



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on April 16, 2019

## Rand Paul Proposes Immunity for Assange in Exchange for Testimony

Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) proposes the potential offering of immunity from prosecution for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in exchange for the latter's testimony at a Senate Intelligence Committee hearing.

In a story reported first by Gateway Pundit, the constitutionally-minded senator suggested the compromise as a way of getting valuable information Assange might have without causing him greater harm.



"I think that he should be given immunity from prosecution in exchange for coming to the United States and testifying," Senator Paul told the Gateway Pundit. "I think he's been someone who has released a lot of information, and you can debate whether or not any of that has caused harm, but I think really he has information that is probably pertinent to the hacking of the Democratic emails that would be nice to hear."

Last August, Senator Richard Burr (R-N.C.), chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, sent a letter to Assange in care of the Ecuadorian embassy in London where he was living in asylum. The letter requests that Assange consent to a "closed interview with bipartisan Committee staff at a mutually agreeable time and location."

The meeting proposed by Burr was for the purpose of ascertaining whether Assange had any pertinent intelligence related to the Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

On April 11, Assange was physically dragged from the Ecuadorian embassy in London by British police after officials of the Ecuadorian government withdrew their political protection of the WikiLeaks founder.

A day earlier, April 10, the president of Ecuador, Lenin Moreno, tweeted the reason for the country's asylum for Assange: "Ours is a government respectful of the principles of international law, and of the institution of the right of asylum. Granting or withdrawing asylum is a sovereign right of the Ecuadorian state, according to international law," Moreno said in the prerecorded message.

Now that Assange is no longer safely sequestered inside a foreign embassy, officials of the United States are attempting to extradite Assange in order to try him for a variety of crimes he's alleged to have committed in connection with the Afghan Papers.

A brief recap of the case against Julian Assange and the role played by WikiLeaks is in order if one is to understand the numerous questionable actions taken by the governments of Ecuador, the U.K., and the United States that have resulted in the arrest of Assange and his potential extradition.

First thing, however, no matter what one may think of Julian Assange, WikiLeaks, or the information that has been released on that website, it must be recalled that Assange has been under arrest (or



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constructively so) for about nine years without being formally charged with any crime and without being brought before a magistrate to challenge his detention.

In late July 2010, WikiLeaks released the so-called Afghan War Diary. These documents are a collection of internal U.S. military logs of the war in Afghanistan.

Next, on August 18, 2010 (two days before allegations of sexual impropriety were raised), Anders Hellner, a senior policy adviser to the Swedish Foreign Policy Institute, told Swedish TV News Rapport:

The situation is escalating because an official Swedish party which is represented at the European Parliament (the Pirate Party, which had announced it would host WikiLeaks servers) is taking up what the U.S views is a very controversial role. The Americans are looking to stop this somehow.

It isn't too much of a strain of credulity to believe that the United States would want to retaliate against Assange for the revelations contained in the Afghan War Diary, particularly those related to the aid given to the Taliban and al-Qaeda by Pakistan, our ersatz "ally" in the War on Terror, and the disclosure of the number of civilian casualties precipitated by the military action of the United States and other "coalition" forces.

Given the bipartisan celebration of Assange's arrest, it's unlikely that Senator Paul's proposal will gain any traction among many of his colleagues in Congress. Paul's famous father is another story, however.

In April 2018, former congressman and presidential candidate Ron Paul and Doug Stafford, chief strategist for Senator Rand Paul, co-authored an "open letter" petitioning the Ecuadorian government to restore Assange's access to communication and requesting that the government of the United States "end the Grand Jury investigation into WikiLeaks and drop any charges against the publisher and all other staff members."

After a recitation of historic and moral defense of the freedom of expression, Paul's letter ends with a paean to the principle and its dearness to the Founding Fathers: "The Founding Fathers would have protected WikiLeaks at all costs and it is time that we inherit their spirit."

I'll see Ron Paul's Founding Father quote and raise him a quote from one of the Founding Generation's favorite writings, *Cato's Letters*, written by John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon.

In *Cato's Letter* No. 15, published on February 24, 1721, Thomas Gordon writes, "Freedom of speech is the great bulwark of liberty; they prosper and die together: And it is the terror of traitors and oppressors, and a barrier against them."

So, shouldn't anyone suggesting Assange is a traitor (he's not American) and that WikiLeaks published propaganda be anxious to hear from the now-arrested journalist and political prisoner?

As of the publishing of this article, no member of Congress has publicly supported Senator Paul's proposed immunity for Julian Assange in exchange for his testimony.

*Photo: AP Images*



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