

Julian Assange statement exposes bogus rape allegation

Steve James

13 December 2016

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, incarcerated in the Ecuadorean embassy for four and a half years, has released a transcript of the statement he made to Swedish investigators last month.

Assange's comments include more detail about the sexual encounter on which the bogus "rape" allegations against him were based. He presents a devastating review of the US-led campaign against him, which underscores the politically motivated and concocted character of the smears.

Assange issued the statement after he was finally interviewed by Swedish authorities, on behalf of prosecutor Marianne Ny, following years of prevarication and delay. In his 19-page statement, Assange exposes blatant breaches of Swedish law by Ny.

Swedish law demands the conduct of "preliminary investigation as expeditiously as possible and when there is no longer reason for pursuing the investigation, it shall be dropped."

No person should be "exposed to suspicion, or put to unnecessary cost or inconvenience." But Ny "deliberately suspended her work to progress and bring to a conclusion the preliminary investigation," despite Assange's repeated offers to be interviewed following his original voluntary questioning on August 30, 2010.

Assange outlined the egregious circumstances of the November interview. His Swedish defence lawyer was not permitted to be present, despite the interview being a Swedish criminal preliminary investigation. Assange's Ecuadorian defence counsel has no access to the case file and did not understand Swedish. Assange has not been able to read key text messages in the possession of the Swedish authorities, which will confirm he is innocent of the allegations against him.

Nevertheless, the WikiLeaks founder felt "compelled to give my statement today so that there can be no more excuses for the Swedish prosecutor Marianne Ny to continue my indefinite unlawful detention, which is a threat to my health, and even to my life." He continued, "I will not grant this prosecutor any excuse to avoid taking my statement as I

fear she would use it as a means to indefinitely prolong my cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment."

On the circumstances of his trip to Stockholm in 2010, Assange explained that earlier in that year Hillary Clinton, as United States Secretary of State, launched an investigation "unprecedented in scale and nature" against WikiLeaks. Led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], the investigation grew to involve "a dozen other agencies, including the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], the NSA [National Security Agency] and the Defence Intelligence Agency." Described as a "whole of government" investigation, the case also involves a closed door Grand Jury and the torture and jailing of whistleblower and political prisoner Chelsea Manning for 35 years in an attempt to implicate Assange and WikiLeaks.

WikiLeaks published the Afghan War Diaries in July 2010. These exposed a brutal war of colonial subjugation involving rampages by army personnel, targeted assassinations, indiscriminate bombing and drone attacks on entire villages and the destruction of an impoverished country.

The diaries provoked a state-orchestrated international media witch-hunt against WikiLeaks and threats to arrest or kill Assange. The statement cites Marc Thiessen in the *Washington Post*, whose article "WikiLeaks Must be Stopped" called for diplomatic pressure to be brought on governments to arrest Assange. Failing this, the US "can arrest Assange on their territory without their knowledge or approval." Another article described an office near the Pentagon with 120 analysts, from the FBI and other agencies, working around the clock "on the frontlines of the secret war against WikiLeaks."

Assange travelled to Stockholm under enormous pressure and in considerable danger to ensure the safety of WikiLeaks publishing servers, some of which were in Sweden. Swedish state television complained that WikiLeaks' presence in Sweden risked its strategic relationship with the US. During Assange's stay his personal bank cards were blocked, and WikiLeaks' Moneybookers account could not be accessed.

Later in the year, this became a “concerted judicial economic blockade against WikiLeaks by US financial service companies, including VISA, Mastercard, PayPal, Bank of American, Western Union and American Express.”

Cut off from funds, Assange was forced to rely on people he hardly knew for “food, safety and telephone credit.” He gave a speech on the Afghan war which a woman, “SW,” attended and sat in the front row. SW, he writes, “appeared to be sympathetic to my plight and also appeared to be romantically interested in me.” The pair went to the National Museum, where “SW” said she worked and where “she kissed me and placed my hands on her breasts.”

They met again two days later. “SW” invited Assange to her home where she “made it very clear that she wanted to have sexual intercourse with me.” Assange notes that “he felt concerned about the intensity of ‘SW’s’ interest”. SW knew an “unusual amount of detail” about Assange.” They had consensual sex on “four or five occasions.”

He goes on, “In the morning she went out to pick up breakfast for us. After enjoying breakfast together, I left her home on good terms. At no stage when I was with her did she express that I had disrespected her in any way or acted contrary to her wishes other than to be not interested enough to pay her attention above my security situation or attempts to sleep. She accompanied me to the train station on her bicycle and we kissed each other goodbye.”

Over the following days, he and SW spoke on the phone and SW told him of her concerns over sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). She went to the Swedish police for STD advice and asked him to be tested for STDs. He agreed and stated, “You can imagine my disbelief when I woke the next morning to the news that I had been arrested in my absence for ‘rape’ and that police were ‘hunting’ all over Stockholm for me.”

Texts from SW to a friend and seen by Assange’s lawyers expose the allegation of rape as bogus. Assange states that the texts “were sent to her friends during the course of the evening I was at her home and during that week, which the Swedish police collected from her phone. Although the prosecutor has fought for years to prevent me, the public and the courts from seeing them, my lawyers were permitted to see them at the police station and were able to note down a number of them, including (as directly cited by Assange):

- On 14 August 2010 SW sent the following text to a friend: *I want him. I want him. Followed by several more of similar content (all referring to me) in the lead-up to the events in question (13:05);*

- On 17 August SW wrote that *we had long foreplay, but nothing happened (01:14); then it got better (05:15);*

- On 17 August, after all sex had occurred, SW wrote to a friend that it “turned out all right” other than

STD/pregnancy risk (10:29);

- On 20 August SW, while at the police station, wrote that she “did not want to put any charges on Julian Assange” but that “the police were keen on getting their hands on him” (14:26); and that she was “choked (sic shocked) when they arrested him” because she “only wanted him to take a test” (17:06);

- On 21 August SW wrote that she “did not want to accuse” Julian Assange “for anything”, (07:27); and that it was the “police who made up the charges (sic)” (22:25);

The remainder of the statement records the extraordinary and ever more aggressive, undemocratic, illegal and intimidatory methods employed by the US, Swedish and British governments to silence Assange and WikiLeaks.

In November 2010, immediately following WikiLeaks’ release of hundreds of thousands of US diplomatic cables exposing further crimes and political conspiracies carried out by Washington and the Pentagon, the US established a State Department “War Room” against WikiLeaks. On November 30, an Interpol Red Notice was sent to 180 countries to arrest Assange for a Swedish “preliminary investigation” for which no charges or indictment exist. Days later a European Arrest Warrant was issued and Assange was arrested in London. He was held in a high security jail, then under house arrest for nearly two years before applying for diplomatic asylum in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London in June 2012, where he remains.

Last month, the British government lost its appeal as “inadmissible” against a legally binding verdict earlier this year by the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (UNWGAD). According to the original verdict, “taking into account all the circumstances of the case, the adequate remedy would be to ensure the right of free movement of Mr. Assange and accord him an enforceable right to compensation, in accordance with article 9(5) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.”

Julian Assange’s full statement can be accessed here.



To contact the WWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact