Twitter Thread by James Doleman



James Doleman
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Judge enters and proceedings commence.
#Assange

Now waiting for Julian Assange to be brought into court

Assange enters, gives his name and date of birth

Clair Dobbin, representing the US government rises to object to bail

Says Assange has previously "gone to extraordinary lengths to avoid extradition."

Says any appeal "would be rendered academic," if Assange was not remanded in custody.

Dobbin says Assange attempted to assist NSA whistleblower Edward Snowdon avoid a trial for leaking NSA documents by helping him fly to Russia

Dobbin says he court should not doubt Assange's ability to flee the country, notes the president of Mexico has already offered him political asylum.

"He is capable of going to any lengths," Dobbin says

The US government counsel now quoting a previous High Court judgment denying Assange bail.

Says Assange staying in the Equadorian embassy cost taxpayers £16m adding that he has "no respect for the law"

Dobbin "He was given the opportunity to get bail [over the Swedish case] and he squandered it."

Dobbin says that flight is a "likelihood,"
Adds that Covid 19 outbreaks in prison are a matter for the Ministry of Justice not the court, and there is now a special area of Belmarsh for them to be isolated in.

Breaking: US government lawyer confirms they will be appealing the judgment at the High Court.
Notes of appeal being drafted

Counsel for the US government summarising the grounds on which they will be appealing Mondays judgment, says "it is impossible," for someone to commit suicide in the conditions Mr Assange will be held in.

Judge interrupts says there is no need for Dobbin to go into detail about their grounds for appeal to the High court, "It doesn't serve any purpose in a bail hearing."
#Assange

Dobbin ends her submissions saying "There are insurmountable circumstances," to stop bail

Edward Fitzgerald QC, for Assange, rises to make the case for bail.
Says to judge, "Your decision [to deny extradition] changes everything, notes his client has been detained for 15 months due to this US government request.

"It doesn't matter how many goals you score, what matters is the outcome" Fitzgerald says. Once the application has been rejected the presumption should be "liberty."

Fitzgerald notes an appeal is not even certain as quoting an interview from a US prosecutor saying president elect Biden may decide not to pursue the matter further.

Fitzgerald, "A court saying I discharge you, should at least mean a person getting conditional liberty."

(This is the article Fitzgerald is referring to)

https://t.co/HjOWMJAqVN

Counsel says that the judgment not to extradite Assange gives him a huge motive to stay in the UK as he knows he is protected from extradition to the USA here, which he would not be if he went to another country

Fitzgerald says situation is totally different from 2012, especially given the virus outbreak

50% of prisoners on Assange's wing either have, or have had Covid he says.

Judge queries the 50% covid figure, asks where information came from?
Fitzgerald says it's from his instructing solicitor, who hasn't been allowed into court.
Dobbin interrupts to quote an email from Belmarsh prison saying only 3 positive cases at the current time.

Judge says she is minded to accept the evidence on Covid from the prison, not the defence.

Fitzgerald says whatever the figures Assange would still be safer at home with his family rather than in prison.

Defence move on, notes High court usually accepts that a district judge's findings of fact.
Quotes precedents, including the Lauri Love case.

Assange has no reason to abscond, counsel says, and notes this would be his first ever opportunity to live with his family.
"He's had a ruling ordering his discharge," he says

Says the conditions of bail would amount to "virtual house arrest," anyway

Defence say "Everything has changed," since Assange absconded in 2012, he will also wear a GPS tag giving real time information on his location at all times

Asks judge to consider "humanitarian reasons," for giving bail.

"There is an overwhelming case for bail," Fitzgerald says.
Asks "How on earth is he going to get to Mexico?" And says the asylum offer from there only applied after all legal proceedings ended.

"It's not even clear there will be an appeal," Fitzgerald says, court takes a 10 minute break so defence can take instructions from Mr Assange

Back at 11.15.
#Assange