

Now Assange is safely locked up, Sweden drops its “investigation”

By Caitlin Johnstone, 20 November 2019

Now that WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is safely locked up in Belmarsh prison awaiting a US extradition hearing, Sweden has dropped its rape investigation.

“After conducting a comprehensive assessment of what has emerged during the course of the preliminary investigation, the evidence is not strong enough to form the basis for filing an indictment,” [said](#) deputy chief prosecutor Per Thoren in Stockholm on Tuesday.

This decision comes days after the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Nils Melzer began [making noise](#) about [his questions](#) about the [many enormous, glaring plot holes](#) in the investigation which began in 2010. The investigation was based on "evidence" with the testimony of the alleged victim, a condom provided as evidence that had neither the integrity nor the complete disregard for confidentiality rules and normal investigative protocol from the earliest moments. The investigation was marred by conflicts of interest, Sweden's refusal to provide assurance that Assange would not be extradited to the US, the statements made by the alleged victims which contradict the allegations, unexplained correspondence between Assange and many others.

[#Sweden](#): FULL PIC of Govt's disappointing response to my detailed & diligent inquiries of 12 Sept & 20 Sept - to explain its handling of the [#Assange](#) case - to provide the requested information - to engage in a constructive dialogue with [#SRT@SwedenUN](#) [#Torture pic.twitter.com/iqhPKbWfFi](#)

— Nils Melzer (@NilsMelzer) [November 11, 2019](#)

None of which matters anymore. He is caged, and public support for him has been deliberately demolished. The investigation did its job. Assange took political asylum with the government of Ecuador out of fear of US extradition, his own world, his own reputation, and his own physical health while the empire prepared its case against him, kept him in limbo, and smeared until he could be forcibly pried from the embassy in April of this year.

Once this was accomplished, all the feigned concern for alleged victims of sexual assault suddenly vanished. The investigation was authored in the early days of the investigation by feminist writer Naomi Wolf who said, "How do I know if Julian Assange is a form of theater? Because I know what happens in rape accusations against men that are investigated by governments."

"In other words: *Never* in twenty-three years of reporting on and supporting victims of sexual assault around the world, a man sought by two nations, and held in solitary confinement without bail in advance of being questioned, was ever easily proven," Wolf wrote. "In terms of a case involving the kinds of ambiguities and complexities of the Assange case, it is a

consensually that allegedly became non-consensual when dispute arose around a condom — please find prison today without bail on charges of anything comparable."

Everyone who was familiar with sexual assault investigations knew that Assange's case was being treated with a shred of intellectual honesty knew that this was because his case *was* different from any other: it was about embarrassed powerful governments. That was *always* what this was about. It was *never* about protecting Assange now that the imperialists have gotten what they wanted makes this abundantly clear.

And now he's locked up [for no other reason than a pending US extradition request](#), exactly as he anticipated. His sentence he was serving has already expired, and the rape investigation everyone pretended was so important is a legal wrapper. As one reader [put it on Twitter](#) today, "So Julian Assange continues to be detained in a high security prison sentence for not meeting the bail conditions for a charge that wasn't and won't be made. All on top of the fact that it is rule of jackboot not law."

"Let's call this for what it is: an outrage," the Defend Assange account [tweeted](#) after the news broke. "The fact that he is imprisoned in Sweden paved in Stockholm--and so it will be remembered. The damage done to Assange's and WikiLeaks' reputation which he was never charged-is monstrous."

Monstrous it is. And monstrous the whole thing remains. They have maneuvered circumstances and narrow legal technicalities to literally imprison a journalist for exposing US war crimes, right in front of us, while telling us we live in a world where the supposed to be your friend reach down and start strangling your dog to death while looking you right in the eye and saying "I would never do that. We're friends."

While the world knows Julian's name has been cleared in Sweden, he is sitting in a cell in Belmarsh prison and all his visits today.

Don't Extradite Assange! pic.twitter.com/WhhIEGZSyA

— *WikiLeaks (@wikileaks)* [November 19, 2019](#)

They've locked him up. They've silenced him. They've broken his body. They've broken his mind. And now he is gone forever, out of sight and out of mind, so we can all forget all about the evil things they've revealed about the world.

But all that means is that now his fate is in our hands. Back when he was strong and bright-eyed and had the courage to stand up to the world, we said "Eh, he'll find a way out of this. He's the smartest guy around!" It was easy to lean on his strength in order to fight the tooth and claw from a globe-spanning oligarchic empire which seeks to criminalize holding power to account.

We can't do that anymore. We can't take comfort in Assange's power, because he doesn't have it anymore. We need to fight for him, because he can't do it himself. We need to win this battle if we're ever to have a chance of stopping the world from oppressing us all and shoving us toward greater and greater peril. We can't afford to lose this one. We need to win it. Because, in a very real sense, it does.

