



## Secret Charges Against WikiLeaks Chief a Threat to Free Press

In a case with potentially massive implications for freedom of the press and government secrecy, federal prosecutors have seemingly filed secret charges against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange (shown), court filings suggest. It was not immediately clear what exact charges the advocate of transparency may be facing. But some conspiracy theorists making allegations about a supposed link between President Donald Trump and the Kremlin — many of whom claim to believe Russian authorities delivered incriminating e-mails from Hillary Clinton’s campaign to WikiLeaks — are hyping the case as a potential turning point in the Special Counsel “investigation.” More than a few experts and insiders [have suggested the leaked Democrat e-mails were actually released by a campaign insider, potentially even murdered DNC staffer Seth Rich](#). But so far, the actual source remains a mystery to the public. Assange denies it was a state source at all. But he is facing the wrath of Deep State outrage either way.



From across the political spectrum, a wide range of voices — including some traditionally associated with the Left, the far-left, and even the establishment — have vigorously protested the effort to prosecute and destroy Assange as an all-out assault on free speech, freedom of the press, and government transparency. The biggest concern among critics, perhaps, is that the prosecution of Assange could set a precedent that would eventually be used to prosecute anyone publishing government secrets. Trevor Timm, executive director of Freedom of the Press Foundation, for instance, noted that the precedent against WikiLeaks could “easily be turned around” and used against more conventional and “mainstream” reporters. “Hard to overstate how dangerous it would be for press freedom,” he added, echoing concerns by free speech and free press advocates across America and worldwide.

Writing at *The Duran*, investigative historian Eric Zuesse argued that what is really happening is an effort to shut down and destroy all voices with a firm commitment to truth. “In Assange’s case, the penalty for having a firm commitment to truth has been especially excruciating and will almost certainly end in his premature death,” he noted, arguing that Trump was complicit. On social media, even the establishment mouthpiece the *New York Times* said that the Department of Justice’s move to charge Assange could “have implications for the traditional news media and First Amendment protections.”



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Human Rights Watch Executive Director Kenneth Roth said it would be “deeply troubling” for the Trump administration to charge Assange for publishing classified information received from a government — “exactly what journalists do all the time.” The radical far-left ACLU joined in, saying it would be “unprecedented and unconstitutional” and would set a “dangerous precedent for U.S. journalists, who routinely violate foreign secrecy laws to deliver information vital to the public’s interest.”

Indeed, the implications could be chilling and terrifying even for journalists who do not expose crimes by Western governments but focus on foreign dictatorships. Speaking on the far-left MSNBC, for example, Assange’s U.K. lawyer Jennifer Robinson warned that the precedent established in this case could see murderous regimes ruling countries such as Russia or China demanding that people be extradited from Western nations for publishing information exposing their crimes. “If the United States can seek the extradition of a publisher for publishing information they do not like, what does that say to Saudi Arabia, or to Russia? Could they do the same?” wondered Robinson in the interview. “This raises fundamental free speech issues in the U.S. and elsewhere.” She said the U.S. investigation that resulted in the current charges appears to go back to 2010, when WikiLeaks exposed war crimes and various human-rights abuses perpetrated by the Bush and Obama administrations.

On the other hand, Deep State operatives and their useful idiots could barely contain their hatred for Assange and their celebration over news of the charges. For instance, Obama’s “White House ethics czar,” the unethical globalist Norm Eisen, wrote on Twitter that the WikiLeaks founder “deserves to go to jail for the rest of his life.” Countless Trump-Russia conspiracy theorists [who still cling to the theory that the Kremlin and WikiLeaks worked together to deny Hillary Clinton the presidency](#) also celebrated. It is worth noting that the DOJ continues to be dominated by Clinton apparatchiks — the same partisans who refused to prosecute her for an endless list of documented crimes, while continuing to harangue Trump and terrorize all his associates under the guise of “Russia collusion.” Consider that according to an analysis by *The Hill*, [97 percent of 2016 presidential campaign contributions from DOJ employees went to Clinton](#).

Word of the secret charges first leaked out, apparently accidentally, in a court filing related to another individual charged in a sex-crimes case. In the document, Assistant U.S. Attorney Kellen Dwyer in Virginia asked the judge to keep sealed the charges against the WikiLeaks founder, who remains at the Ecuadorean embassy in London, until he could be brought in. “Due to the sophistication of the defendant and the publicity surrounding the case, no other procedure is likely to keep confidential the fact that Assange has been charged,” the official said in the filing, asking that everything be kept sealed until then. Later in the document, the prosecutor added that the charges against the self-proclaimed journalist and publisher would “need to remain sealed until Assange is arrested in connection with the charges in the criminal complaint and can therefore no longer evade or avoid arrest and extradition in this matter.” Days earlier, news reports suggested prosecutors were preparing a case.

Nobody seems to know why Assange’s name was in the court filing. Some speculated the text was inadvertently copied and pasted from another document. A spokesman for the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Virginia, which has been investigating Assange and WikiLeaks, claimed the court filing was “made in error,” without elaborating. “That was not the intended name for this filing,” he was quoted as saying. However, since that apparently inadvertent disclosure, unnamed sources in the Justice Department have confirmed to various media outlets that sealed charges have indeed been filed against Assange. So far, it is not known what exactly the government is alleging, but speculation ranges



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from “espionage” charges against the WikiLeaks chief to more mundane criminal allegations including “extortion” for potentially having tried to negotiate a deal with Trump before publishing leaked details of unconstitutional and illegal CIA surveillance schemes last year.

One thing that is clear is that WikiLeaks and its founder have made some extremely powerful enemies by publishing truthful information and real government documents. Assange, who has been hiding out in the Ecuadorean embassy in London since 2012 to avoid arrest and prosecution by U.S. officials, has repeatedly embarrassed top global power-brokers. This was done primarily by exposing malfeasance and corruption by the U.S. government and other governments around the world. In 2010, WikiLeaks became a global sensation by releasing a video showing the killing of Iraqi civilians and Reuters journalists by U.S. troops who apparently mistook camera equipment for weapons. Later that year, WikiLeaks released what was then the largest-ever trove of classified U.S. government documents showing the seedy underbelly of U.S. diplomacy. Numerous mega-scandals emerged from the disclosures. The “Deep State,” and especially its “foreign policy” arm, was left foaming at the mouth in outrage.

The group continued to make powerful enemies in the years that followed. WikiLeaks’ release of Clinton campaign e-mails in 2016, including e-mails from infamous Clinton campaign chief John Podesta evidencing massive corruption and downright evil, enraged top insiders. Unsurprisingly, the establishment media did everything possible to avoid covering the actual story, instead hyping the Trump-Russia conspiracy theory. Today, establishment “fake news” sources continue to claim as fact the unproven allegation that the Kremlin delivered the e-mails to WikiLeaks, based only on a widely ridiculed DOJ indictment of some low-level “intelligence” officials who have not been convicted of anything. Assange, meanwhile, denies receiving the documents from any state source. Aside from the Clinton camp, all sorts of globalists, war criminals, neocons, Deep State operatives, and other proponents of unlimited government and official secrecy — many of whom have been exposed by WikiLeaks — have been plotting against Assange for years, too.

Swedish authorities have officially dropped their effort to arrest the WikiLeaks chief on “rape” charges last year — charges that Assange believed were a pretext to have him extradited to face “espionage” charges in the United States. So that threat is over. But now, thanks to the sealed U.S. charges, the same threat of being extradited and potentially facing life in a U.S. prison or worse remains. Because the new Ecuadorean government is not a fan of having the transparency campaigner living in its London embassy, and thanks to U.S. pressure, Assange is already living in prison-like conditions. Indeed, according to reports, he is being kept in what has been described as a situation of “solitary confinement” in the embassy. He has no access to visitors or even the Internet. His health is reportedly deteriorating, too. Apparently Vice President Mike Pence leaned on Ecuadorean authorities to make Assange’s life so miserable that he would be forced to leave the embassy.

“He is, right now, alone, sick, in pain, silenced in solitary confinement, cut off from all contact, and being tortured in the heart of London,” Assange’s mother recently explained. “He has been detained nearly eight years, without trial, without charge. For the past six years, the UK government has refused his requests to exit for basic health needs ... [even for] vitamin D.... As a result, his health has seriously deteriorated.... A slow and cruel assassination is taking place before our very eyes.... They will stop at nothing.... When U.S. Vice President Mike Pence recently visited Ecuador, a deal was done to hand Julian over to the U.S. He said that because the political cost of expelling Julian from the Embassy was too high, the plan was to break him down mentally ... to such a point that he will break and be forced to



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leave.... The extradition warrant is held in secret, four prosecutors but no defense, and no judge ... without a prima-facie case.”

With the new revelations of U.S. charges, longtime suspicions that Assange was a target of the Deep State have been confirmed. And his enemies may be close to getting him at last, if court filings and news reports are anything to go by. Keep in mind that all of this terror and abuse is the result of Assange publishing true information exposing corruption, crime, lawlessness, and abuse by powerful individuals and organizations. If Assange goes down, it will not be long before the precedent established is extended to journalists around the world. Every tinpot dictator on the planet will point to Assange’s prosecution by U.S. authorities to justify their own terror and abuse against truth-telling journalists. The First Amendment is absolutely clear when it comes to freedom of the press. Regardless of what anyone thinks of Assange, sacrificing this essential constitutional protection for God-given rights should not be on the table for any reason.

*Photo: AP Images*

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