

United States: Chelsea Manning Jailed — Again

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Chelsea Manning, a transgender U.S. soldier who blew the whistle on U.S. war crimes, and spent 2013 to 2017 in an army stockade as a result, is back in prison again.

This time because she refuses to join a bipartisan campaign against Wikileaks that seeks to bring Julian Assange from his refuge in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London to the U.S. in order to put him on trial and send him to prison.

In 2010, she leaked hundreds of thousands of documents about the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. She first tried to get mainstream media to publish them, to no avail, before turning to Wikileaks, which did publish them.

One of these was a video, shown on TV at the time. The video was taken by U.S. soldiers aboard a helicopter gunship as they machine-gunned Iraqi civilians in the street as they attempted to flee. The soldiers joked and laughed while they committed murder.

Daniel Ellsberg, who released the secret *Pentagon Papers* during the Vietnam War that documented the long campaign Washington engaged against Vietnam from the end of WWII through the Vietnam War itself, said recently on Democracy Now!, “She also revealed massive, widespread torture being conducted by our Iraqi allies, with our knowledge and complicity, going from George W. Bush on into President Obama’s term.

“So there is a lot of resentment against her in the intelligence community and the Army about the shameful things she revealed. Also assassination squads, death squads, corruption in general.”

Manning is in prison once again for refusing to answer questions before a grand jury investigating Wikileaks and its founder, Julian Assange. She was subpoenaed by federal prosecutors to appear for questioning about her 2010 leak to Wikileaks, and jailed for contempt for refusing to do so. In 2010 she testified that she acted alone (on record if the prosecutors really want to know), and now stands by that.

Journalist Glenn Greenwald said on Democracy Now!, “I don’t think it’s a surprise to anybody that Chelsea Manning is extraordinarily heroic. She has demonstrated that repeatedly over the last decade in all kinds of ways. But what she’s doing here is really remarkable, because the context is that the Trump administration is trying to do what the Obama administration tried to do but concluded it couldn’t do without jeopardizing press freedoms, which is to prosecute Wikileaks and Julian Assange for what it regards as the crime of publishing top secret or classified documents.”

He added, “The Obama administration tried to create theories to say that Wikileaks did more than passively receive documents from Chelsea Manning and then publish them.... The Justice Department under Obama, searched high and low for evidence that Wikileaks participated in Chelsea Manning’s taking of those documents. They found no evidence....

“And unfortunately, between the Republicans, who have long hated Wikileaks for exposing the war crimes of the Bush administration and Democrats, who now hate Wikileaks because they published documents that reflected poorly on Hilary Clinton and the Democratic Party, very few people are willing to stand up to this very serious attack on press freedom.

The latter refers to Wikileaks publishing Democratic National Committee documents that exposed Clinton’s and the DNC’s dirty tricks to sabotage Bernie Sanders’ campaign in 2016. That is, Wikileaks published the truth. But the Democrats are joining the Trump administration in going after Wikileaks for a deeper reason – the whole U.S. government operates behind a vast wall of secrecy, and hates it when they are exposed for their crimes.

In 2017, then head of the CIA Mike Pompeo, who is now Secretary of State, charged that “Wikileaks walks like a hostile intelligence service and talks like a hostile intelligence service and has encouraged its followers to find jobs at the CIA in order to obtain intelligence. It directed Chelsea Manning in her theft of specific secret information It’s time to call out Wikileaks for what it is: a nonstate, hostile intelligence service....”

That’s what the federal prosecutors are now trying to substantiate to criminalize Wikileaks and jail Assange. Chelsea Manning won’t go along with this, and is sitting in jail, with nary a squeak of protest by Democrats.

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