

## Only Cowards And Sadists Support The Persecution Of Assange

By Caitlin Johnston, 23 October 2019

Former British ambassador Craig Murray has [published a very disturbing account](#) of Julian Assange's court reading in full. There have been many reports published about Assange's case management hearing, but with torture victims, his familiarity with British courts, his friendship with Assange, and his lack of revealing much more penetrating insight into what happened than anyone else has been able to provide so far.

Here is a small excerpt:

*Before I get on to the blatant lack of fair process, the first thing I must note was Julian's condition. I was shocked. My friend has lost, by the speed his hair has receded and by the appearance of premature and vastly accelerated greyness never seen before. Since his arrest he has lost over 15 kg in weight.*

*But his physical appearance was not as shocking as his mental deterioration. When asked to give his name for several seconds to recall both. I will come to the important content of his statement at the end of proceedings. His voice was very evident; it was a real struggle for him to articulate the words and focus his train of thought.*

*Until yesterday I had always been quietly sceptical of those who claimed that Julian's treatment amounted to torture. As Special Rapporteur on Torture – and sceptical of those who suggested he may be subject to debilitating torture in Uzbekistan of several victims of extreme torture, and having worked with survivors from Sierra Leone and Eritrea, I changed my mind entirely and Julian exhibited exactly the symptoms of a torture victim brought blinking tears, disorientation, confusion, and the real struggle to assert free will through the fog of learned helplessness.*

*This may be the most important article you will ever read. I'm not exaggerating. I beg you now to read it here: <https://t.co/D42gqKDzMz>*

— George Galloway (@georgegalloway) [October 22, 2019](#)

Murray reports that there were no fewer than five representatives of the US government in the Westminster courtroom were seated behind the British prosecutors and essentially giving them orders. The judge, Vanessa Baraitser, was hostile towards the defense, smirking and refusing their requests without explanation, while behaving warmly and leniently towards the prosecution. The extradition hearing will commence without delay on February of next year, despite the case [violating the evidence emerging](#) of CIA-tied espionage on Assange and his lawyers while he was at the Ecuadorian embassy courtroom with almost no room for the public to provide scrutiny, without Assange's defense having adequate time to prepare.

Assange's lawyer Mark Summers [told the court](#) that the case was “a political attempt” by the United States to “publishing information.” And of course he's right. Nobody sincerely believes that the [175-year sentence](#) imposed on Assange and extradited to the US by the Trump administration is a reasonable punishment for publishing activities which the US [declined to prosecute](#) based on the exact same evidence, citing concern for the damage the precedent would set.

nothing to do with justice, and they aren't meant to be merely punitive. They're made to serve as a deterrent to a world who might otherwise see fit to publish inconvenient facts about the US government.

This is obvious. It is obvious that the US government is destroying Assange to signal to journalists the cost of speaking out, and therefore also obvious that any journalist who fails to use whatever platform they have to speak out against the US government is ever publishing anything that the US government doesn't want published. Their silence on or support for the US government can be taken as an admission that they are nothing other than state propagandists. State propagandists, sycophants.

*Today in court, Julian Assange struggled to say his own name and date of birth as he appeared in the dock. He was crying. This happened in the case management hearing, and was holding back tears as he said: "I can't think properly."*

— *Tristan Kirk (@kirkkorner)* [October 21, 2019](#)

Cowardice is driving public support for Assange's persecution. Cowardice and sadism. Even if [every sin](#) lies about feces on embassy walls to the *still* evidence-free allegation of Trump/Russia collusion, even if the allegations were true, his punishment to date would be more than enough. I mean, exactly how much torture is appropriate for the one who was elected? How weird is it that such entitled sadism goes unquestioned. To continue to call for his punishment when you're one of the powerful people he pissed off or just another mindless repeater in the comments section is a disgrace.

We are watching a great tragedy unfold in a fractal-like way, from the zoomed-out meta tragedy of the world being destroyed down to the personal tragedy of this death blow to a man called Julian Assange. His once encyclopaedic knowledge of the world is being lost on his birthday. This guts me. There are no other minds on earth that understood the power dynamics of invisible forces better than [humanity now faces](#) as we hurtle towards an AI-dominated information landscape as well as his did. The world is changing, and we must never forget that. We must never forgive that.

It's been a tough day. My heart has been hurting and my sighs have been long. The only brightness I can see appears to be emerging for these nationless plutocrats who are pulling the strings. The more they get the more they will necessarily be, because the thing they are attempting to do is so totally abnormal. Yesterday's court proceedings, the rulings, to the strange sight of US advisers interfering in a UK case about an Australian citizen, down to the fact that Assange is being punished. None of this is normal, and when things aren't normal there is a risk that people will notice, and things are going to pull this off.

The only thing keeping people from really seeing what's going on here is a thin layer of narrative management. The only way to act on their seeing is feeling like they are alone in their seeing. Keep the pressure up, keep watching, keep talking to anyone who will listen. It may very well save Julian's life.