# Twitter Thread by Joshua Rozenberg

**Joshua Rozenberg**
@JoshuaRozenberg

**Assange: waiting online with other journalists for a ruling from District Judge Vanessa Baraitser. Although the hearing is taking place at the Old Bailey, this is a sitting of Westminster Magistrates' Court. It is not a trial. The losing side may appeal against the DJ's ruling.**

Reporters covering the Assange hearing remotely can now see and hear the courtroom. Edward Fitzgerald QC is asking for a glass of water. The dock is currently empty.

Assange: court is waiting for him to be brought into the dock. Ed Fitzgerald QC, his counsel, is still desperate for a glass of water.

Assange enters the dock. He wears a suit and tie — and a facemask.

District judge enters court. Assange confirms his name and DOB.

DJ says she may cough but she is not contagious. Written judgment will be available when she has finished speaking. She will summarise this now but not read it out.

Assange judgment: he says this a political offence. DJ says current Extradition Act 2003 no longer treats this as a bar to extradition. Any breach of the treaty does not help Assange.

Assange judgment: password cracking of a DOD computer went beyond the activity of a journalist.

Assange judgment: Assange had been communicating with Manning through Jabber. He made a comment and she then uploaded more docs to a secure cloud directory. [More details of what they did]. This took him outside investigative journalism. Not protected by free speech (Shayler).

Assange judgment: DJ explains how Official Secrets Act works in UK. Defence claims he was protected as a journalist. But he disclosed names of informants. 100 at risk; 50 requested help. Others deterred from revealing abuses. Newspapers including @theguardian condemned decision.

@theguardian DJ on Assange: Official Secrets Act would not provide Assange with a defence if prosecuted in UK.

DJ: Assange charges not improper.

DJ on Assange: would it be unjust or oppressive to extradite him in view of the passage of time? He chose to enter the Ecuador embassy in 2012. He became a fugitive from the US in 2017. No evidence he was hampered by passage of time. Any unfair evidence could be excluded.

Assange: DJ turns to human rights convention. Rejects claim that jury would be partial. Plea-bargaining is a common feature of European justice systems. No improper motives for bringing charges. No evidence Manning was tortured. So no breach of article 6 ECHR.

Assange: DJ deals with art 7 ECHR. Notes 5th Amendment to US constitution: doctrine of vagueness and overbreadth in US law. DJ says Assange can bring these challenges in the US. Their courts well equipped to interpret their doctrines. That will ensure protection of art 7 rights.

DJ on Assange: was there breach of art 10 ECHR? He claims conduct was lawful. But he could have been prosecuted in the UK. So no breach art 10. US 1st Amendment protects freedom of speech, to foreign nationals as well as US citizens. This court trusts that a US court will comply.

DJ deals with Assange's clinical depression, autism and Aspergers. He has told psychologist he had suicidal or self-harming thoughts and asked to speak to Samaritans. Half a razor blade found concealed in his cell. Monitored and prescribed antidepressants. He has prepared a will.

DJ on Assange: suicide in family. Real risk he'd be detained under special administrative measures in US. Viewed as threat to US national security. Real risk he'd be held at ADX Florence CO. Likely to damage his mental health. He has the intellect to avoid anti-suicide measures.

DJ: without protection at Belmarsh, he's find a way to kill self. So I order his discharge.

Assange wins. US has 14 days to appeal.

US confirms it will appeal.

DJ asks Assange's counsel about a bail application.

DJ says Assange will remain in custody for the time being.

Ed Fitzgerald QC for Assange confirms that he will be requesting bail.