriend, Sofia Celi. Later, government officials went on television to applaud the arrest -- and mention his visits to Mr. Assange.

The minister of interior, María Paula Romo, said the government was trying to prevent Ecuador from turning into a center for digital "espionage and piracy." Ms. Romo said she could not comment on the evidence against Mr. Bini, but she, too, noted that he had visited Mr. Assange at the Ecuadorean Embassy "at least a dozen times."

Mr. Bini's lawyers say the detention is unlawful. They say he was denied access to lawyers for 17 hours, was not

informed of the charges against him, and was not offered a translator, as required by local laws. His lawyers said they have been harassed and threatened by the police.

Mr. Bini, who was not granted bail, will remain in custody for 90 days while Ecuadorean prosecutors build a case against him.

Mr. Bini moved to Ecuador in 2013, when he was working as a consultant for ThoughtWorks, a technology company based in Chicago. The Ecuadorean government had contracted with the company to consult on a new law governing software development.

He had joined the company around 2008, and when ThoughtWorks started offering cybersecurity consultancies, Mr. Bini focused on that area, said Ronaldo Ferraz, who was ThoughtWorks' manager for Latin America and Africa at the time and oversaw Mr. Bini's work.

He said that Mr. Bini was being accused of doing "the very same things he protected people against" and that the idea of Mr. Bini's illegally accessing private information "runs contrary to everything he believes."

Two weeks after Mr. Bini's arrival in Ecuador, he gave an address titled "Ecuador as a Privacy Paradise" at a technology event hosted by a state university, during which he expressed concern about governments' use of technology to monitor citizens.

After his arrest, Mr. Bini's parents flew to Ecuador and gave a news conference denying their son was involved in wrongdoing and saying that his friendship with Mr. Assange was not enough to incriminate him.

Mr. Bini's girlfriend, Ms. Celi, is a coder herself and has written academic papers with him on cryptography. She said there seemed to be a lack of understanding about the work Mr. Bini did, and what "cryptographic and privacy-preserving tools actually mean."

In a note handed to his parents while they visited him in prison, Mr. Bini offered his thanks for the support he is receiving.

"I appreciate it more than I can say," he wrote. "If Ecuador can do this, so can others."

Photograph

Ola Bini, right, a Swedish programmer, with his father last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GÖREL BINI GUSTAFSSON)

DETAILS

Subject:	Internet; Arrests; Attorneys; Computer security; Diplomatic &consular services; Privacy; Human rights
Location:	Chicago Illinois United States--US Latin America Africa Ecuador Japan
People:	O Brien, Danny Moreno, Lenin Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: United Nations--UN; NAICS: 928120; Name: Amnesty International; NAICS: 813311; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: Electronic Frontier Foundation; NAICS: 541720, 813910
URL:	https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/21/world/americas/ecuador-ola-bini-assange.html
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LINKS

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Document 27 of 35

Justice Dept. Continued to Investigate WikiLeaks After Secretly Indicting Assange

Benner, Katie; Scott, Shane . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]17 Apr 2019: A.16.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

WASHINGTON -- The Justice Department continued to investigate WikiLeaks last year even after the secret indictment of its founder, Julian Assange, seeking to question at least two of the antisecrecy organization's volunteers about their activities, according to interviews and a letter obtained by The New York Times. One day after prosecutors charged Mr. Assange with a single count of conspiracy to unlawfully hack into a computer, the Justice Department asked Daniel Domscheit-Berg, a former WikiLeaks activist, if it could question him about the possibility that he violated American laws prohibiting "the receipt and dissemination of secret information." The language, in a letter to him in his native German, suggested that prosecutors had not, at least at that point, abandoned the possibility of charges based on WikiLeaks' publication of United States government secrets.

Prosecutors last summer also sought out David M. House, a former researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who worked as a volunteer for WikiLeaks from 2009 to 2013.

Mr. House spoke for about 90 minutes to prosecutors and also testified at length to the grand jury, according to a person who has spoken with prosecutors and agreed to an interview on the condition of anonymity. They pressed him for information about debates inside WikiLeaks over whether to redact from government documents posted online the names of vulnerable people, such as foreign citizens who worked confidentially with American military officers or diplomats, to protect them from harm.

The communications with Mr. Berg and Mr. House show that even after Mr. Assange was indicted on accusations of computer hacking, the United States government was eager to build a case against a WikiLeaks associate for disseminating state secrets -- a charge that spoke directly to the group's main enterprise, but would also thrust the Justice Department into a thorny fight over First Amendment rights and galvanize supporters of WikiLeaks and of the free press.

They also show that prosecutors were focused mainly on work done by WikiLeaks in 2010, when Mr. Assange received classified and secret information from Chelsea Manning, a former Army intelligence analyst, about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and American diplomacy overseas.

Mr. Assange worked with reporters at publications including The New York Times, The Guardian and the German magazine Der Spiegel to publish that information. Eric H. Holder Jr., then the attorney general, announced a criminal investigation of WikiLeaks.

Justice Department officials under the Obama administration ultimately decided they could not prosecute Mr. Assange for sharing information because it risked setting a precedent that could erode press freedoms for news organizations that also publish classified information.

But prosecutors in Northern Virginia continued to explore ways to crack down on WikiLeaks.

The letter to Mr. Berg, dated March 7, 2018 – one day after Mr. Assange was secretly indicted – was sent by Tracy Doherty-McCormick, a cybercrime and national security specialist who worked on the Assange case while she was a federal prosecutor in Virginia under the Obama administration. She was also the acting United States attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia when Mr. Assange was indicted.

Ms. Doherty-McCormick wrote that the interview would be voluntary, and it was unclear whether Mr. Berg ultimately spoke with prosecutors. The German publication Die Zeit first reported the case against Mr. Berg. A Justice Department spokesman declined to say whether the government had dropped its case against Mr. Berg or whether there were any sealed charges against him or any other WikiLeaks associates.

In his interviews with prosecutors and the grand jury, Mr. House denied any role in the leak of the documents from Ms. Manning to WikiLeaks, the person said. Mr. House's interview with prosecutors and grand jury testimony were first reported by The Daily Beast.

He was asked about online chats among WikiLeaks workers that investigators had obtained and was questioned about discussions inside the group about when to redact names from documents posted on the internet.

The question of redactions became a point of contention in 2010, after human rights groups criticized WikiLeaks for exposing the names of Afghan citizens who had assisted the United States and might be subject to retaliation. The group subsequently stripped names from many documents but remained inconsistent in its practices. It is unclear whether investigators were considering whether endangering people named in the government documents by posting them online might violate a criminal statute.

Mr. Assange was ultimately accused of unsuccessfully helping Ms. Manning try to log onto a classified military network by breaking a passcode and using another person's identity. He was charged with a single computer hacking offense.

The indictment against Mr. Assange did not include any charge related to the receipt or publication of secret information, but he was accused of hacking into a government computer system "in furtherance of a criminal act" that violated laws against obtaining material to harm the United States or to aid a foreign power.

Nor did the indictment mention the 2016 election or Mr. Assange's decision to post to WikiLeaks troves of Democratic emails stolen by Russian government hackers.

The special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III, secured an indictment against 12 Russian military officers in the thefts, describing them as part of the Kremlin's campaign to undermine the American electoral process and help Mr. Trump win the election. The Russians used online personas including Guccifer 2.0 to work with people and organizations in a position to spread the information, including WikiLeaks, according to the indictment.

WikiLeaks' publication of the stolen Democratic emails may have been omitted from Mr. Assange's indictment in part because mention of the election could cast the Justice Department's charges against Mr. Assange in a more political light, legal experts said, and harm the administration's chances of extraditing him from Britain to stand trial in the United States.

Photograph

Prosecutors sought to question Daniel Domscheit-Berg, a WikiLeaks activist, on secrecy laws. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

DETAILS

Subject:	Investigations; Public prosecutors; Indictments; Government documents; Interviews; Armed forces; Hackers; Military officers
Location:	United Kingdom--UK Iraq Afghanistan Virginia United States--US New York Massachusetts
People:	Domscheit-Berg, Daniel Mueller, Robert S III Manning, Chelsea Assange, Julian Paul Holder, Eric H Jr
Company / organization:	Name: Guardian (newspaper); NAICS: 511110; Name: Daily Beast; NAICS: 519130; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: New York Times Co; NAICS: 511110, 511120, 515112, 515120; Name: Massachusetts Institute of Technology; NAICS: 611310; Name: Der Spiegel; NAICS: 511120; Name: Department of Justice; NAICS: 922130
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Document 28 of 35

Julian Assange's Narcissism

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A.20.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

To the Editor:

Re "Britain Arrests Assange, Ending 7-Year Standoff" (front page, April 12):

The arrest of Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, should give all of us pause to re-examine our feelings regarding his self-described career as a journalist.

Though I do support most efforts to expose corruption, my concern with Mr. Assange is that he usually fails to use filters, as most respected journalists would. He has always seemed more interested in owning the headlines (as we are only too painfully aware that narcissists like to do) and creating chaos than in righting a wrong or fighting a good fight.

To obtain a story, to expose corruption, to bring a wrong into the light of day, all of these can be done with good, old-fashioned investigative reporting and persistence. Hacking into computers at the Pentagon and certain other nefarious deeds should not be seen as useful tools toward that end, but rather a "look what I can do" moment by a rebellious, criminal eccentric.

Patricia Weller

Emmitsburg, Md.

DETAILS

Subject:	Corruption in government; Narcissism
Location:	United Kingdom--UK
People:	Assange, Julian Paul
Company / organization:	Name: Department of Defense; NAICS: 928110; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130
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Document 29 of 35

Ecuador Battled Threats of Leaks In Aiding Assange

Casey, Nicholas; Becker, Jo . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]13 Apr 2019: A.1.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

The secrets came directly from the phones of President Lenín Moreno of Ecuador: intimate pictures of him and his family on vacation, text messages from his wife, even a photograph of the president himself in a posh bedroom, eating a lobster in bed.

The material, published last month on an anonymous website, was particularly embarrassing because Mr. Moreno was in a bruising national fight over his austerity measures. But rather than mount a defense, the president played the victim: He blamed WikiLeaks, whose founder, Julian Assange, had spent the last seven years holed up in the country's London embassy.

WikiLeaks' actions were "despicable," said the country's vice president on television, vowing to take action. The group denied leaking the information, but on Thursday Ecuador made good on its threat -- opening the door to British police officers who carted away Mr. Assange.

With that, Mr. Assange's long refuge inside the Ecuadorean Embassy finally came to an end, the capstone of an

international cat-and-mouse game involving stolen document dumps, promises of more to come, failed efforts to contain him and accusations of blackmail.

Even as Ecuador harbored Mr. Assange from international prosecution, he and WikiLeaks wielded the threat of releasing damaging information against the Ecuadorean government.

In October 2016, as WikiLeaks was releasing thousands of emails hacked from the Democratic National Committee and the personal account of John D. Podesta, the chairman of the Clinton campaign, Ecuador restricted Mr. Assange's access to the internet, citing his interference in a foreign election.

The United States may have played a central role in the effort to corral Mr. Assange. On Oct. 14, with the emails upending the campaign and the election just weeks away, a confidante of the Clintons and a top aide to Secretary of State John Kerry showed up at a dinner party hosted by the Ecuadorean ambassador before a ball, lingering with him as other guests left, several attendees said.

Mr. Assange's internet was curtailed by the Ecuadorean Embassy the very next day.

But WikiLeaks quickly retaliated, issuing a cryptic message that a leak against Ecuador was on its way. The tactic seemed to work. Two months later, Mr. Assange said in an interview that his internet had been restored.

Mr. Assange has been hailed by many around the world as a champion of transparency and a casualty of his own success at revealing secrets.

In Britain, the leader of the opposition Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, said this week that his country should oppose the extradition of Mr. Assange to the United States – where he faces a charge of conspiring to hack a Pentagon computer network in 2010 – because the WikiLeaks founder was being pursued for "exposing evidence of atrocities in Iraq and Afghanistan."

Diane Abbott, another Labour Party official, made the same assertion, arguing that Mr. Assange "is not being pursued to protect U.S. national security; he's being pursued because he has exposed wrongdoing by U.S. administrations and their military forces."

But Ecuadorean officials contend that the expulsion comes from an extensive list of transgressions by Mr. Assange that soured their long – and often strained – relationship.

In explaining his decision, Mr. Moreno accused Mr. Assange of installing electronic distortion equipment in the embassy, blocking security cameras, confronting and mistreating guards and gaining access to security files without permission.

On Thursday, the government said it had also arrested a computer programmer in Ecuador in connection with the Assange case, contending that WikiLeaks had interfered in Ecuador's domestic political affairs.

WikiLeaks insisted it was not involved in the hack of Mr. Moreno's phones, and that the Ecuadorean government was using the episode as a false pretext to toss out Mr. Assange.

It was no secret that the United States wanted him removed. It was also clear that Mr. Moreno is eager for international loans and better relations with the United States after the tensions that festered under his leftist predecessor, who granted Mr. Assange shelter in the embassy.

"I inherited this situation," Mr. Moreno said in a video address this week.

Fernando Cutz, a former senior adviser to H.R. McMaster, the former national security adviser, and a Latin America policy specialist at the White House, acknowledged that American officials regularly spoke with their Ecuadorean counterparts about handing over Mr. Assange.

But Mr. Cutz argued that Ecuadorean officials did not simply cave to American demands. They wanted Mr. Assange gone as well, he said.

"We would definitely raise it with Ecuador," Mr. Cutz said. "It was a bilateral irritant, without a doubt. But I don't think the U.S. pressure ended up being the reason for this move. Bettering relations with the U.S. was just the icing on the cake for Moreno. Assange was his own worst enemy."

Mr. Assange's odyssey with Ecuador began in 2012, when he skipped a bail hearing to avoid being extradited to Sweden, where he was wanted for questioning in connection to accusations of "rape, sexual molestation and unlawful coercion."

Ecuador's president at the time, Rafael Correa, had been criticized in his own country for a crackdown against the press. But in Mr. Assange, the Ecuadorean president found a symbol of his challenge to the United States, which he called an imperialist power. Mr. Assange was free to stay in the embassy as long as he pleased, Mr. Correa said. But by 2016, a change in power was afoot in both the United States and in Ecuador. Hillary Clinton, who had run the State Department during the enormous leak of information by WikiLeaks in 2010, was running for president. Mr. Assange also had reason to worry about the coming election in Ecuador, where his stay in the embassy was becoming a campaign issue as well.

On Oct. 7, 2016, a tape was leaked showing Mrs. Clinton's opponent, Donald J. Trump, boasting of sexually harassing women while filming a segment for the show "Access Hollywood," sending Mr. Trump's campaign into a major crisis.

Less than an hour later, WikiLeaks began publishing the first of thousands of hacked emails from Mr. Podesta's account, creating a different controversy in the Clinton camp.

WikiLeaks continued to release the emails throughout October on a daily basis. American intelligence agents later concluded that the documents had been hacked by Russian operatives and laundered through WikiLeaks.

When Ecuador restricted Mr. Assange's internet access in response, Mr. Correa's administration said that it had acted on its own accord, not because of pressure from the United States. A spokesman for Mr. Kerry also denied that the Obama administration played any role.

But during the encounter on Oct. 14 – the night before Mr. Assange's internet access was restricted – Patsy Thomasson, a veteran of the Clinton White House, and a senior aide to Mr. Kerry attended a dinner at the Ecuadorean Embassy hosted by Francisco Borja, the ambassador of Ecuador.

Attendees interviewed said it struck them as odd that such high-powered players would decide to attend a party hosted by a small country's ambassador. They noted that neither Ms. Thomasson nor the Kerry aide was dressed in black tie for the ball, and that both stayed behind with the ambassador after other guests left for the event.

Ms. Thomasson, reached by phone, said she had been invited at the very last minute by someone whose wife couldn't come, and that she did not recall having any conversations with the ambassador, "much less about Julian Assange."

WikiLeaks struck back soon after. On Oct. 16, the day after Mr. Assange's internet was restricted, WikiLeaks tweeted a code, known in its parlance as an "insurance file," and signaled that an upcoming leak involving Ecuador was imminent.

According to former WikiLeaks insiders, Mr. Assange had damaging information about Ecuador and wasn't bluffing.

Mr. Assange certainly seemed to have acquired compromising material. In 2015, Cynthia Viteri, a prominent Ecuadorean politician, and Fernando Villavicencio, an Ecuadorean political journalist, had gotten secret documents showing that Ecuador was running a surveillance program, using an Italian company to spy on journalists and political enemies, in addition to spying on Mr. Assange at the embassy.

Mr. Villavicencio said he sent the material to a WikiLeaks email address, hoping the organization would publish the information. He eventually published the documents himself. WikiLeaks never did, though it is clear from leaked 2015 chat group logs from WikiLeaks Forum, a related site, that Mr. Assange and his inner circle were aware of them.

Mr. Villavicencio said he believed the documents he sent to WikiLeaks may have been among those that Mr. Assange had threatened to publish.

"There was very valuable information, information of millions of dollars in expenses, tens of millions of dollars in contracts to foreign companies to do illegal hacking – and it surprised me it didn't get out," he said. "It was information of international and national interest."

Nothing ever came of the Ecuador-related "insurance file" WikiLeaks tweeted about in October 2016.

"From 2011, WikiLeaks did not leak relevant information regarding Correa's government," Mr. Villavicencio said.

"That certainly shows hypocrisy and a double standard, contradicting journalism principles."

The controversy was just the beginning of Mr. Assange's difficulties. Mr. Moreno took over as president in May 2017 and soon broke with the policies of his predecessor.

Advisers to Mr. Moreno met with Paul Manafort, who had served as President Trump's campaign chairman, and raised the possibility of releasing Mr. Assange in exchange for concessions like debt relief. Mr. Moreno said repeatedly that Mr. Assange's time in the embassy should not be forever.

Then, Mr. Moreno's government was hit by a familiar disruption: more leaks.

In March, an anonymous website, INApapers.org, published around 200 private emails related to Mr. Moreno, text messages written by his wife and photos of the president and his family taking luxurious vacations in Europe. Mr. Moreno's government was quick to blame the release on WikiLeaks, which it says Mr. Assange still controls. On Thursday, Mr. Moreno repeated the claim, telling Ecuadorean journalists that Mr. Assange didn't have the right to "hack private accounts or phones."

Credit: NICHOLAS CASEY and JO BECKER; Ed Wong contributed reporting from Washington, and Jose María León Cabrera from Warsaw.

Photograph

The WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange being transported in a police van in London after being arrested on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JACK TAYLOR/GETTY IMAGES) (A8)

DETAILS

Subject:	Journalism; Political campaigns; Presidents; Internet access; National security; Politics; Diplomatic & consular services; Arrests; Hackers; Classified information; Extradition
Location:	United States-US Ecuador
People:	Assange, Julian Paul Moreno, Lenin
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Document 30 of 35

Questions Remain About Assange's Links to Russians and 2016 Election

Mazzetti, Mark; Barnes, Julian E . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]12 Apr 2019: A.11.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

WASHINGTON – In June 2016, five months before the American presidential election, Julian Assange made a bold prediction during a little-noticed interview with a British television show.

"WikiLeaks has a very big year ahead," he said, just seconds after announcing that the website he founded would soon be publishing a cache of emails related to Hillary Clinton.

He was right. But an indictment unsealed on Thursday charging Mr. Assange with conspiring to hack into a Pentagon computer in 2010 makes no mention of the central role that WikiLeaks played in the Russian campaign to undermine Mrs. Clinton's presidential chances and help elect President Trump. It remains unclear whether the arrest of Mr. Assange will be a key to unlocking any of the lingering mysteries surrounding the Russians, the Trump campaign and the plot to hack an election.

The Justice Department spent years examining whether Mr. Assange was working directly with the Russian government, but legal experts point out that what is known about his activities in 2016 – including publishing

stolen emails -- is not criminal, and therefore it would be difficult to bring charges against him related to the Russian interference campaign.

Numerous significant questions are left unanswered, including what, if anything, Mr. Assange knew about the identity of Guccifer 2.0, a mysterious hacker who American intelligence and law enforcement officials have identified as a front for Russian military intelligence operatives.

Court documents have revealed that it was Russian intelligence -- using the Guccifer persona -- that provided Mr. Assange thousands of emails hacked from the Democratic National Committee and the personal account of John D. Podesta, the chairman of the Clinton campaign.

Another question is whether Mr. Assange was a conduit between the Russian hackers and the Trump campaign.

Mr. Assange exchanged emails with Donald Trump Jr., Mr. Trump's eldest son, during the campaign, and a Trump campaign official sent Roger J. Stone Jr., a longtime adviser to the president, to get information about the hacked Democratic emails, according to a January indictment by Robert S. Mueller III, the special counsel.

Mr. Mueller concluded his investigation without an indictment that directly connected WikiLeaks, the Russians and the Trump campaign, suggesting that prosecutors did not find sufficient evidence that Mr. Assange knowingly engaged in a conspiracy with Russia to help the Trump campaign.

But the report drafted by Mr. Mueller's team, and expected to be released next week, could have additional details about the ties between the Trump campaign and Mr. Assange. Those details could be redacted by the Justice Department, however, if officials believe the material includes classified intelligence, said Carrie Cordero, a former official with the Justice Department's National Security Division and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

"What was the actual interaction between Russian intelligence surrogates, WikiLeaks and Trump campaign surrogates?" she said. "That is a question that has not yet been answered."

On Thursday, congressional Democrats sent a letter to Attorney General William P. Barr again demanding that they be provided the full, unredacted report, along with underlying evidence.

The special counsel also handed off his work to other prosecutors, including those who have long been examining Mr. Assange's dealings with Guccifer, the Russian intelligence front.

Many Democrats and Republicans remain convinced that Mr. Assange knowingly worked with Russian intelligence. On Thursday, Senator Richard M. Burr, the North Carolina Republican who is chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said Mr. Assange and WikiLeaks "have effectively acted as an arm of the Russian intelligence services for years." The committee's Democratic vice chairman, Senator Mark Warner of Virginia, said Mr. Assange had become "a direct participant in Russian efforts to undermine the West."

Mr. Assange has long been a polarizing figure -- hailed at the beginning of his career as champion for government transparency but also viewed by American national security officials as a disruptive force who conspired with Chelsea Manning, the former Army intelligence analyst, to publish hundreds of thousands of classified documents. But it was WikiLeaks' publication of material stolen by Russian intelligence in 2016 that hardened the view of national security officials.

In April 2017, in one of his first major speeches, Mike Pompeo -- who was C.I.A. director at the time but months earlier, as a Republican congressman, had praised WikiLeaks for its releases that damaged the Clinton campaign -- signaled that the government would take a hard line on WikiLeaks.

Mr. Pompeo compared WikiLeaks to "a hostile intelligence service," and said it sought support from anti-democratic countries as it targeted the United States with its disclosures.

Mr. Pompeo's public remarks coincided with a private push against Mr. Assange by the Trump administration. The C.I.A. intensified espionage efforts against WikiLeaks, seeking to learn more about his interactions with the Russian intelligence operatives.

The timing of Mr. Assange's actions fueled suspicions. His June 2016 interview announcing the impending release of Democratic emails came three days after a meeting at Trump Tower in New York between Russians and senior Trump campaign officials -- a meeting set up on the promise that the Russians would have damaging information

about Mrs. Clinton.

Throughout the 2016 campaign, Mr. Assange played down accusations of Russian interference, and misled the public on his source for the damaging documents WikiLeaks released.

He offered a \$20,000 reward for information about the killing in Washington of Seth Rich, a young Democratic National Committee staff member shot to death in an apparent bungled street robbery. Some supporters of Mr. Trump suggested that it was Mr. Rich who had leaked the committee's emails and that he had been killed in retaliation.

During an August 2016 discussion with Dutch television about the sources of WikiLeaks' information, Mr. Assange suddenly brought up Mr. Rich's killing.

"That was just a robbery, I believe, wasn't it?" the interviewer said. "What are you suggesting?"

"I'm suggesting that our sources take risks," Mr. Assange said. He then declined to say if Mr. Rich was a source.

Photograph

Robert S. Mueller III's inquiry did not issue any indictments directly connecting WikiLeaks, Russia and the Trump campaign. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CLIFF OWEN/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

DETAILS

Subject:	National security; Espionage; Intelligence services; Congressional committees
Location:	Russia United States-US New York Virginia North Carolina
People:	Trump, Donald J Pompeo, Mike Mueller, Robert S III Stone, Roger J Barr, William P Clinton, Hillary Rodham Assange, Julian Paul Rich, Seth Manning, Chelsea
Company / organization:	Name: Democratic National Committee; NAICS: 813940; Name: Office of the Director of National Intelligence; NAICS: 922190; Name: Committee on Intelligence, Select-Senate; NAICS: 921120; Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: Department of Justice; NAICS: 922130
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Britain Arrests Assange, Ending 7-Year Standoff

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[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

WASHINGTON -- The WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange was arrested on Thursday in London to face a charge in the United States of conspiring to hack into a Pentagon computer network in 2010, bringing to an abrupt end a seven-year saga in which he had holed up in Ecuador's embassy in Britain to avoid capture. The Ecuadorean government suspended the citizenship it had granted Mr. Assange and evicted him on Thursday, clearing the way for his arrest. His hosts had displayed growing impatience, listing grievances including recent WikiLeaks releases they said interfered with other states' internal affairs and personal discourtesies, like the failure of Mr. Assange to clean the bathroom and look after his cat.

A bedraggled and shackled Mr. Assange, 47, was dragged out of the embassy. At a court hearing, a judge swiftly found him guilty of jumping bail, and he was detained partly in connection with an American extradition warrant. Mr. Assange indicated that he would fight extradition, and legal experts said that process could take years. He is likely to argue that the case is politically motivated rather than driven by legitimate legal concerns.

Mr. Assange's arrest brought to a head long-simmering tensions that have raised profound First Amendment press

freedom issues. Since Mr. Assange began publishing archives of secret American military and diplomatic documents in 2010 – provided by the former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning – senior officials in two administrations had weighed whether to try to put him out of business by charging him with a crime. Ms. Manning was convicted at a court-martial trial in 2013 of leaking the documents.

The Obama administration had explored whether to bring charges against Mr. Assange but decided not to, in part because of fears of creating a precedent that could chill traditional journalism. But in November, an accidental court filing appeared to disclose that the Trump administration had secretly charged him with some unspecified offense.

The indictment unsealed Thursday, however, revealed that prosecutors in Northern Virginia had not charged Mr. Assange under the Espionage Act for publishing government secrets. Instead, they charged him with conspiring to commit unlawful computer intrusion based on his alleged agreement to try to help Ms. Manning break an encoded portion of passcode that would have permitted her to log on to a classified military network under another user's identity.

Because traditional journalistic activity does not extend to helping a source break a code to gain illicit access to a classified network, the charge appeared to be an attempt by prosecutors to sidestep the potential First Amendment minefield of treating the act of publishing information as a crime. Nevertheless, journalists should still be worried, said Barry Pollack, a lawyer for Mr. Assange.

"While the indictment against Julian Assange disclosed today charges a conspiracy to commit computer crimes, the factual allegations against Mr. Assange boil down to encouraging a source to provide him information and taking efforts to protect the identity of that source," Mr. Pollack said. "Journalists around the world should be deeply troubled by these unprecedented criminal charges."

Spokesmen for the Justice Department's National Security Division and for the United States attorney in the Eastern District of Virginia declined to comment.

Mr. Assange has been in the sights of the United States government since his organization began publishing Ms. Manning's leaks in 2010, bringing to light many secrets – like revealing that more civilians had died in Iraq than official estimates showed, detailing the accusations against Guantánamo detainees and airing American diplomats' unvarnished takes on what was happening around the world – vaulting WikiLeaks to fame. A grand jury in Virginia began investigating people with links to WikiLeaks.

Most recently, Mr. Assange has been under attack for his organization's release during the 2016 presidential campaign of thousands of Democratic emails stolen by Russian hackers. (Russian intelligence officers apparently adopted the guise of a hacker calling itself Guccifer 2.0 when providing the files to WikiLeaks.) But the conspiracy charge against Mr. Assange is not related to WikiLeaks' role in Russia's operations to sabotage the election.

The internal government debate over whether to charge Mr. Assange continued under the Trump administration and was accelerated by Jeff Sessions, the attorney general at the time, according to former officials involved in the discussions. It centered on whether Mr. Assange was a journalist or whether at least some of his actions could be deemed crimes unrelated to journalism.

A hacking offense cited in the indictment carries an eight-year statute of limitations, which may have played a role in spurring the Trump administration to decide whether to move forward: The unsealed court papers indicated that a grand jury returned the indictment on March 6, 2018 – almost eight years to the day that Mr. Assange is accused of agreeing to help Ms. Manning try to crack the password, court papers showed.

The indictment says Mr. Assange made that agreement on March 8, 2010. Had they succeeded, prosecutors said, it would have helped Ms. Manning cover her tracks by making it harder for the government to later identify who had copied files. But Mr. Assange's efforts evidently failed – he told Ms. Manning two days later, on March 10, that he had "no luck so far," according to the court filing.

Also on March 8, prosecutors said, Ms. Manning told Mr. Assange, "After this upload, that's all I really have got left." Mr. Assange replied, "Curious eyes never run dry in my experience."

That exchange came at a time when Ms. Manning had copied and sent to WikiLeaks archives of logs of significant

events in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and dossiers about Guantánamo Bay detainees, but she had not yet sent the group hundreds of thousands of diplomatic cables from American embassies around the world, the indictment said. Weeks later, she began copying and uploading the State Department messages to WikiLeaks, it said. The pair also tried to cover their tracks by removing user names from the disclosed information and deleting their chat logs, according to the indictment.

During her court-martial, in which some of Mr. Assange's efforts to help were also discussed, Ms. Manning took complete responsibility for her actions and said that Mr. Assange had not pushed her to take them.

"No one associated with W.L.O." – an abbreviation she used to refer to the WikiLeaks organization – "pressured me into sending any more information," she said at the time. "I take full responsibility."

Ms. Manning was convicted and sentenced to 35 years in prison for leaking the files and served about seven – the longest of any convicted leaker in American history – before President Barack Obama commuted most of the remainder of her sentence shortly before leaving office in 2017.

Ms. Manning is in jail again. A judge held her in civil contempt last month for refusing to testify before a grand jury about her interactions with WikiLeaks.

If Mr. Assange is convicted on the conspiracy to hack offense alone, he could face up to five years in prison. The government could later seek to charge him with additional offenses, but because of extradition practices, any such superseding indictment would most likely need to come soon, before Britain formally decides whether to transfer custody of him.

Until recently, Mr. Assange's Ecuadorean citizenship, granted in 2017, presented a hurdle in President Lenín Moreno's efforts to remove him from the embassy. Ecuador's Constitution limits the government's ability to turn over citizens to a foreign justice system, especially if they could face torture or the death penalty, which are outlawed in Ecuador.

The country's former foreign minister, María Fernanda Espinosa, originally granted Mr. Assange's citizenship, citing a policy that allowed certain foreigners under "international protection" to be naturalized. She argued that Mr. Assange's refuge at the embassy was a case that qualified.

However, on Thursday, Ecuador's current foreign minister, José Valencia, said Mr. Assange's citizenship had been suspended because of irregularities, opening the door for him to be handed to the British authorities.

Mr. Assange took refuge in the Ecuadorean Embassy in June 2012 to avoid extradition to Sweden, where he faced questions about sexual assault accusations, which he has denied. Sweden rescinded its arrest warrant for Mr. Assange in 2017, but he refused to leave the embassy.

Under a previous president, Ecuador had offered Mr. Assange citizenship and open-ended refuge in its embassy. But its government soured on the relationship as the years kept passing, and it eventually began to impose limits on what Mr. Assange could say and do.

The Ecuadorean government said last year that it had cut off Mr. Assange's internet access, saying that he had violated an agreement to stop commenting on, or trying to influence, the politics of other countries. The government also imposed other restrictions, like limiting his visitors. He sued in October, claiming that it was violating his rights.

On Thursday, Mr. Moreno, who became Ecuador's president in 2017, said on Twitter that his country had decided to stop sheltering Mr. Assange after "his repeated violations to international conventions and daily-life protocols."

Follow Adam Goldman, Charlie Savage and Eileen Sullivan on Twitter: @adamgoldmanNYT, @charlie_savage and @esullivanatty.

Credit: CHARLIE SAVAGE, ADAM GOLDMAN and EILEEN SULLIVAN; Reporting was contributed by Katie Benner from Washington; David D. Kirkpatrick and Richard Pérez-Peña from London; Nicholas Casey from New York; and Raphael Minder from Madrid.

Photograph

Julian Assange left the Ecuadorean Embassy in London aboard a police van on Thursday to face a judge over jumping bail in 2012. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRY NICHOLLS/REUTERS) (A1); London police officers removed the

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange from Ecuador's embassy on Thursday after he was evicted. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK) (A9)

DETAILS

Subject:	Journalism; Arrests; Diplomatic & consular services; Archives & records; Citizenship; Court hearings & proceedings; Conspiracy; Criminal investigations; Sex crimes; Arrest warrants; Extradition; Influence; Hackers; National security; Presidential elections; Classified information
Location:	Sweden United States–US United Kingdom–UK Iraq Ecuador Russia
People:	Assange, Julian Paul Manning, Chelsea
Company / organization:	Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130
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Document 32 of 35

What the Charges Mean For U.S. Press Freedoms

Savage, Charlie . New York Times , Late Edition (East Coast); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]12 Apr 2019: A.11.

[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

WASHINGTON -- Charges against Julian Assange, the founder and leader of WikiLeaks, that were unsealed on Thursday brought to a head a long-running debate about whether his actions construed a crime and what prosecuting him would mean for American press freedoms.

Mr. Assange vaulted to global fame in 2010, when his anti-secrecy website began posting archives of secret American military and diplomatic documents leaked by Chelsea Manning, an Army intelligence analyst who had downloaded them from a classified computer network she worked on at her outpost in Iraq. His image became more complicated in 2016, when WikiLeaks published stolen Democratic emails that the Russian government had hacked as part of its covert operation to damage Hillary Clinton and help Donald J. Trump win the presidency. Throughout that saga, national security and law enforcement officials in both the Obama and the Trump administrations have weighed whether they could charge Mr. Assange with a crime. That debate has raised concerns by press freedom advocates about what any precedent established by his case would mean for First Amendment rights and the future of investigative journalism in the United States.

Why does the case against Mr. Assange raise concerns about press freedoms?

Mr. Assange is not a traditional journalist, but most of what he does at WikiLeaks is difficult to distinguish in a legally meaningful way from what traditional news organizations, like The New York Times, do every day: seek out and publish information that officials would prefer to be kept secret, including classified national security matters, and take steps to protect the confidentiality of sources.

In recent years, prosecutors have begun far more regularly charging officials with leaking information to reporters under the Espionage Act, a World War I-era law. It criminalizes the disclosure of potentially damaging national security secrets to someone not authorized to receive them. On its face, the Espionage Act could also be used to prosecute reporters who publish government secrets.

While many legal scholars believe that prosecuting reporters for doing their jobs would violate the First Amendment, the prospect has never been tested in court because the government has never charged a journalist under that law. The rumblings about prosecuting Mr. Assange raised the possibility that prosecutors could violate that norm and try to establish that publishing government secrets can be a crime.

Was Mr. Assange charged with publishing secrets?

No. When the indictment was unsealed on Thursday, it showed that a grand jury had instead charged Mr. Assange with conspiring with Ms. Manning to illegally hack a government computer to obtain national security information. Specifically, the indictment said, on March 8, 2010, Mr. Assange agreed to help Ms. Manning try to crack part of an encoded password that would have let her gain access to more information than her own account provided.

Prosecutors also cited a chat log from two days later that they said indicated that Mr. Assange had taken steps to act on that conspiracy: He said he had "no luck so far" in trying to crack the password.

So can people concerned about press freedoms rest easy?

Not quite. For now, the case significantly reduces such concerns because it is outside traditional investigative journalism to help sources try to break passcodes so they can illegally hack into government computers.

But some press freedom advocates say they remain concerned. For one thing, the Justice Department could file a superseding indictment, so there is no guarantee that Espionage Act charges will stay out of the case. Under extradition procedures, however, any additional charges would most likely have to come soon -- before Britain decides whether to transfer custody of Mr. Assange.

For another, prosecutors cited details that expanded beyond a narrow focus on cracking the passcode and that sounded like typical activities of a journalist. For example, the indictment talks about efforts to conceal conversations by using a special chat service and deleting certain chat logs. It also says Mr. Assange took a step to help Ms. Manning send him the files, by making a special folder for her to upload files.

And it quotes a purported exchange midway through Ms. Manning's leaks in which she wrote, "After this upload, that's all I really have got left," but Mr. Assange replied, "Curious eyes never run dry in my experience." Several weeks later, according to the indictment, Ms. Manning copied and sent WikiLeaks the diplomatic cables.

The Justice Department's inclusion of those details as relevant to the case was cause for worry, said Jameel Jaffer, the executive director of the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University.

"The indictment and the Justice Department's press release treat everyday journalistic practices as part of a criminal conspiracy," he said. "Whether the government will be able to establish a violation of the hacking statute remains to be seen, but it's very troubling that the indictment sweeps in activities that are not just lawful but essential to press freedom -- activities like cultivating sources, protecting sources' identities and communicating with sources securely."

Could Mr. Assange be charged later in connection with Russia's election interference?

It would not be easy.

The Espionage Act does not cover the disclosure of unclassified emails like the Democratic messages, so prosecutors would have to come up with a theory in which publishing them violated some other law. Even if they could find one, a 2001 Supreme Court ruling held that the First Amendment did not permit prosecutors to charge someone with a crime for publishing or broadcasting information so long as no law was broken in acquiring it -- even if the source who provided it did something illegal to obtain it.

No one has suggested that the Russians needed or had any help from Mr. Assange in hacking Democrats' emails. And Mr. Assange has denied knowing who his source was; at the time, Russian military intelligence officers created the fictitious online persona of a hacker calling himself Guccifer 2.0 to disseminate and call attention to the files, although evidence that it was most likely a front for Russian intelligence was broadly discussed.

What about the statute of limitations?

Normally, the statute of limitations prevents prosecutors from charging people with a crime for actions that took place more than five years ago. However, a hacking provision cited in the indictment -- intruding into a government computer to obtain national security secrets -- has an eight-year limit. A grand jury returned the indictment of Mr. Assange on March 6, 2018, just before the eighth anniversary of the day that Mr. Assange is accused of entering into a conspiracy with Ms. Manning to violate that law.

There is an oddity: As part of the USA Patriot Act after the Sept. 11 attacks, Congress added that provision to a list of crimes that get an eight-year limit under a separate law titled "extension of statute of limitation for certain

terrorism offenses." While Mr. Assange's case involves national security, it is not about terrorism. The "terrorism" heading most likely makes no legal difference, however – just as prosecutors can use the words of the Espionage Act to charge leakers, not just spies.

Is a trial imminent?

No. Mr. Assange is widely expected to fight extradition to the United States by arguing in British court that his prosecution is politically motivated. That fight and inevitable appeals could take years to play out.

Follow Charlie Savage on Twitter: @charlie_savage.

Credit: CHARLIE SAVAGE; Eileen Sullivan contributed reporting.

Photograph

A mobile billboard supporting Chelsea Manning and Julian Assange last week in London outside the Ecuadorian Embassy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JACK TAYLOR/GETTY IMAGES)

DETAILS

Subject:	Journalism; Crime; Freedom of the press; Diplomatic & consular services; Indictments; Conspiracy; Extradition; National security; Publishing; Reporters; Law; Covert operations; Espionage
Location:	Russia United Kingdom--UK Iraq United States--US New York
People:	Clinton, Hillary Rodham Assange, Julian Paul Manning, Chelsea
Company / organization:	Name: Wikileaks.org; NAICS: 519130; Name: New York Times Co; NAICS: 511110, 511120, 515112, 515120; Name: Knight First Amendment Institute; NAICS: 611310; Name: Columbia University; NAICS: 611310; Name: Twitter Inc; NAICS: 519130; Name: Congress; NAICS: 921120; Name: Department of Justice; NAICS: 922130
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Document 33 of 35

WikiLeaks Publishes Classified American Documents

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FULL TEXT

APRIL - NOVEMBER 2010

WikiLeaks Publishes Classified American Documents

WikiLeaks burst onto the scene in 2010. In April that year it released a graphic decrypted video from Iraq. In July, it published a six-year archive of classified American military documents about the war in Afghanistan. The group released a second cache of secret reports, this time about the Iraq war, in October. Next, it published a quarter-million confidential American diplomatic cables.

Since then, WikiLeaks appears to have gradually shifted its focus to releasing material that benefits Russia, to the consternation of many of its former allies and defenders. Mr. Assange was a persistent problem for the Obama administration, releasing embarrassing documents from the United States and other countries. Meanwhile, President Trump during his campaign repeatedly expressed glee over WikiLeaks' release of confidential emails from the Democratic National Committee and the Clinton campaign, even after American officials said the emails had been given to WikiLeaks by hackers working for Russian intelligence.

SUMMER 2010

U.S. Investigates WikiLeaks

Army investigators suspected that the source of the leaks was Pfc. Bradley Manning, now known as Chelsea. Private Manning was court-martialed in June 2010, and in August 2013 she was sentenced to 35 years in prison for passing information to WikiLeaks. President Barack Obama commuted her sentence at the end of his second term, and she was released in May 2017.

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2010

A Rape Investigation and Extradition Request

Mr. Assange was investigated in August and September 2010 on charges of rape and molestation after separate complaints from two women. Sweden issued an extradition warrant for him in November that said Mr. Assange was wanted for questioning in connection with accusations of "rape, sexual molestation and unlawful coercion." He said he was afraid that Sweden would turn him over to the United States, where WikiLeaks has been under investigation.

NOVEMBER 2011 - JUNE 2012

Assange Goes to Court

A British court ruled in November 2011 that Mr. Assange could be extradited to Sweden. His lawyers challenged that decision, having argued at a February 2011 hearing that he would not receive a fair trial if extradited to Sweden. He lost his final appeal before Britain's Supreme Court in June 2012.

AUGUST 2012

Ecuador Grants Asylum

Ecuador rejected pressure from Britain and granted Mr. Assange political asylum in August 2012. He had already spent two months living in the country's embassy in London. The decision left Mr. Assange confined to the embassy: Ecuador could protect him as long as he remained on Ecuadorean territory, but if he left the embassy he was subject to arrest by the British police.

JANUARY 2016

U.N. Panel Rules in His Favor

A United Nations rights panel said in January 2016 that Britain and Sweden had arbitrarily detained Mr. Assange, should restore his freedom of movement and should compensate him. The panel said that Swedish prosecutors had not pressed charges and had never shown Mr. Assange evidence against him or given him a chance to respond. The ruling was disregarded by both countries, and Mr. Assange remained in the embassy.

NOVEMBER 2016

Questioned at the Embassy

Swedish prosecutors, with Ecuador's help, questioned Mr. Assange for four hours at the embassy in London. His Swedish lawyer, Per E. Samuelson, was not summoned to attend, and on Radio Sweden, he questioned the validity of the interview.

APRIL 2017

A New Ecuadorean President

Lenín Moreno is elected president of Ecuador, succeeding Rafael Correa, a leftist who had been in power for a decade. During the campaign, several candidates had vowed to evict Mr. Assange from the embassy if they won. Mr. Moreno said he would let Mr. Assange stay, but has been significantly more critical than his predecessor, calling Mr. Assange a hacker and warning him not to meddle in politics.

MAY 2017

Sweden Drops

Rape Investigation

Swedish prosecutors said they would stop the rape investigation into Mr. Assange. The chief prosecutor, Marianne Ny, made clear that this did not mean he was being pronounced innocent. Ms. Ny said that proceeding with the case would require Mr. Assange to be served notice of the charges against him and for him to be present in a

Swedish court, both of which were impossible.

In Britain, he still faces a warrant for failing to appear in court.

JANUARY 2018

Ecuador Grants Citizenship

In early 2018, Ecuador announced that it had made several moves to end the long diplomatic standoff, including granting Mr. Assange citizenship in December, a few months after he asked for it.

Days later, Ecuador asked Britain to give Mr. Assange diplomatic immunity so he could leave the embassy, but Britain declined. Still, the Ecuadorean government pushed on, saying it would seek a mediator to help broker a potential deal that would free him to leave the building.

FEBRUARY 2018

Warrant Is Upheld in the U.K.

A British judge twice upheld the outstanding arrest warrant against Mr. Assange for jumping bail when he took refuge in the embassy in 2012. It was not clear that a ruling in his favor would have led to his going free, because the United States and Britain have never said whether there is a secret request to extradite him to face charges in an American court.

NOVEMBER 2018

An Indictment

Mistakenly Revealed

A court filing revealed that the Justice Department had prepared an indictment against Mr. Assange, although it was not clear whether charges had been filed against him. The existence of the indictment became known only after prosecutors inadvertently mentioned possible charges against him in an unrelated case. Seamus Hughes, a terrorism expert at George Washington University who closely tracks court cases, discovered the document and posted it on Twitter.

APRIL 2019

Assange Is Arrested at Embassy and Charged by U.S.

The United States charged Mr. Assange with one count of conspiracy to hack a computer related to his role in the 2010 release of secret American documents.

Hours earlier, Mr. Assange had been arrested by the British authorities at the Ecuadorean Embassy in London, where he had lived since 2012.

This is a more complete version of the story than the one that appeared in print.

DETAILS

Subject:	Arrests; Diplomatic & consular services; Indictments; Citizenship; Presidents; Criminal investigations; Sex crimes; Extradition; Government documents; Intelligence services; Hackers; National security; Electronic mail systems; Presidential elections; Classified information
Location:	Sweden Russia United States--US United Kingdom--UK Iraq Afghanistan Ecuador
People:	Trump, Donald J Manning, Chelsea (Bradley) Clinton, Hillary Rodham Assange, Julian Paul
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'Curious Eyes Never Run Dry'

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FULL TEXT

The arrest in London of the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange ends one bizarre saga, but opens a legal drama that is likely to stretch over many years and could probe uncharted areas of press freedoms and national security in the United States in the digital era. There is good reason to be watchful as the case unfolds.

Mr. Assange, a 47-year-old Australian, had spent almost seven years holed up in the Ecuadorean Embassy, initially to avoid arrest on Swedish sex charges that have since been dropped, then British charges of skipping bail. But extradition to the United States was what Mr. Assange really feared, and what the cat-and-mouse game was always about.

It was in the United States that the materials posted on WikiLeaks created the greatest furor, first through the publication of a trove of classified documents supplied by an Army private, Chelsea Manning, and then by releasing material stolen from the computers of Hillary Clinton's campaign.

The Obama administration was wary of pursuing Mr. Assange because WikiLeaks was essentially involved in investigative work common to a free press. But the Trump administration saw Mr. Assange and WikiLeaks as targets as soon as it took office. (Mr. Trump loved WikiLeaks in 2016 when it was embarrassing top officials of the Clinton campaign.) Two years ago, as director of the C.I.A., Mike Pompeo labeled WikiLeaks "a nonstate hostile intelligence service" after it released a cache of C.I.A. hacking tools. Efforts got underway then to build a case against Mr. Assange. This was confirmed through an inadvertent mention in a federal court filing last November. Mr. Assange, meanwhile, managed to exhaust his welcome at the Ecuadorean Embassy, and on Thursday British police officers unceremoniously bundled the scraggly-bearded refugee off in a van. Soon after, Scotland Yard acknowledged that it was also acting on an American extradition warrant, after which a federal indictment was unsealed in the United States charging Mr. Assange with conspiring to hack a government computer.

The single charge is straightforward: It alleges that Mr. Assange helped the Army private break into a government computer in 2010 to steal classified and sensitive documents. According to the indictment, when Ms. Manning told Mr. Assange that she had no more material to send him, he replied, "Curious eyes never run dry in my experience." Ms. Manning served almost seven years of a 35-year sentence for the leak, and is now back in jail for refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating WikiLeaks.

The still-unproven charge is far less contentious than had it been, as widely anticipated, for espionage-related crimes. That would have been a direct challenge to the distinction between a journalist exposing abuse of power through leaked materials -- something traditional newspapers like The Times do all the time -- and a foreign agent seeking to undermine the security of the United States through theft or subterfuge.

These questions will arise in any event -- starting with the extradition hearings, at which Mr. Assange's lawyers are likely to argue that the American charges are politically motivated. And if Britain does extradite him, there is no certainty that the Trump administration, with its combative stance toward the press and its documented recent antipathy for Mr. Assange, will not throw more charges at him.

The issues WikiLeaks raises are vitally important. The responsibilities, ethics and rules of journalism are fast changing in an era when terabytes of secret data can be dumped in a flash, and when hostile governments like Russia's can burrow into foreign computers for compromising information and then launder it through other channels.

The case of Mr. Assange, who got his start as a computer hacker, illuminates the conflict of freedom and harm in the new technologies, and could help draw a sharp line between legitimate journalism and dangerous cybercrime. Once in the United States, moreover, he could become a useful source on how Russia orchestrated its attacks on the Clinton campaign.

The administration has begun well by charging Mr. Assange with an indisputable crime. But there is always a risk with this administration -- one that labels the free press as "the enemy of the people" -- that the prosecution of Mr. Assange could become an assault on the First Amendment and whistle-blowers.

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Illustration

DRAWING (DRAWING BY CAROLINE GAMON)

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Document 35 of 35

A Divisive Prophet of the Public's Right to Know

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[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

The shaky video clips of Julian Assange's arrest flashed around the world on Thursday, the white-bearded prophet of the age of leaks being hauled by unsmiling security officers to a gray van marked Police.

"We must resist!" he cried. "You can resist!" It was a scene that the very image-conscious Mr. Assange might appreciate: one man literally fighting the all-powerful state.

It was also the latest -- and surely not the last -- dramatic turn in a career marked by both brilliant achievement and dubious judgment. Mr. Assange has long had a knack for celebrity, and as a tech-savvy, global, almost stateless figure, he captured the new influence the internet could give to individual citizens.

[Read more about the arrest of Julian Assange.]

His creation of WikiLeaks helped empower a generation of whistle-blowers and disgruntled insiders who could operate on an industrial scale, providing disclosures by the terabyte and enraging the powerful in many countries. WikiLeaks collaborated closely with major world publications, including The New York Times, in the release of secret records on the American-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and a quarter-million confidential State Department cables.

But Mr. Assange has always elicited fervent reactions: He has been hailed as a hero of free information, or despised as a treacherous criminal worthy of death by drone -- often depending on what WikiLeaks had recently been up to. Though he has always described himself as a journalist, he has been far too much of an activist to be satisfied with the role of neutral and fair-minded provider of information.

He has proved a highly problematic, even embarrassing champion for the principles of press freedom and the public's right to information, especially in recent years. For the past seven, he was hiding out at Ecuador's tiny redbrick embassy in London, not just from American prosecutors, but also from Swedish sex-crime investigators, who eventually closed their case.

Mr. Assange, the world's most famous self-proclaimed political refugee, lived there with his cat in a small corner room. He continued to run WikiLeaks, conducted news conferences before hundreds of fawning admirers from a balcony, rode his skateboard in the halls and played host to a parade of visitors, including Lady Gaga and Pamela Anderson, a rumored lover who brought with her vegan sandwiches.

The arrest came at the end of a meandering legal path that began in 2010, when the Justice Department announced it was investigating WikiLeaks. Obama administration officials eventually dropped the idea, persuaded by press advocates that prosecuting WikiLeaks would set a dangerous precedent because many mainstream news organizations regularly publish classified information.

In 2016, some of Mr. Assange's former American sympathizers turned sharply against him after he made WikiLeaks into an enthusiastic instrument of Russia's intervention in the American presidential election, doling out hacked Democratic emails to maximize their political effect, campaigning against Hillary Clinton on Twitter and promoting a false cover story about the source of the leaks.

That performance drew voluble praise from her opponent, Donald J. Trump, who regularly read from leaked Clinton campaign emails in his 2016 stump speeches and declared, "I love WikiLeaks." But months later, while he was president, WikiLeaks posted a collection of classified documents on the C.I.A.'s hacking tools, and Mr. Trump's first C.I.A. chief, Mike Pompeo, called Mr. Assange "a narcissist" and labeled the organization "a nonstate hostile intelligence service."

His words were a harbinger of the single charge of conspiracy to commit computer intrusion against Mr. Assange that the Justice Department unsealed on Thursday.

In some ways, Mr. Assange, 47, has never fully shed the rebellious, secretive ways of the precocious Australian teenager with a complicated family background who, with two pals, formed a hacking collective called the International Subversives. In the 1997 book "Underground," a lengthy account of the young hackers written by Suelette Dreyfus and crediting Mr. Assange as "researcher," a hacker with the nickname Mendax clearly resembles the young Julian.

Mendax found the small Australian town where Mr. Assange lived with his mother, Emerald, "dead boring," the book says. "Sometimes Mendax went to school. Often he didn't. The school system didn't hold much interest for him." A vulnerable computer network in Sydney, the book says, "was a far more interesting place to muck around in than the rural high school."

In 1991, at age 20, Mr. Assange was charged with a long list of hacking offenses, to which he pleaded guilty and got off with a fine and a warning. "There is just no evidence that there was anything other than sort of intelligent inquisitiveness and the pleasure of being able to -- what's the expression -- surf through these various computers," the judge said at his sentencing, according to an account in *The New Yorker*.

"Underground" hints at a kind of qualified idealism, suggesting that Mendax and his comrades mostly shunned theft and vandalism in favor of disclosure. The book describes "the early Australian underground's golden rules of hacking: Don't damage computer systems you break into (including crashing them); don't change the information in those systems (except for altering logs to cover your tracks); and share information."

By 2006, when he founded WikiLeaks, Mr. Assange had adopted a nomadic lifestyle, roaming the world and pronouncing sometimes cryptic principles about secrecy and information. By 2008, he was living in East Africa and exposing corruption in Kenya on the new site, which had published more than one million documents, including some from the Iraq war and the Guantánamo prison, as well as a potpourri covering less momentous topics: an early script for an Indiana Jones movie, Wesley Snipes's tax bill and documents from the Church of Scientology and the Mormon Church.

But it was Chelsea Manning, then a low-level intelligence analyst stationed at a base in Iraq, who really put WikiLeaks, and hence Mr. Assange, on the map. Bored and harboring doubts about the war and American foreign policy, she began copying thousands of documents from a classified network onto CDs that she marked as Lady Gaga songs to avoid detection.

Back in the United States, she called both *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* before connecting with

WikiLeaks, where Mr. Assange and his fractious band of activist volunteers eagerly took up the cause in 2010. They first posted a devastating video of two American helicopter gunships in Iraq shooting at suspected enemies on the ground – two of whom were among those killed and turned out to be war correspondents for Reuters. The news organization had struggled to learn the details of the strike; now the world saw not just the view from the helicopters, but it heard the pilots' casual exchanges as they opened fire three times.

Military officials accused WikiLeaks of leaving out crucial context, including the presence on the ground of several rocket-propelled grenades and other weapons in the group that was targeted. WikiLeaks called the video "Collateral Murder," an illustration of Mr. Assange's skill at spin.

That was followed by publication, in coordination with The Times and other mainstream news organizations, of 77,000 military documents from the war in Afghanistan and then 392,000 from the war in Iraq.

The War Logs, as they were called, were published in coordination with Le Monde, The Guardian and Der Spiegel, and they shed new light on civilian casualties, soldiers' morale, the treatment of detainees and the use of contractors. An editor's note explained that they provided "a real-time history of the war," but also struck an ambivalent chord about their source, WikiLeaks, which the note said "was not involved in the news organizations' research, reporting, analysis and writing."

Human rights groups complained that WikiLeaks' own publication of unredacted documents might put in danger Afghans who were named as working with the United States military, and the Iraq documents were stripped of names. When the diplomatic cables were published, The Times and other news organizations worked closely with WikiLeaks to redact names to protect vulnerable people – but later, in a dispute with a British editor, Mr. Assange decided simply to publish the massive cable collection without any edits.

Meanwhile, WikiLeaks was plagued with infighting, often touched off by Mr. Assange's astringent style and ego. Two women complained to Swedish authorities about Mr. Assange's sexual conduct with them, setting off a yearslong quest of investigators to question him. Angry American politicians denounced Mr. Assange, whose distinctive face had become recognizable worldwide, and called for his arrest or even his execution.

In 2012, Ecuador's foreign minister announced that Mr. Assange was at the embassy in London and had asked for political asylum. Small as they were, Mr. Assange's living quarters at the embassy did not cramp his desire to remain in the limelight. He pronounced his opinions on Twitter, briefly hosted a talk show on the Russian television channel RT and continued to oversee the publication of leaked material and even sent an associate to assist Edward Snowden, a former National Security Agency contractor, when he flew to Russia from Hong Kong – even though WikiLeaks had not played a role in Mr. Snowden's leak of agency documents.

Mr. Assange had an office equipped with a bed, sunlamp, phone, computer, kitchenette, shower, treadmill and bookshelves. Vaughan Smith, a longtime supporter of Mr. Assange who helped put up his bail money, said that "Julian's a big bloke, with big bones, and he fills the room physically and intellectually."

"It's a tiny embassy with a tiny balcony," Mr. Smith added. "Small, hot and with not great air flow, and it must be jolly difficult for everyone there."

But Mr. Assange held court for admirers and famous curiosity seekers, among them the soccer star Eric Cantona and Nigel Farage, the pro-Brexit radio host and former head of the U.K. Independence Party.

Eventually, Mr. Assange's isolation began to wear on him, a friend said on Thursday, especially the long, lonely weekends in an essentially empty embassy that he could not leave.

He was becoming deeply depressed and wondered about simply walking out, the friend said, speaking on the condition of anonymity. And relations with his hosts were becoming deeply strained, even adversarial, as diplomats grew tired of his behavior. Even Mr. Assange's friends have described him as difficult, a narcissist with an outsize view of his importance and little interest in mundane matters like personal hygiene.

A copy of a 2014 letter from Juan Falconí Puig, then Ecuador's ambassador to Britain, to the Foreign Ministry, seen by The Times, complained of Mr. Assange's penchant for riding a skateboard and playing soccer with visitors. His skateboarding, Mr. Falconí said, had "damaged floors, walls and doors." When a security guard tried to take his soccer ball, Mr. Assange "began to shake, insult and push the agent," reclaimed the ball and then "launched the ball

at his body," the letter said.

Mr. Assange's presence in the embassy long after the Ecuadorean president who granted him political asylum had been replaced finally became too much for the government in Quito. Last year, it severed his internet access and limited his visitors.

On Thursday, President Lenín Moreno, elected in 2017, explained on Twitter and in a video the decision to evict him.

"In a sovereign decision Ecuador withdrew the asylum status to Julian Assange after his repeated violations to international conventions and daily-life protocols," he said.

Mr. Moreno accused Mr. Assange of having installed forbidden "electronic and distortion equipment," accessing the embassy's security files without permission, blocking the embassy's security cameras and mistreating its personnel, including guards.

Appearing in the Westminster Magistrates' Court, his silver hair tied in a bun, Mr. Assange looked composed in a navy suit. The scene underscored the obvious: that Mr. Assange will use his legal predicament as a new platform for his defiance of authority and his crusade for WikiLeaks.

Outside the courthouse, a flock of cameras were pointing toward the guarded entrance, and a group of protesters chanted feebly: "Free, free, free Assange."

After Mr. Assange took his seat in court, a supporter wearing a scruffy fluorescent jacket gave him a thumbs-up from the public gallery. Mr. Assange returned the gesture.

Waiting for the lawyers to enter, Mr. Assange read from a book, which he raised for the news media to see: "History of the National Security State," by Gore Vidal.

Credit: SCOTT SHANE and STEVEN ERLANGER; Reporting was contributed by Nicholas Casey, Palko Karasz, Iliana Magra and José María León Cabrera.

Photograph

Julian Assange, top, while free in London in 2010. He inspired a new generation of whistle-blowers in part by leaking information from Chelsea Manning, center right, about American military actions in Iraq. Mr. Assange also had a polarizing role in the 2016 American presidential election, above, doling out hacked Democratic emails to maximize their political effect. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; SUZANNE CORDEIRO/REUTERS; OZIER MUHAMMAD/THE NEW YORK TIMES; CHET STRANGE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

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