



## **Attack on Free Speech - Journalist Craig Murray Charged with Contempt of Court in the UK**

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**Taylor Hudak (TH):** Hi, everyone, I'm Taylor Hudak with Activism Munich. And this is the first report and overview of a new series where we will be covering the case against former diplomat, now journalist and blogger Craig Murray. In April 2020, Craig Murray, who manages his own well-known blog, was issued an indictment where he learned he was charged with contempt of court in Scotland in relation to his blog posts he published on his website. The prosecution claims the material in his series of blog posts influenced the outcome of a trial involving the Scottish politician Alex Salmond. Additionally, the prosecution claims the posts could lead to the jigsaw identification of individuals involved in the case. Jigsaw identification is the ability to identify one's identity using pieces of information. Now, especially when that identity is meant to be kept confidential. In a report in The Grayzone, it states, Murray describes the case against him as a thoroughly undemocratic attack on free speech and warned it may be punishment for his dissident journalism and activism. Many free press advocates state that this is yet another instance where a government is seeking to criminalize free speech and free press. But in order to understand why the Crown Office is focusing on Craig Murray, it's important to understand his history, his work and his consistency in standing up to the establishment at his own risk.

**Craig Murray (CM):** Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Dionino referred to the reports of Intelligence and Security Committee, and the investigation into British collusion in torture, which had been quashed by Dom Johnson immediately on taking office. I was one of the witnesses to that committee because I blew the whistle on torture and extraordinary rendition years ago because I had seen from the inside that governments torture, governments lie, governments cheat, governments steal, governments kill, and they try to hush it up and they try to keep it secret. And they claim that the secrets need to be kept for the security of the people, whereas in fact, much of what government does is a plot against people.

**(TH):** In 2002 to 2004, Craig Murray served as the UK ambassador to Uzbekistan. It was during

this time that Murray became aware of serious human rights abuses taking place in the country, which involved British and U.S. governments. In an act of bravery, Murray blew the whistle on the CIA torture of detainees and as a result, he was fired by the UK Foreign Office. Murray then became an advocate for human rights and manages his own blog on his personal web site. He frequently writes about imperialism, injustices in the judicial system and provides a critical perspective on American, Israeli and British foreign policy. He has also been publicly supportive of Scottish independence from the UK. And beyond his journalism and insightful commentary of the issues of our time, Murray has been an outspoken advocate and defender of WikiLeaks and Julian Assange.

**(CM):** But we're hearing this week in court evidence of possible deals that were put to Julian and that Julian refused to give up a source on the DNC emails because he would not give up his source in the hope of securing his own freedom. And that is why WikiLeaks is trusted. And that is why Julian is trusted not only as a great figure in the information age, but as a person of deep courage and heroism himself. The idea that a publisher, a publisher, is in prison for publishing nothing, but the truth is astonishing. I am ashamed to be standing in the country among the institutions of the power of a country which tortures a publisher for publishing the truth. When the people who committed the crimes which he exposed are still safe, still employed by the state and still in positions of power. This must not be allowed to stand.

**(TH):** A hearing for Craig Murray's case was held on Tuesday, July 7th. Murray is being represented by John Scott, while advocate depute Alex Prentice QC is representing the Crown Office, which is the prosecution. During the hearing, Prentice shared concerns over relevancy over the list of the defense witnesses. Judge Dorian stated that she was surprised the defense had a list at all. And the defense stated that the witnesses will address the issue of jigsaw identification. The judge also reiterated the dangers of contempt of court in the case and that regulations must be followed. Murray's two day trial is scheduled for October 22nd and twenty third. Craig Murray's work may be found at his web site [craigmurray.org.uk](http://craigmurray.org.uk). You may also show your support by signing the open letter, which expresses concern over the Crown Office and Police Scotland's recent actions and attack on the free press. The open letter has been signed by high profile figures including Yanis Varoufakis, the former Greek finance minister, Kristinn Hrafnsson, editor in chief of WikiLeaks, and Christine Assange, the mother of Julian Assange. Now, we will continue to follow this case and provide you all with regular updates, as well as produce detailed reports covering specific aspects of this case. So please subscribe to our YouTube channel. I'm Taylor Hudak with Activism Munich. Thank you all for watching. And I'll see you all next time.