
Supporters blast media coverage of Julian Assange case

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London, November 24 (RHC)-- Strongly criticizing mainstream media reporting on Julian Assange, award-winning journalist John Pilger has blasted the Guardian for its coverage of the WikiLeaks founder.

Pilger took aim at a Guardian editorial published this week, which made the case for not extraditing the Australian to the United States, where he could face 175 years behind bars for possession and dissemination of classified information.

The BAFTA award-winning documentary filmmaker has offered his interpretation of what the editorial actually meant. "What the Guardian was really saying was this: 'We are the fourth estate, the bearers of true liberal principles, the guardians of sacred rights. Such as the right to suck up to power. The right to invade countries and the right to smear those who expose our double standards and, if necessary, the right to destroy them,'" he said, adding that if Julian Assange were to succumb to the cruelty he has endured, week after week, month after month, newspapers like the Guardian would share the responsibility.

Pilger is one of the contributors to a new book titled 'In Defense of Julian Assange,' and he made the comments at the book's launch in London on Saturday. Writer and activist Tariq Ali, fashion designer Vivienne Westwood, actress Pamela Anderson, and former diplomat Craig Murray are among the other high-profile names who contributed to the book, which is an essay compilation on the prosecution of Assange and freedom of speech.

Assange is currently incarcerated at Belmarsh Prison, awaiting a hearing on extradition to the United States, where he faces possible charges of treason.

Edited by Ed Newman