

Key Witness for US Extradition Case Against Julian Assange Admits He Lied About the WikiLeaks Publisher

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Award winning journalist Julian Assange will spend his 50th birthday in a UK supermax prison for exposing the war crimes of American imperialism.

In early January of 2021 a UK judge, Vanessa Baraitser, blocked the US attempt to extradite Assange on humanitarian grounds. In her judgement she agreed with all of the American claims against Assange. She agreed the central claim that Assange was a hacker who conspired with Chelsea Manning to steal American intelligence documents.

In 2017 the US Department of Justice (DOJ) decided to apply for the extradition of Julian Assange who at that time was holed up in the Ecuadorian embassy in London. They decided not to pursue Assange on the grounds of leaking documents to media outlets such as the New York Times and Guardian.

This is based on the deliberations of the DOJ during the Obama presidency. During the Obama presidency the Department of Justice reached the conclusion that media outlets which published documents given to them by WikiLeaks were protected under the 1st amendment. Therefore they decided not to pursue an extradition application for Assange.

William Barr, Attorney General under Trump, decided that the extradition case against Assange had to be based on other grounds. The central charge against Assange was to be the claim that he conspired with Chelsea Manning to hack US military computers to illegally obtain classified documents.

This claim that Julian Assange conspired with Manning to hack US military systems was supported by the claims made by Sigurdur Ingi Thordarson. Thordarson’s claims formed a key part of the second superseding indictment against Assange that the US Department of Justice presented last summer to Judge Baraitser.

[Stundin journalists Bjartmar Oddur Peyr Alexandersson](#) and Gunnar Hrafn Jónsson have written an article that deals a huge blow to the American case against the WikiLeaks

publisher. They note that the second superseding indictment from the DOJ purported to:

“... show that Assange instructed Thordarson to commit computer intrusions or hacking in Iceland.

The aim of this addition to the indictment was apparently to shore up and support the conspiracy charge against Assange in relation to his interactions with Chelsea Manning. Those occurred around the same time he resided in Iceland and the authors of the indictment felt they could strengthen their case by alleging he was involved in illegal activity there as well.”

[Alexandersson and Jónsson](#) note the impact of Thordarson’s claims on Judge Vanessa Baraitser:

“Nonetheless, the tactics employed by US officials appear to have been successful as can be gleaned from the ruling of Magistrate Court Judge Vanessa Baraitser on January 4th of this year. Although she ruled against extradition, she did so purely on humanitarian grounds relating to Assange’s health concerns, suicide risk and the conditions he would face in confinement in US prisons. With regards to the actual accusations made in the indictment Baraitser sided with the arguments of the American legal team, including citing the specific samples from Iceland which are now seriously called into question.”

Thordarson, a serial criminal with convictions for child abuse and fraud, has admitted in a recent interview with Stundin that he made up the claims about Assange. Thordarson now admits that he lied about the claim that Assange instructed him to hack into the computers of Icelandic members of parliament and steal files from a bank in that country.

Thordarson who stole over \$50,000 from WikiLeaks while working as a volunteer, spent several hours with the journalists from Stundin where he admitted to numerous crimes. Thordarson tells the story of how the FBI offered him an immunity deal in May 2019 in return for his testimony against Assange.

[Alexandersson and Jónsson state that:](#)

“The deal, seen in writing by Stundin, also guarantees that the Do J would not share any such information to other prosecutorial or law enforcement agencies. That would include Icelandic ones, meaning that the Americans will not share information on crimes he might have committed threatening Icelandic security interests – and the Americans apparently had plenty of those but had over the years failed to share them with their Icelandic counterparts.”

These journalists from Stundin have revealed how Thordarson has continued committing financial crimes of fraud during the period of his work with the DOJ. Icelandic authorities seem oblivious to his criminal activity. It would appear that this key witness against Julian Assange was emboldened by his immunity deal. [Alexandersson and Jónsson note:](#)

“It is as if the offer of immunity, later secured and sealed in a meeting in DC, had encouraged Thordarson to take bolder steps in crime. He started to fleece individuals and companies on a grander scale than ever; usually by either acquiring or forming legal entities he then used to borrow merchandise, rent luxury cars, even order large

quantities of goods from wholesalers without any intention to pay for these goods and services."

So there you have it. A key witness for the US case against Julian Assange has admitted that his testimony against the WikiLeaks editor was a pack of lies. It would appear that Thordarson was incentivised to lie by the promise of immunity from his many crimes.

The US case against Julian Assange has been dealt a huge blow by this revelation. However, it remains to be seen if the High Court in London will take this into consideration when it finally hears the US appeal against the decision not to extradite Assange.

All people of good conscience should step up their efforts in support of a journalist imprisoned for exposing American war crimes.

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