

## **TWITTER / Social Media**

### **10 Words**

#WPFDD means freedom for #JulianAssange. If he goes down, press freedom disappears too.

### **20 / 50 Words**

There's an elephant in the room on #WPFDD. Press freedom depends on being able to tell the truth. #SaveJulianAssange to save press freedom. #ElephantInTheRoom

## **EMAIL / LETTERS**

### **200 Words**

The elephant in the room. To save WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange the press must tell the public of his plight. Most people have no idea of what is happening behind the closed doors of Belmarsh prison where he is jailed and the Woolwich Crown Court where the UK Government is hearing his US extradition trial. Grave injustices are being committed by the judicial system against Assange in this hearing. Most politicians have declared they are on the side of the USA. A truthful account is that Assange is a publisher who revealed war crimes and he should not be in jail, nor extradited to the United States to face 175 years in prison. Unless people are aware of this, the process that Assange is undergoing is hidden from public view. The press needs to speak out on behalf of Julian Assange, a journalist and a publisher. This trial will set a dangerous precedent. If he is extradited to the US, it means any journalist anywhere in the world who reveals state secrets and inconvenient truths could face a lifetime in a US jail. This is the elephant in the room.

### **300 lines**

World Press Freedom Day is a special day in which the UN asks us to recognise the special role of the journalist in reporting without fear or favour. But there is an Elephant in the Room that has been growing larger each year. The press itself must recognise this elephant – a largely unspoken about anomaly - and shine a light on it, to save itself. The elephant in the room is, of course, the plight of publisher and journalist Julian Assange, Walkley Award winner and Nobel Peace Prize nominee who is in the covid-19-stricken Belmarsh prison in London, with no charges pending against him. The reason he is there is that he partnered with mainstream media outlets and published open source documents revealing war crimes, genocide, corruption and ecocide committed by the US and other governments. This work is part and parcel of the job of being an investigative journalist. Yet Assange, and not the publications he partnered with to reveal these, is the only one being singled out for this

brutal treatment. That is, for now. Assange is facing the threat of extradition to the US to face espionage charges amounting to 175 years in prison. Who will be next? If the precedent is set, any one of the journalists Assange worked with on the Iran and Afghan war logs which revealed war crimes, or anybody who published the Collateral Murder video which showed an American military chopper firing indiscriminately on Reuters journalists, civilians and the people who rushed to save them, including children, could be at risk of being jailed in a US prison too. With Assange's imprisonment and extradition, the entire concept of press freedom is about to be wiped out. That is the elephant in the room that the mainstream media needs to illuminate in order to save itself. Julian Assange's freedom represents the reality of press freedom today.

## IMAGES

