

# Assange supporters speak outside his Belmarsh prison wedding

Our reporters  
23 March 2022

*World Socialist Web Site* reporters attended an event held outside Belmarsh prison yesterday afternoon to mark the wedding of Julian Assange and Stella Moris. They interviewed several of their supporters.

**Reiko**, currently unemployed, said, “I am here to support Julian—he should not be in prison. All he did was publish information we should know about. It is such a dangerous precedent if the United States locks him up.

“They are desperate to stop people finding out the truth, this is what the American empire does everywhere. I think it is the first time they have used the Espionage Act to come after a journalist. It is so dangerous.

“The media are just stenographers for the powerful, for the elite. They are not interested in educating the public. If people could see the truth, they wouldn’t accept things as they are. They would see the injustice and do something about it. People are a bit brainwashed, lied to and misinformed and so accept things as they are.”

Reiko criticised the Labour Party for refusing to defend Assange, “They have ignored him. They do not say anything. Maybe a few do, now and then, but it is not enough. Jeremy Corbyn, when he was leader [of the Labour Party] did not say anything. Only afterwards did he say a little bit. Too little too late.”

**Yang Chen**, who works as a carer and in a hotel, explained, “I’m here to support Julian and Stella Moris, because Julian is telling the truth. People who are honest, they suffer. And people who are lying and deceiving, they are not in prison. Julian is telling the truth to the world—it’s not a crime, that is humanity. The public should know the truth.

“The mainstream media don’t report because they are just following the government, that is my opinion. And

that is why there’s not much exposed about what is happening to Julian. Only a few individuals are exposing that. Journalism is not a crime, and telling the truth is not a crime. It is not right that the honest person is in prison.”

Yang said of the war in Ukraine, “I think the war is totally the wrong thing, and it shouldn’t happen. But the politicians, the world we live in, these things keep happening and the people who suffer most are the innocent people and the ordinary citizens, not the rich people in the high-up positions. So, that is completely wrong. There’s always one side they present, they’re not telling both sides. It’s totally injustice.”

**Val** has been protesting for Assange’s freedom for more than a decade, “It is terrible that it is here, in Belmarsh prison, that they are getting married. They should be in Westminster Abbey with thousands of people because they are two wonderful brave people. It is disgusting that they are getting shut up in that hell hole. We just have to be here to let them know how much they are loved. Had it been a weekend, there would have been thousands of people here.

“Without the truth, we cannot do anything. Over a million people took to the streets over Iraq but we were told that they had WMDs [weapons of mass destruction]. It is thanks to journalists that we learnt they did not have them. Journalists, real journalists, are so needed that we must do everything we can to protect them. That is why I am here, and other people are here, not just for Julian but for all journalists who are not afraid to tell us the truth.”

**Bill**, who works as a builder, said, “I am just here to support Julian and the star of the wedding. We all think he is innocent of any real charge. It’s bad that he’s been locked up and they have thrown away the key. I feel the world is getting fewer people telling the truth.

He's been alone, a thinking person, doing right, but they make him feel like a criminal. It's wrong, so today I would like to show my support.

"The mainstream media have been putting untruths out there. People are asleep, watching the news and they don't know what is happening in the real world. I think the government should show some accountability. They wash their hands and get away with it. The media, like the *New York Times*, profited from WikiLeaks in terms of readership, and now they have closed the door on him."

**Tom** explained his reasons for supporting Assange, "I think he's a prisoner of conscience, a political prisoner. The reason he's being held in custody is because he published evidence of war crimes."

He continued, "What's happened here, on purpose, is that people have forgotten what he revealed in the first place. That's completely gone out of the public debate. These were total war crimes, but nobody's been punished for those war crimes. Assange had published evidence of those war crimes and now he's being punished, and I think it's tremendously significant that the media has not been covering it, so therefore most people don't know what the hell is going on.

"He was subject to a campaign of vilification with the rape allegations. I think it's terrible how the media, including for example the *Guardian*, have been hanging him out to dry. What are they thinking of? If he's extradited that means in effect that you are criminalised from publishing details of war crimes or other crimes of state. So, what is the point of the media then? That's supposed to be the whole point of the media, holding the powerful to account.

"There's so few people in the British media, in British politics, who will stand up for him and that's chilling, and I think it's because his reputation has been so smeared.

"And you know about this book by [UN special rapporteur on torture] Nils Melzer? I've just read that book and that's a very important book. He's got great credentials to write it. I think Assange is being persecuted, Nils Melzer says tortured psychologically. Tortured in order to, and this is the point, encourage others *not* to do the same thing or to discourage other people from doing the same thing, and meanwhile the rest of society is just lying down like that. Scary, I just find it very scary.

"The BBC is the one that matters most because it is the one with the greatest credibility. It's the one that most people listen to, so it doesn't have to be the worst to matter the most, and it's covered the story really badly, really badly.

Describing the importance of the case, Tom said, "It depends on what you mean by being a citizen in 2022, whether you want to be able to ask difficult questions of your government and hold your government to account and not just take what is handed down to you. This is terrifying I think because you cannot have a more clearcut issue which is correct to bring to light than war crimes, particularly those war crimes and the deaths that were caused, and yet that's swept under the carpet by the whole system.

He concluded, "There are lots of things that are scary in the world right now but this is one of them. And in fact, the higher the stakes with war and with climate change then the more you would want to be able to hold your government to account and the more they would want to hide, and we know that we can't trust them. So it's incredibly important."



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