

Julian Assange's Bail application Successful

by gan Tuesday, Dec 14 2010, 9:02am

international / injustice/law / commentary

The extremely compromising (for the persecutors) unjustified and politically motivated incarceration of WikiLeaks' spokesperson Julian Assange in London has ended *[update details below]* today with his release on bail - I would hasten to add that more than the British judiciary heaved a sigh of relief at the Courts decision today. *[Swedish authorities appealed the decision on the basis that Assange presents as a 'flight risk!' Assange remains in solitary confinement pending a final decision by the British Legal System. Ed]*



Julian Assange on the Cover of TIME

The British elite are relieved that Sweden has defined itself as principal antagonist in this case, as the British Government and local Corporate interests do not wish to be the targets of a rapidly growing Global digital army targeting anyone perceived to have caused Assange and WikiLeaks unnecessary 'grief.'

The persecuted, lone figure of Assange fighting against the most powerful forces on the planet can not help but make him a folk hero in the eyes of the common people and a symbol for professionals to voice their concerns at the many social injustices that have been inflicted on Western society over the past decade.

Socially engineered debt slavery, the loss of liberties (surveillance and intrusive body searches etc) are constant, unwanted, UNNECESSARY pressures now placed on average citizens. A reactive response was inevitable and expected; the HUGE (and growing) level of antagonism and hostility for the powers has allowed Assange and others to consciously or unconsciously tap into that energy reservoir of frustration and angst. Assange and his organisation, WikiLeaks, have become symbols of resistance for people around the globe to rally behind.

The persons that have been instrumental in victimising Assange are today in a very unenviable position. The plan was to silence the pesky Aussie for good, one fabricated way or the other; however, due to the overt nature of the gambit, it always carried the risk of a GLOBAL REBELLION.

Indeed, Assange has become a galvanising force for the people in their struggle to RESTORE Free Speech and Representative Democracy in their respective societies. It may already be too late to stop the growing tide of opposition to the inane and simplistic divisionary tactics of criminal ruling

elites around the world - restrictive/limiting slogans such as, *"you're either with US or you're with the terrorists,"* were an affront to thinking people everywhere, it was simply a matter of time before people reacted to that ludicrous American imposition.

We may yet witness Corporate CEOs, Banksters and their Puppet Politicians hanging from conspicuous locations in capital cities around the globe. We shall see!

Report from the Toronto Star follows:

WikiLeaks founder Assange gets Bail

by David Stringer

LONDON—a British judge has granted bail to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.

Assange was scheduled to appear in a London court Tuesday seeking to fight his extradition to Sweden in a sex-crimes investigation and trying to secure bail after being held for a week in a British prison cell.

The 39-year-old Australian had been ordered held in custody by a judge at a hearing a week ago after surrendering himself to Scotland Yard to answer a Swedish arrest warrant.

He is wanted for questioning after two women accused him of sexual misconduct in separate encounters in Sweden over the summer. Lawyers for Assange say he denies the allegations and will contest the attempt to extradite him for questioning.

Supporters had been planning to protest Assange's detention outside the court, following a small rally on Monday outside Sweden's embassy in London.

Some of Assange's supporters suspect the extradition request has been motivated by WikiLeaks' decision last month to begin publishing its trove of about 250,000 secret U.S. diplomatic cables, something Swedish officials have denied.

Assange remained defiant in comments from prison relayed Tuesday by his mother. Australia's Seven network said Christine Assange spoke to her son by phone for 10 minutes and asked him, at the network's request, whether it had been worth it.

"My convictions are unfaltering," the network quoted Julian Assange as saying. "I remain true to the ideals I have expressed. This circumstance shall not shake them. If anything, this process has increased my determination that they are true and correct."

The disclosures, which have continued unaffected since Assange was detained in prison, have offended some U.S. allies and angered its rivals. Officials in Washington claim some other countries have already curtailed their dealings with the U.S. government as a result.

At an hour-long court hearing last week, lawyer Gemma Lindfield — acting for Swedish police — said Assange is accused of rape, molestation and unlawful coercion.

She told the court one woman had accused Assange of pinning her down and refusing to

use a condom during an encounter on Aug. 14 in Stockholm. That woman also accused of Assange of molesting her in a way “designed to violate her sexual integrity” several days later.

A second woman has accused Assange of having sex with her without a condom while he was a guest at her Stockholm home and she was asleep.

In Sweden, a person who has sex with an unconscious, drunk or sleeping person can be convicted of rape and sentenced to up to six years in prison.

Assange’s Swedish lawyer, Bjorn Hurtig, claims the courts are stacked against defendants in sex cases in Sweden.

However, a 2009 European Commission-funded study found only 10 per cent of sex offences reported in Sweden result in a conviction.

Lawyers for Assange said they will make a new application Tuesday to have him freed on bail, and will offer to post a hefty bond with the court. Several high-profile Britons — including socialite Jemima Khan and filmmaker Ken Loach — have offered to contribute 20,000 pounds (\$31,500) each.

A decision on whether to extradite Assange is expected to take several weeks. Both Assange and the Swedish government are entitled to appeal against the ruling if the judge rules against them.

Britain’s government said Monday that the country’s national security adviser believes government websites could be attacked in retribution if Assange is not released.

Government departments have been told they could be targeted by online “hacktivists,” following attacks on companies including MasterCard Inc., Visa Inc. and PayPal Inc., which cut ties to the WikiLeaks site.

In his statement, Assange called those companies “instruments of U.S. foreign policy.”

“I am calling on the world to protect my work and my people from these illegal and immoral attacks,” he was quoted as saying.

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UPDATE from [The Guardian](#) UK -- Tuesday 14 December 2010 21.34 GMT

Julian Assange remains in jail as Sweden appeals against bail decision

by Vikram Dodd and Sam Jones

Sweden tonight decided to fight a British judge's decision to grant bail to [WikiLeaks](#) founder [Julian Assange](#), who has spent more than a week in prison over sexual assault allegations involving two Swedish women.

A dramatic day in and around City of Westminster magistrates court saw Assange win bail, but then

be forced to return to what his lawyer Mark Stephens described as "Dickensian conditions" at Wandsworth prison while the international legal battle played out.

Sweden has decided to contest the granting of bail to Assange, who is being held pending an extradition hearing, on the grounds that no conditions imposed by a judge could guarantee that he would not flee, a legal source told the Guardian.

The appeal will be heard by the high court this week. If he wins, Assange will still have to raise £200,000 in security to meet his bail conditions before being freed. Howard Riddle, the same senior district judge who last week ordered Assange be held on remand, granted bail with strict conditions, including a curfew and the wearing of a tag.

Today's developments represent a small but significant victory for Assange, who is being forced to fight the Swedish sex crime allegations in the midst of a tsunami of controversy after the publication by WikiLeaks of thousands of classified US government cables.

The court drama came as a further tranche of cables was released detailing often futile efforts by the US and UK - involving substantial amounts of British taxpayers' money - to block the thriving drug route from west Africa to Europe. The cables reveal countries struggling to cope with the booming trade while government officials sabotage anti-smuggling measures, officials tip off traffickers and vast shipments from South America pass through under the noses of customs. In one cable the president of Ghana is even forced to ask UK officials for help in screening his own entourage, who he fears could be carrying drugs through airports.

Today, in a packed courtroom, Assange's barrister, Geoffrey Robertson QC, dismissed claims his client was a flight risk, saying that as a result of the past fortnight's WikiLeaks stories, his face was known worldwide.

Robertson also gave a taste of what Assange's argument could be when the extradition case begins in earnest. He said there was no allegation that Assange had used violence or injured the two women making allegations against him, and said one allegation that he had sex with a woman while she slept might not be an offence under English law.

Robertson said that even if Assange was convicted in Sweden, sentencing practice there meant he might not be jailed. Assange had been interviewed by Swedish police over the allegations on 30 August and vehemently denied any wrongdoing, Robertson said. Assange sat behind a plastic screen during the hearing, dressed in a dark jacket and open-neck white shirt. Asked by the judge if he understood that breach of his bail would lead to his arrest, he replied: "I understand that, your honour."

The bail conditions are that security of £200,000 is deposited with the court before Assange is freed, as well as two sureties of £20,000 each from two named people. Assange's passport must remain with the police and he must not apply for any international travel documents. He must stay at a country mansion owned by a friend, Vaughan Smith, and observe curfews from 10pm to 2am, and then from 10am to 2pm. During those periods the judge said he would be electronically monitored via a tag. Assange will also have to report to a nearby police station every evening.

Smith was one of two people to pledge £20,000 in surety, money that could be lost if Assange were to breach his bail conditions or attempt to abscond. His estate, Ellingham Hall, on the Norfolk-Suffolk borders, is set in 600 acres.

Restaurant designer Sarah Saunders also pledged £20,000 in surety. Asked why, she told the court: "Because I believe he would not let me down - he is a good friend ... He will always do what he says

he will do."

The court heard that internationally renowned figures including a Nobel prize-winning scientist, Sir John Sulston, and the film-maker Michael Moore were also backing Assange.

But a starkly different portrait of Assange was painted in court by Gemma Lindfield, representing the Swedish authorities, who said that "complaints have been made by two women of a serious sexual nature".

Opposing bail, she said: "The court has already found Mr Assange is a flight risk and nothing has changed since last week."

The judge disagreed, however, and said that since last week police had "verified" the address Assange would stay at if granted bail. He also said that last week he had been under the impression the prosecution was claiming there was no record of Assange entering the UK. The UK Border Agency had now told him it was not uncommon for there to be no such record even if someone had arrived perfectly legally.

Outside court, Stephens said: "It is impossible to say how long it will take before Julian Assange is out. The problem is £200,000 cannot be put in by cheque as that takes seven days to clear. So I have to go around to find cash and have it delivered to court, and until the court has it an innocent man stays in jail."

He condemned Sweden's decision to appeal against the bail ruling: "They are continuing to persecute Mr Assange ... An innocent man is in custody."

Assange's mother, Christine, who flew over from Australia, said: "I am very happy with the judge's decision and I thank you all so much for supporting Julian."

Earlier she released a statement from her son in which he said: "My convictions are unfaltering. I remain true to the ideals I have expressed. This circumstance shall not shake them.

"We now know that Visa, MasterCard, PayPal and others are instruments of US foreign policy ... I am calling for the world to protect my work and my people from these illegal and immoral attacks."

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UPDATE from ITN News

<http://www.thestar.com/news/world/article/906606--wikileaks-founder-assange-gets-bail?bn=1>

Cleaves Alternative News. <http://cleaves.lingama.net/news/story-2245.html>

