

By Chris Floyd

From [World Can't Wait](#) | Original Article

At 3:25 p.m. on Tuesday, a UK judge reverses an earlier court decision and granted bail to Julian Assange, who is being held in a British prison on a warrant for "sexual misconduct" charges in Sweden. The bail is attached with heavy conditions, including the demand for a large wad of cash upfront, a daily curfew (which will keep Assange off the prime-time news), and the requirement of wearing an electric tag.

The ruling does not free Assange, however; he is sent back to jail pending the gathering of the cash, and pending a decision by Swedish authorities to appeal the bail ruling.

At 4:18 p.m., outside the courtroom, film director Ken Loach, one of the many people putting up money for Assange's case, makes this comment:

Clearly, if the Swedish government opposes bail it will show there is some vindictiveness beyond this case. It will show there is some political element that goes beyond the case.

Indeed. At this writing, it is not believed that Sweden has never pursued anyone so zealously (if at all) through the international criminal justice system on a charge of 'sexual misconduct' (not rape).

At 5:26 p.m., it is announced that Swedish authorities are indeed challenging the decision. Assange, although granted bail, will remain in prison until the appeal is heard -- at some point in the next 48 hours.

The Guardian's legal affairs editor, Afua Hirsch, explains the draconian laws -- enacted post-9/11, natch -- that allow government authorities across Europe to amplify their reach across several borders:

Followers of the WikiLeaks story wonder how Assange could be extradited with so few questions asked. Why, for example, can our prisons detain someone (Assange is currently on remand in Wandsworth prison) for an offence under Swedish law that does not exist in British law? And how can a judge agree to an extradition without having seen enough evidence to

make out a prima facie case?

The 2003 Extradition Act originated in an EU decision agreed just one week after 9/11. It was sold to voters as a way of ensuring cross-border cohesion in prosecuting suspects wanted across Europe for terrorism and serious crime. ... It's been downhill from there. Around three people per day are now extradited from the UK, and there is little to suggest that the majority are terrorists or serious criminals. In fact those involved in the process agree that many of the cases are "trivial".

This month I watched proceedings in Westminster magistrates' court as Jacek Jaskolski, a disabled 58-year-old science teacher, fought an EAW issued against him by his native Poland. Jaskolski – also the primary carer for his disabled wife – has been in the UK since 2004. His crime? Ten years ago, when he still lived in Poland, Jaskolski went over his bank overdraft limit. There are instances when unauthorised bank borrowing can have criminal elements, but this is not one of them. The bank recovered the money, and there is no allegation of dishonesty. A similar case in Britain would be a civil, not a criminal, matter.

But it is a criminal offence in Poland, where every criminal offence has to be investigated and prosecuted, no matter how trivial. As a result Poland requested 5,000 extraditions last year alone, accounting for 40% of all those dealt with by Britain. By contrast the UK made just 220 requests.

In 2008 a Polish man was extradited for theft of a dessert from a restaurant, using a European arrest warrant containing a list of the ingredients. People are being flown to Poland in specially chartered planes to answer charges that would not be thought worthy of an arrest in the UK, while we pick up the tab for police, court, experts' and lawyers' time to process a thousand cases a year.

That's right; they'll track you down and jail you for an old, repaid overdraft; they'll track you down and jail you for a dessert you didn't pay for. They'll track down across the face of the earth and jail you for things that aren't a crime in the country where they've jailed you -- if you happen to have put powerful people in a bad light; i.e., shown them as they really are.

But if you start a war; or if you [get another country to start a war](#) for you; or if you continue and expand a war; or if you actually assassinate, murder, [hundreds of innocent people in cold blood](#) far outside a war zone, then you will not only not be jailed, you will be honored, celebrated, enriched and obeyed. Hell, you can even [murder people and harvest their organs for sale](#), and you will be feted and supported as a great ally of the defenders of civilization, as long as you play ball with their agenda of domination.

But tell the truth about power? Or just try to live your ordinary life, care for your loved ones, go to work, harm no one, pose no threat, make no provocation -- other than being an attractive, and defenseless, piece of fodder for petty power to glut itself upon? Oh then, my friend, you can

be stitched up, put in the frame anytime they damn well please.

What kind of world do you think you're living in? Well, the Old Man said it years ago:

"Democracy don't rule the world;
Better get that through your head.
This world is ruled by violence:
But that's better left unsaid."

And if the strangulators of truth who are pulling the strings against Assange and WikiLeaks have their way, it's going to remain unsaid.