Film critic, cinema professor and journalist Joseph McBride: Julian Assange “should be freed”

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Joseph McBride is Professor of Cinema, San Francisco State University; a professional journalist since 1960 and author of Into the Nightmare: My Search for the Killers of President John F. Kennedy and Officer J.D. Tippit*; also, biographies of Frank Capra, Steven Spielberg and John Ford, and the critical study* How Did Lubitsch Do It?

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All journalists depend on inside sources and documents to help tell the truth about what really goes on behind the facade of governments. Often those documents are ones governments do not want revealed, but they are crucial for us to have to expose crimes and other social problems. The same goes for the information provided by inside sources. History, true history, is replete with examples of how such information has benefited the public good. Naturally governments tend to demonize people who provide the truth to the public.

One such prominent figure is Julian Assange. In recent years he has revealed many important facets of the world and particularly of the United States government that we need to know. He has paid a heavy price in being under what amounts to house arrest and other forms of harassment. If he is forced out of his current embassy safe house in London, his personal freedom and his professional work with WikiLeaks are in jeopardy, as well as his very life. Anyone who believes in the public right to know should stand beside him and oppose attempts to prosecute him and persecute him further. He should be freed.

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