

Jeremy Corbyn, John Pilger & Stella Moris speak out for Julian Assange

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John Pilger: The main takeaway is that on the 27th and 28th, that is the final act in this monstrous piece of theatre at which it's decided by this court, the High Court of Great Britain that Julian Assange goes to the United States, where he'll be dropped in a hellhole and almost certainly sentenced to the rest of his life, where his life will be in great risk or he walks free. That's the most important thing. It is...

Unidentified reporter: And in relation to the judge's decision to at least find the grounds of appeal..

John Pilger: They passed the buck, the judges passed the buck. They do it often and they did it spectacularly today. But John Reese said they preferred to let it be arguable. That's the term they used. That one of the most distinguished experts on psychiatry in the world, Professor Michael Kopelman. That his word should be altogether trusted, but rather arguable, whereas the word of a known liar, embezzler, convicted, a felon, who confessed, that he who was one of the US's principal witnesses in this grotesque case not long ago, he confessed that everything he said was a fabrication. Not a word about him.

Jeremy Corbyn: Say to Boris Johnson, you have made your life before you became an MP, as a journalist, a career as a journalist. Julian Assange has uncovered a lot of uncomfortable truths around the world. That is a function of true journalism. And I think that Boris Johnson should reflect on that.

Unidentified reporter: And of course, we've seen, you've seen this campaign up across your career that the United States, despite many protests around the world, have steamrolled ahead with it's plans. Do you think it will do the same for Julian Assange?

Jeremy Corbyn: Well he's got to get past the courts here and it's got to recognise that there

are millions of people around the world who have seen Julian Assange, somebody that has actually uncovered, some very uncomfortable truths and told the reality of decisions that go towards such as [unintelligible].

Unidentified reporter: And we've seen the British government force pass laws against whistleblowers, against journalists leaking in the government. Do you think this is a wider war on press freedom?

Jeremy Corbyn: Press freedom is essential in a free society. It's essential that you deal with the problems of the world. Corruption, environmental disaster... All these big issues that face this planet are not going to be solved if the truths are covered up. If they are uncovered by real journalists who make brave steps and brave decisions to uncover corruption and the dangers to all of us, to climate change then we need this from the real perspective.

Stella Moris: For every day that this colossal injustice is allowed to continue. Julian's situation grows increasingly desperate. He won the case against the US government seven months ago, yet he remains in Belmarsh prison. What is this, if not punishment by process? Yesterday, Julian and I were permitted to embrace for the first time in 17 months. Throughout my visit in Belmarsh, I held his warm hands. Julian has been denied the love and affection of his family for so long. Julian and the kids will never get this time back. This shouldn't be happening. The US government is exploiting the inherently unfair arrangement between the US and the UK. They're exploiting the inherently unfair extradition arrangements with this country in order to prolong- to arbitrarily prolong his imprisonment, the imprisonment of an innocent man accused of practising journalism. Julian has asked me to thank all of you for coming and for continuing to fight for his freedom.

Yanis Varoufakis: But first, they're getting Julian, then they will get you, me, everyone. This is a clear struggle for freedom of the press and for the right of citizens to know that which governments are doing behind their backs, supposedly on their behalf.

Yanis Varoufakis: The circumstances in which he's held in there are an affront to civilisation.

Abby Martin: I think this case has absolutely devastating, horrifying and wide reaching implications for press freedom and journalism as a whole. And unfortunately, people have already made up their mind about Julian Assange. They're not taking a stand the way they should be.

Jill Stein: He is being punished, as is Julian Assange and Edward Snowden, for releasing the truth.

John Shipton: Every single human right of Julians has been arbitrarily broken, distortions of

procedure, falsification of witness statements, the lot, the whole rotten lot of it.

Tariq Ali: He's on death row. He will be on death row if he is extradited.

Nils Melzer: If this man gets extradited to the United States he will be tortured until the day he dies.

Jennifer Robinson: It may now be Julian and it may now be Glenn Greenwald, but who will be next?

Stella Moris: Julian is a publisher. Julian is also a son. He's a friend. He's my fiance. And a father. Julian needs his freedom and our democracy needs a free press.

Nils Melzer: Yes, it is about Julian Assange, but it is much more also about all of you and your children and your families. And 20 years from now, will you still be able to know the truth about what your government is doing? When it has become a crime to inform you about what your government is doing with your tax money to other people that have not done anything wrong in their lives?

Taylor Hudak: Hi, everyone, I'm Taylor Hudak with acTVism Munich, I'm in London outside the old Bailey courthouse.

Taylor Hudak: Hi everyone, I'm Taylor Hudak and I'm outside of London's Belmarsh prison.

Srecko Horvat: We are all Julian Assange. How would you know about all the crimes committed in our names if there weren't the billions of leaks published by WikiLeaks?

Angela Richter [00:07:52] If wars can be started by lies. Peace can be started by truth.

Abby Martin: We're going to lock people away, facing two hundred years in prison for exposing war crimes. What kind of country, what kind of world are we going to live in? So we have to stand up and collectively say no more.

Glenn Greenwald: If you're an activist of any kind. Right, left, centre, an animal rights activist and environmental activist, a socialist activist, any kind of an activist against global institutions and you're not capable of setting aside whatever emotional feelings you have for Julian Assange to defend the basic press freedom and stand opposed to the efforts of the Trump government and Boris Johnson's Tory government to criminalise the activities of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks and publishing information in the public interest you are going to create a world for yourself in which the presidents you're now acquiescing to or cheering, out of some misplaced hatred for Julian Assange are going to be used against you.

Nils Melzer: When you're in a dark room, one person switching on the lights will make everyone see. Don't look for the light somewhere else. Go and switch it on yourself.

Noam Chomsky: We should all thank Julian for his courage and integrity in providing us with this precious gift at great cost to himself, much to our shame.

Edward Snowden: Think about the opportunities that you have. Right. Because there are no heroes. Nobody's going to save you. But there are only heroic actions. There are only heroic choices. There are only people who moment by moment see bad things and recognise maybe I can do something, maybe I can't fix everything, but maybe I can make progress. Maybe I can make things better. Maybe I am the one that I'm waiting for. And as soon as you start thinking like that, you realise that you are.

Vivienne Westwood: Free Assange. Rock and roll.

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