

Julian Assange: No Surrender

By [Ann Garrison](#)

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Wikileaks founder Julian Assange appears to be one step closer to forcible removal from Ecuador's London Embassy, most likely to be extradited to the US to face charges in the Eastern District Court of Virginia, which is commonly known as "the espionage court." If UK police have to go in and remove him by force that will of course demonstrate the brutality of the state in the Gandhian tradition.

The US and UK governments may nevertheless be in a hurry to get hold of him however they can, with Theresa May's Tory government so close to collapse and Jeremy Corbyn's Labor Party so close to power. Given all that Corbyn has said about protecting journalists who take risks to reveal the truth about power, it's hard to imagine him extraditing Assange in response to US demands, even though refusal would no doubt damage the longstanding Anglo-American alliance.

["Ecuador Envivo"](#) reports that Ecuador's new ambassador to the UK has "very clear instructions" regarding Assange, who has been an asylee in the embassy for the past six years. And that the government said Assange's asylum has been detrimental to its relationship with the UK and could further damage trade relations between the two countries.

Supporters of Assange met last Friday evening on an international online video conference about his worsening situation. Consortium News Editor Joe Lauria said that he does not expect Assange to leave the embassy of his own volition. Stefania Maurizi, Italian "La Repubblica" journalist and longtime Wikileaks publishing partner, told Lauria that she was able to see Assange about 10 days ago, and that he's not planning to come out on his own, no matter what they do to him.

Black Agenda Report columnist Margaret Kimberley and Joe Lauria both said that the elite list of those determined to arrest and silence Assange prove that he deserves the support of the people:

Margaret Kimberley: If you look at his enemies, and you look at who wants to lock him up forever, it's clear that he's important and it's clear that we have to defend him.

Joe Lauria: They want to lock him up because he's directly threatening their interests. I'm talking about individuals inside the CIA, the NSA, the Pentagon, MI6, and big business. If you oppose Julian Assange, you're on the side of the state against the people.

Chris Hedges said that defending Assange is equivalent to defending the possibility of investigative journalism despite mass surveillance: Chris Hedges: I really can't reiterate enough times that this is the last chance we have not only to defend Julian Assange, but

also to protect publishers ability to disseminate material on the inner workings of corporations and corporate states.

I worked as an investigative journalist for the New York Times and I still have colleagues there, and they are quite blunt about the fact that investigative journalism into the inner workings of power has been frozen completely because of wholesale surveillance. Government officials, because they know they're monitored, and journalists, because they know they're monitored, can no longer shine a light into the inner workings of power. Leaks are the only mechanisms left by which we can understand power and particularly the crimes that are being committed by power, by the elites.

The three-hour video conferences regarding developments and possible responses to the UK and US governments pursuit of Julian Assange can be viewed every Friday evening beginning at 8 pm Eastern Time on the website Unity4J.com. Viewers can ask questions, make suggestions, and share details of upcoming Assange solidarity events in the YouTube chat window.

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