

Julian Assange – what's going on?

WHY IS THIS LINKED TO CLIMATE CAMPAIGNING?

Action on climate change needs good data. Wikileaks offered in 2017 to secure scientific information under threat from the new Trump Administration.

Authoritarian power threatens civil liberties and needs to be opposed. Climate activists world-wide risk arrest and harassment. Julian Assange and Wikileaks should be celebrated.

AFFRONTING THE USA

What did Julian Assange do wrong, in the eyes of authorities?

Julian Assange and others created Wikileaks, an online platform used by people to share secret information held by the US, other governments and corporations.

Examples include:

- Secret Pentagon War reports on Iraq/Afghanistan
- Helicopter gunning of civilians in Iraq
- 250,000 US Diplomatic Cables
- Guantanamo Inmates Files



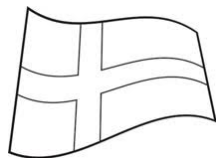
Why are they so intent on punishing him?

In the eyes of the US government and the security establishment, publicity through Wikileaks hinders their operations, and is thus very dangerous.

David Holmgren, permaculture expert, writes of “Assange being the most globally important independent journalist and publisher using the power of the internet to challenge the rapid rise in authoritarian power and propagandised media.”

SWEDEN BECOMES INVOLVED

Rape allegations against Assange arose from time he spent in Sweden, after Wikileaks had published documents exposing US secrets.



Why didn't he return to Sweden to be questioned regarding an allegation of rape (lesser crime)?

Julian Assange argued from day one that Sweden would rendition/extradite him to the USA to face a grand jury. This jury exists in spite of past US denials. It recently revealed charges against Assange.

Should he face the Swedish allegations?

Yes. Julian would like to have the opportunity to clear his name. He went to the Swedish Police in 2010 and was given the all clear to leave Sweden. He offered several times to be interviewed by Swedish authorities in the UK and then in the Ecuadorian embassy. He was finally questioned in Nov 2016 inside the Embassy. Six months after that on May 19th 2017 Sweden closed the investigation. No charges have been laid by Swedish authorities.

What were the allegations?

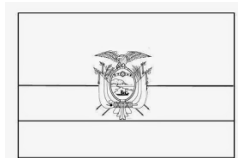
Rape under Swedish law includes intent to have unprotected sex without informing the other partner. This was the basis of the allegation, which was initially withdrawn by one prosecutor but then reimposed by another. There is a lot of controversy about what the Swedish authorities have done. Some see the hand of the US government behind it.

UK based Women against Rape <http://againstrape.net/> are angry that rape is used as a weapon to attack Assange.

ABOUT ECUADOR

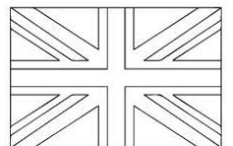
Why was he in the Ecuador embassy in London?

Julian Assange entered the Ecuadorian Embassy 19th June 2012 and requested protection from US persecution. Ecuador granted him asylum in August 2012. He lived in a small room in the embassy for seven years.



Why did Ecuador call police into the embassy?

Simply, new President Moreno of Ecuador elected in 2017 was unwilling to support Assange unlike his predecessor Correa. Although from the same party, Moreno initiated significant changes in domestic and foreign policy, including more closely aligning with the United States. He applied for a 4.2 billion IMF loan that required US approval. Subsequently, the new Moreno government allowed British police to arrest him inside the embassy in April 2019.



IN AN ENGLISH PRISON

How are prison authorities treating him?

Prison conditions are harsh. With lock down of 23 hours a day, in isolation. Visits from his father and others are limited.

How is his physical and mental health right now?

His health has deteriorated rapidly since incarceration in Belmarsh. He needs specialist medical attention, but is only being given standard prison service.

A MERRY DANCE

How is the US government behaving?

Mike Pompeo, Secretary of State, once said "WikiLeaks is a non-state Intelligence Service."

The US DOJ is using the 1917 US Espionage Act to indict Julian Assange with 17 charges of Espionage, for doing publishing, carrying the potential sentence of 170 years imprisonment. Covertly they have been presenting the media with biased accounts, and pressuring the Swedish, British and Australian governments to support actions to get Assange to the USA. They have spent millions blackening his name.

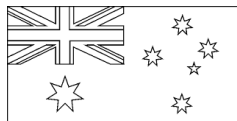
Britain has signed off on his extradition to the USA, but Assange's legal team has appealed this.

What would happen if he was extradited to the USA, and faced a grand jury?

He would almost certainly be imprisoned for life. He's facing 18 charges.

ABOUT AUSTRALIA

What is the attitude of our government?



The Australian government has offered Assange the usual consular support, but nothing more. The Prime Minister and others pretend that Julian is just another ordinary Australian in trouble with the laws of another country.

What do we say?

Assange is a hero for many people, because of his role in exposing crime, and nefarious activities of governments.

He has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and for many journalism awards. Awards include:

- The Economist New Media Award (2008)
- The Amnesty New Media Award (2009)
- The Sam Adams Award for Integrity (2010)
- The National Union of Journalists Journalist of the Year (Hrafnsen) (2011)
- The Sydney Peace Foundation Gold Medal (2011)
- The Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism (2011)
- The Walkley Award for Most Outstanding Contribution to Journalism (2011)
- The Yoko Ono Lennon Courage Award (2013)
- The Willy Brandt Award for Political Courage (Harrison) (2015)

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- The Galizia Prize for Journalists, Whistleblowers and Defenders of the Right to Information (2019)
- The Danny Schechter Global Vision Award for Journalism & Activism (2019)
- The Gavin MacFadyen Award (2019)

Join The Fight to Free Julian Assange! Go to www.defend.wikileaks.org for ideas on actions to defend him against US Extradition! Protect our publishers and their sources!!

What needs to happen?

Support needs to grow so that the Australian and British governments act to release Assange, give him proper medical care and sanctuary.

Roger Waters, Pink Floyd band "How do we put ourselves in the position of a Julian Assange in solitary confinement ... It is called empathy and it is the most valuable thing any human being can possess in their lives."

HERE'S WHAT INDIVIDUALS LIKE YOU ARE DOING

Network, tell the truth and build support

- Talking to friends, and communicating the facts about the case
- Approaching people with some influence and encourage them to be active
- Ask a group you belong to discuss what action can be taken, individually and as a group

Lobby and act

- Visiting, writing or calling their local MP
- Joining the campaign group, here in Melbourne, London or elsewhere
- Writing to the PM and Foreign Minister

Find out more

- Women against Rape <http://againstrape.net/>
- ABC <https://radio.abc.net.au/> search for Assange
- Arena <https://arena.org.au/tag/julian-assange/>
- New Matilda 5 part series <https://newmatilda.com/category/special-investigations/>
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Free-Julian-Assange-112794885456369/>
- Going to www.wikileaks.org, check the leaks since 2017. Use the search bar to find out about your favourite climate criminal.

Model and actress Pamela Anderson said "I feel like an outsider looking in, looking at how America has embraced all this propaganda, it's really frustrating. I just hope he doesn't get extradited, I don't think he'll make it."