Twitter Thread by ■Mary Kostakidis

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#Assange Bail Hearing 6 January 2021
On the videolink to London and waiting to cross to the court room.

Within 2hrs we'll know if Julian will walk out of that court room or head back to Covid infected Belmarsh to spend potentially another couple of years while appeals are heard.

They are having internet problems. Our screen was frozen for 10 mins. They fixed it but mine is frozen again. Trying to reconnect. @AndrewJFowler & I still in the virtual waiting room

I'm in.

13 waiting in the waiting room will be pretty nervous as we have passed the cut off time but the host is continuing to let people in.

We're all asking the host to request a sound check as we missed the first half hour of what the judge said yesterday

Crossed to court. This is a different, more modern court room.

Camera is on the glass box at the back of the court room.

Mark Summers on a split screen with court.
Judge enters.
Asks for Julian. Told he is on his way up.

Julian in a suit, wearing a mask

Hearing objections to bail first

We have all lost sound

Prosecution making the case that he cannot be trusted as he is determined to avoid extradition.

Quoting Kromberg on JA helping Snowden to avoid justice..

Prosecution giving details of the assistance provided and alternative plans contemplated for Snowden by Wikileaks

...JA has resources, know-how and determination to abscond.

.. he is capable to going to any length, including spending 7 years in an Embassy to escape extradition

.. detailing his failure to adhere to bail conditions in the Swedish case

..Disdaining the law of the land, costing the State £16M

.. he should stay in Belmarsh where the judgement asserts conditions are not intolerable

.. 3 Covid infected prisoners have been moved from his section of the jail so there is no threat to his health - this was an update provided to the Prosecution today.

..Citing precedents on bail refusals & setting out grounds of appeal. Judge interrupts her as this is unnecessary- they have leave to appeal & she doesn't need to hear what they will argue.

..prosecution continues.. Defense is relying on his having children.. which he had knowing his his predicament.

Fitzgerald: you have our written submission. Grounds have changed. Your decision changes everything, his motive to abscond, in the context of perusing due process in this country.
He has been detained for 15 months AFTER his bail penalty lapsed. He has been detained since then ..

.. for the purpose of the extradition application. You have discharged him and he is entitled now to be free. US Prosecutor who is the boss of Kromberg is ambivalent about pursuing this matter further, questioning how long this should go on for.

..JA should at least have his conditional liberty, given after all these years a ruling has been made that he should be discharged.

.. The court's ruling removes any reason for Mr A to abscond but rather to stay in this jurisdiction where his rights are being protected.

..due to Covid he hasn't seen his family since March last year. He needs to reestablish his physical connection with his family. Fitzgerald says some 50% of inmates have or have had Covid. Judge interrupts him & asks why the discrepancy

between the information the Prosecution ..

.. just provided.. he is talking to Gareth Pierce.. over 90 people have had Covid. Belmarsh confirmed 60 have had it but 90 tested positive. The person who has the paperwork has not been allowed into court,

Prosecution stands to read info from Belmarsh. Late Nov there was a rise: sick 24, positive 85 (incl staff), positive prisoners 3. (Me: surely it's immaterial whether they are prisoners or staff..)

Prosecution reiterates there are 3 positive prisoners, as of last night's email from the prison, which the judge is accepting. Fitzgerald making the point that the Covid situation is worse now & he is more at risk in Belmarsh where there was a spike recently (in November)

(Me: surely given the situation in the general community, it is very likely to spike again..)

Fitzgerald citing Laurie Love case where he was discharged on bail.

.. there is no significant incentive to abscond, but to remain in this jurisdiction to ensure his liberty is secured finally plus he has a family & wishes to live with them & he would be under house arrest. Tracy W. has offered a home for Stella & JA & is providing £10,000 surety

Adds that Also a significant number of responsible people are offering surety

Fitzgerald argues how could the court deny him his liberty, to reduce the risk of Covid by not being in the closed community of a prison.

Asking for a short break to get instructions on matters Prosecution raised, including the Mexican offer. This was to come to fruition after the conclusion of proceedings. Judge says that doesn't make sense. He replies that he may remain safe in this jurisdiction but not elsewhere

(Me: note why it is not safe for him to come to Australia)

Court break for Fitzgerald to get further instructions re matters raised by the Prosecution

The Mexican offer refers to the recent offer of asylum. This is all as a result of the reality dawning on everyone that just because British courts may refuse extradition, that does not prevent the US from attempting it all over again in another jurisdiction.

The Australian government does not guarantee not to extradite him to the US after all this..

Fitzgerald: going to the Ecuadorian Embassy lead to him being confined for years & then following a change of govt he was ejected - not an experience he is interested in repeating.

And t(e Mexican offer has been misquoted: the President has asked the Foreign Minister to explore thru proper channels with UK govt to poss offer asylum at conclusion of legal proceedings.

Re Covid there are still no visits, so if he remains there, he will not have visitors, at risk of Covid & a fellow prisoner very recently committed suicide .

.. effectively he can be put under house arrest.

Judge re costs: the order shouldn't take effect till result of appeal.

Judge: bail decision

US have already lodged their appeal. Outcome of appeal is not yet known. JA still has reason to abscond. If he absconds they will lose opportunity to appeal. He has let down people who have put up surety in the past. Belmarsh bares no comparison to USprison

..he helped Snowden abscond... he may fail to show up. Bail denied.

Gareth spent the hearing sitting just outside the glass box & is the last person to speak to J before he was taken away. She was scurrying back & forth. An immense disappointment for her she & his legal team were unable to convince the judge.

I hope @Snowden understands the cost to Julian of the help he gave him. He is still paying for it.
Not that it was the only reason he was denied bail, but it is certainly regarded as proof of the assistance he is capable of giving someone to evade "justice"

Julian's life will be on hold now for possibly another couple of years and his health will remain at higher risk from Covid than the general community though his health is already compromised. This is very tough for him and for his family. But let's not forget: No Extradition