

## ***WikiLeaks at |tagg.org|***

HTML version with images and direct links at <http://tagg.org/rants/427605WL1.html>

### ***General***

PayPal, Visa, MasterCard and other corporations have under pressure, mainly from the US government apparently, stopped anyone from paying anything online to WikiLeaks.

Wikileaks, source of vital information revealing disturbing facts about the corruption and power-arrogant cynicism of governments and corporations, have also been cut off by their usual internet service providers, by Amazon and other bodies whose profits seem to be more important than their concern for human rights.

None of this means that WikiLeaks is dead. Quite the contrary. I think it's the start of a major confrontation between, on the one hand, democracy, transparency, accountability and freedom of expression, and, on the other, those whose power and/or profit agendas demand the opposite.

This web page provides a few links and tips for anyone wanting to secure the freedom of information and expression that WikiLeaks represents, for anyone opposed to corruption, arrogance and cynicism, and for anyone who believes that basic human rights should be defended.

### ***Basic links***

- WikiLeaks site: <http://wikileaks.ch/>
- WikiLeaks mirrors: <http://wikileaks.ch/mirrors.html>  
If that doesn't work, try <http://tagg.org/rants/427605/mirrors.html>
- Information about WikiLeaks: <http://wikileaks.ch/about.html>
- Supporting WikiLeaks: <http://wikileaks.ch/support.html>  
Read what DataCell, who've been prevented from processing payments towards to WikiLeaks, have to say about Visa and MasterCard (<http://www.datacell.com/news.php>)  
— Donating: [1] Get your bank to transfer funds directly from your account to one of the accounts listed by WikiLeaks on their Support page.  
— [2] Send WikiLeaks a cheque in the post details also on WikiLeaks Support page.  
— [3] Use <http://flattr.com>.
- Be aware that the WikiLeaks URL (internet address) may have to change in a cat-and-mouse game between WikiLeaks and embarrassed governments or money-mad corporations. If that happens, try any one of the thousands of mirror sites (see above).
- I will try to keep the WikiLeaks main site link updated once a week.
- If you don't want to know what left-wing or cyberactivist sites are saying, at least be informed by what serious mainstream media like The New York Times, The Guardian, Le Monde, El Pais or Der Spiegel publish on this matter. See also next under Mirror Sites.

### ***Action suggestions***

- Sign the international petition at [http://www.avaaz.org/en/wikileaks\\_petition/95.php?CLICKTF](http://www.avaaz.org/en/wikileaks_petition/95.php?CLICKTF).
- Try and get others to sign the petition by including the petition link in emails to as many as possible.
- Try (in general) to avoid using PayPal, Visa, MasterCard or any other organisation backstabbing WikiLeaks. That said, please read on...
- Try (in particular) making a donation to WikiLeaks actually through PayPal, Visa, MasterCard, etc. This action lets those corporations know you want to do something they don't. They should take notice of what their customers want rather than dabble in politics. No payment will be made and you won't be charged. Contact them when your payment doesn't go through, ask them why not, and tell them what you think of their interference with your rights.
- Make a donation to WikiLeaks (<http://wikileaks.ch/support.html>).
- Try and find an alternative to PayPal. I haven't yet but I'll keep trying.
- Try and find an alternative to Amazon. I haven't yet managed to do so.
- Contact your bank and ask what they intend to do about the Visa or MasterCard you may have linked to your account.
- My bank has politically ethical policies and a manager was embarrassed to tell me over the phone that they're hard pushed to find alternatives. They've apparently already written to Visa

asking them to stop their action against WikiLeaks. I've also written my bank a letter of complaint about Visa. No bank or credit card company likes pissed-off customers because it's bad for business. The more of us who write and complain, the better.<sup>1</sup>

- Consider becoming a mirror site for WikiLeaks. The 2,200 mirrors they currently have may well become the target of Cease and Desist orders and new mirrors may become necessary on an ongoing basis. You need to be able to host no more than 2 gig of data. More details under the Mirrors tab on the WikiLeaks main site.
- If you think any of this makes sense, write a few words about what you think of this whole issue and post it on your site (or blog or My SpaceFace page). Do include a link to the current WikiLeaks main site and, if you think it's worth it, to this page.
- If you live in a parliamentary democracy, write to your locally elected representative/delegate (MP, congress[wo]man, etc.) and ask them to raise the issue. [If you're a UK citizen click here to contact your MP.]

### *My view*

I make no bones about it: I'm utterly appalled and outraged by the attempts to silence and to criminalise WikiLeaks.

That doesn't mean I'm surprised at the crude knee-jerk reactions of power élites in government and corporate circles. These consist of individuals who seem to me to think they have the divine right to hide the truth from those they should be serving: that's us, the citizens and customers they rely on to keep them in their positions of trust and power. If, as a teacher, I knowingly denied my students access to important information about the subjects I teach, however uncomfortable that information may be, I'd rightly be called a liar and duly thrown out of the profession. Yes, it's the shameless hypocrisy of it all that bugs me most. But first a statement for those who may be tempted to think I'm part of a conspiracy.

### *Anti-conspiratorial statement*

I hereby certify that in preparing this page I've acted as an entirely independent individual. I've had no contact with any organisation whatsoever in this matter and no-one has urged me in any way to take any action concerning WikiLeaks. I simply think that the attempts to quash WikiLeaks are despicable. I'm merely exercising my rights as an individual citizen to express that opinion and to suggest ways in which this very disturbing course of events can start to be corrected. Of course, I admit that the WikiLeaks gag scandal has turned up in informal conversations but the individuals involved in those few conversations and myself in no way constitute an organisation or association.

### *Hypocrisy (5 points)*

1. China, Iran and various other nation states, some branded as 'rogues', are regularly criticised by politicians and the mainstream media in the West for denying freedom of expression to their citizens. When the 'free world' denies its citizens that same freedom, however, there is little or no outcry of indignation from those same sources.
2. Visa, MasterCard and PayPal are apparently quite happy to mediate payment for online gambling and pornography but not for the vital source of important information that is

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1. Copy of letter sent to my bank, 15 Dec. 2010.

"All [name of my bank] debit and credit card transactions must pass through Visa, a corporation seemingly happy to administer online payments for gambling and pornography but not for donations to a non-profit organisation devoted to freedom of expression and to the freedom of the press, an organisation that has not been accused of any crime, let alone taken to court or convicted of any wrong doing. All these actions mounted to crack down on WikiLeaks are in clear contravention of Articles 10-12, 18-19, 28 and 30 of the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights. None of Visa's actions in this matter constitute ethical behaviour.

I fully understand how difficult it must be for [bank name] to square Visa's actions with the bank's ethical policy. After all, Visa and MasterCard form a virtual duopoly and there currently seem to be no alternatives. That said, I think it's important that the [bank] express its dissatisfaction to Visa/MasterCard in no uncertain terms and consider, together with like-minded banks around the world, setting up debit and credit card companies that implement ethical policies similar to those of the [bank]. In the meantime I would also suggest that the bank keep customers informed, via its website, of what management is doing to put pressure on Visa/MasterCard to return to its job of mediating payments rather than dabbling in dubious politics. I know that those of us who transferred our accounts to [bank] because it did not invest in countries run by corrupt, totalitarian or otherwise unethical regimes would appreciate updates about the bank's views, actions and intentions with regard to this issue.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and to consider the suggestions put forward."

WikiLeaks. Work that one out: the implications are deeply disturbing!

3. WikiLeaks has never been involved in dubious or criminal online activity, and have never been accused of ever having done so. WikiLeaks has not been taken to court by any individual or organisation and are, according to Article 11 in the UN Declaration of Human Rights, to be assumed innocent until proved guilty. Nevertheless, governmental and/or corporate power élites apparently have the divine right to order a 'pre-emptive strike' punishing WikiLeaks for a crime that has yet to be named, of which they haven't been accused, and for which they've been neither tried nor convicted. That action constitutes flagrant contravention of Articles 10-11 in the UN Declaration and is, in my view, behaviour indicative of a totalitarian régime.
4. The First Amendment to the United States Constitution prohibits action infringing on the freedom of speech, the freedom of the press and the petitioning for a governmental redress of grievances. Explain, if you would, how that squares with the present US government's actions against WikiLeaks and against Bradley Manning.
5. Assange has received more severe treatment in UK courts than rapist repeat offenders.

### *Swedish rape*

Two Swedish women have accused Assange of rape. If you want to know more about this side of events, try Deborah Orr's short article in *The Guardian* (2010-12-09)<sup>2</sup> and/or, better and in more depth, Rape claims, WikiLeaks and internet freedom (*The Guardian*, 2010-12-08)<sup>3</sup> by Katrin Axelsson from the organisation *Women Against Rape*. Axelsson's main point is that sexual assault has often been used for political agendas that have nothing to do with women's safety. I think it's pointless to speculate about the nature of Assange's alleged misdemeanours or crimes under Swedish civil law or about the credibility of the two Swedish women accusing him. As Katrin Axelsson points out:

“Assange, who it seems has no criminal convictions, was refused bail in England despite sureties of more than £120,000. Yet bail following rape allegations is routine. For two years we have been supporting a woman who suffered rape and domestic violence from a man previously convicted after attempting to murder an ex-partner and her children – he was granted bail while police investigated.”<sup>4</sup>(source)

Assange was not only refused bail: he was also held in solitary confinement at Wandsworth Prison under Dickensian conditions.<sup>5</sup> How does that square with established judicial practice? How can the punitive nature of that procedure be motivated by any other than political considerations? To put it another way, do you think Clinton was a worse US president than Bush because he was caught with his pants down and Bush wasn't? See also Jemima Khan's Why Did I Back Julian Assange? (“Even my mother asked why I would back an alleged rapist”). Among other celebs to put up bail for Assange were Michael Moore, John Pilger and Bianca Jagger.

### *Bradley Manning*

First Private Bradley Manning (23 years old) provided WikiLeaks with many of the Iraq-related cables. He isn't accused of rape but he *is* being mendaciously smeared as a complete weirdo and a loner, i.e. the opposite psychological profile to that security forces are likely to have been looking for when he signed up in the first place! Bradley Manning faces up to 52 years in jail for treason. He leaked the now infamous footage of an Apache helicopter crew mowing down Iraqi civilians and Reuters journalists in 2007. Please spread info about this courageous young man's fate.<sup>6</sup>

### *More madness*

As Adam Curtis showed in his documentary *The Power of Nightmares*,<sup>7</sup> there are striking similarities of agenda between the rabid right (=wrong, e.g. US Neo-cons) and the Jihadists. They both: [1] bewail, sometimes with good reason, the erosion of the same types of moral value; [2] think there's too much freedom around and not enough duty/discipline; [3] propagate a return to simple but authoritarian, patriarchal and non-egalitarian government; [4] emphasise faith at the expense of reason; [4] believe in violence as the best way of reaching their goals. It's back to the Middle

2. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2010/dec/09/deborah-orr-julian-assange-wikileaks>

3. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2010/dec/08/wikileaks-rape-allegations-freedom-of-speech>

4. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2010/dec/08/wikileaks-rape-allegations-freedom-of-speech>

5. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2010/dec/14/julian-assange-bail-sweden>

6. The infamous footage is at <http://www.collateralmurder.com/>. More about Bradley Manning: <http://www.bradleymanning.org/>. Support Bradley Manning: <http://www.couragetoresist.org/x/content/view/858/1/>

7. <http://www.archive.org/details/ThePowerOfNightmares>

Ages, so to speak, back to Crusaders and Muhajidīn both “fighting the good fight”, killing each other and causing collateral mayhem among innocent civilians. It's back to “My God can beat up your God” as the belief above all others.<sup>8</sup> Both moderate Muslims, even those who devoutly follow the Holy Qur'an, and Western moderates, including my Uncle Ernest (minister in the Methodist Church),<sup>9</sup> are reviled by the extremists, just as anti-Zionist Jews are an abomination unto Zionists.<sup>10</sup> We, the moderates and peaceniks who the extremists call extremist, seem to be the real enemy of both warring factions in the mad medieval war ('on terror'/'on infidels'). That's possibly part of the reason why US and UK secret services supported fundamentalist terror in Afghanistan and why the Muhajidīn accepted the money and weapons of Satan.<sup>11</sup> War: who is it good for? Well, shareholders in arms-manufacturing corporations and those who run their errands, but no-one else, least of all for those sent as cannon fodder at the taxpayer's expense and for all “collateral” civilian “casualties”.<sup>12</sup>

Republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee has said that the those who leaked the 250,000 US diplomatic cables to WikiLeaks should be executed and Sarah Palin has unsurprisingly demanded that Assange be hunted down.<sup>13</sup> And from the land of “good-governance”, Canada (Tom Flanagan, adviser to conservative premier Stephen Harper), we learn:

“I think Assange should be assassinated... I think Obama should put out a contract and maybe use a drone or something” (+ schoolboy snigger à la G W Bush from Flanagan --- “tee hee hee”).<sup>14</sup>

The most effective defence against such infantile outbursts is, I think, the truth. Whatever the source and whatever the motives for spreading truth, the only people it can hurt are those that fear it being known.

### ***Pertinent articles from the UN Declaration of Human Rights***

- Article 10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.
- Article 11 (1). Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.
- Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy..., nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.
- Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion...
- Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.
- Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.
- Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

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8. <http://tagg.org/rants/religion.htm>

9. <http://www.francisfrith.com/northwood,middlesex/>

10. <http://www.jewsforajustpeace.com/>

11. Video source: <http://www.johnpilger.com/videos/breaking-the-silence-truth-and-lies-in-the-war-on-terror>

12. I've neither the time nor space here to deconstruct other aspects of conceptual confusion, like attempts by US and UK governments to hijack and monopolise notions such as international community (which/whose community?), terrorism (defined how and from which side?), democracy (in what form?), freedom (including, excluding or prioritising which freedom[s] at the expense of others?). I'll have a crack at that in another rant another time!

13. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/dec/01/us-embassy-cables-executed-mike-huckabee>

14. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/dec/01/us-embassy-cables-executed-mike-huckabee>. When I imitate the voices of Tony Blair and George W Bush, I find it helpful to think of a phrase and attitude that typify aspects of their personality giving rise to body posture, facial expression, etc. that in their turn make vocal production of those individuals an easier task. For Blair my keys are to smile, to assume the identity of a wide-eyed little boy (c. 7 years old) who is eager to please, and to say to my imaginary parents: “Mummy, Daddy, aren't I nice? Haven't I been a good boy? Don't you like what I've done?” This creates the keen, lively, narcissistic persona necessary for producing Blair's voice. With George W Bush the regression required is not to the age of seven but of three, to the naughty but potentially lovable little rascal who just shat on the floor. I find that voice much more difficult to reproduce: I might have a hang-up there. Moreover, there's plenty I need to say about “good governance”, corruption, double standards and the smugness of Canada's official image of itself. That will also have to wait for a later rant, I'm afraid!

