

As the impending verdict on the extradition to the land of the Stars and Stripes wolf keeps activists worldwide on edge, a calm and composed man holds confidence in Julian Assange's future. His name is **John Shipton**, and among the wonders that life may have ever granted him, perhaps the most extraordinary has been to gift – and gift us – the Australian journalist. With determination and unwavering dedication, the **father of Julian Assange** has always been at the forefront of defending his son's cause. However, there are still too many unanswered questions that justice fail to address. We therefore reached out to John Shipton by phone, who, from Australia, provided us with an insider's perspective on Julian's current situation, the progress in the legal battle, and the global support the case has garnered. In an era where transparency is increasingly under scrutiny, his voice reminds us that the quest for truth is a responsibility of all of us.

For italian version click [here](#).

How is Julian?

Julian is now entering the 15th year of one form of incarceration or another. So not really good. And looks as though he's very close to being extradited to the United States, which makes things worse.

When was the last time you saw him?

The last October. So I'll go over again this October to say hello. However I think it's better that Stella goes and visits with the children.

To organise this interview we have shared some emails by using a service that encrypts the e-mail itself. Was something that Julian recommended you to use?

Yes. Julian did. Julian encrypts all of his communications. It's better to do so because they for some reason or another, 10, 15 years ago transparency was that we would be able to see what governments do and what corporations do. Now transparency is turned around and now the governments want to see everything we do. This is wrong, you know?

How do you see Julian as a son? What's the person behind him?

Well, you know, that's not sort of the questions that I can answer, because Riccardo in the first place is private, and in the second place, it's best not to make private things public. And as I just mentioned, nowadays, privacy has been reversed. So governments like privacy and secrecy and we are not supposed to have any. But the little bit that we do have left, our

feelings about each other are based to that we keep them private.

I always see you in the interviews and in your documentary Ithaka, always smiling with a positive attitude. But how can you always deal with it with positive energy?

I believe that in every human hearth there's a hunger for justice and a revulsion at the sight of injustice. This is very encouraging and it's proven to be true as support for my son has grown around the world to an extraordinary extent. Now, one third of the parliament in Greece and 45% of the parliament in Australia support Julian as presidents. All of the presidents of the major countries in Latin America and every European Parliament, Italy in particular, have an "Assange group". Millions of people around the world. So my feeling is correct that people do hunger to see justice. Yes, and so this lifts the spirits and keeps the spirits high.

What were you meaning when during the documentary you said that «Italy has plenty of a variety of viewpoints and it really cares about the case», do you mean that we have many active groups?

In Italy there are many active groups, right from the border of Switzerland down to Palermo. I could say this, that the senators in Italy were the first ones to bring before the Council of Europe, the situation of the persecution of Julian Assange. And as a consequence of the activities of the Italian senators the Council of Europe issued a statement (well, two statements), of support for my son. This is really important. It started three years ago and they've repeated that statement of support again two years ago.

What about the Australian Parliament and the Australian community? I have just seen that Kennedy spoke with the Sydney Morning Herald about the Julian situation. How is the vibe Down Under?

Here 88% of the population asks for Julian to be returned home. In the Parliament there's fifty parliamentarians in the "Assange group" and one hundred members of the Parliament asked for Julian to be released. A delegation of parliamentarians and senators is leaving for the United States on the 20th of September to request the United States allow Julian to return to Australia. The Prime Minister and the Opposition Leader both make statements in support of Julian. You can say that the entire polity of Australia: people, parliamentarians and institutions desire Julian to be returned to Australia and the persecution lifted.

Then, what is going to happen soon? Is the last chance for Julian with the British Court. What is the plan? Are you going to ask the help of the ECHR (European

Court of Human Rights)?

The last thing I heard is that Julian has an application in with the High Court of the United Kingdom for a hearing, a review of his circumstances. That decision hasn't been made yet. So the High Court haven't announced their decision. With the appeal to the European Court of Human Rights, that cannot go ahead until all other avenues have been satisfied. So if the High Court refuses the hearing, then Julian can make an application to the ECHR, and I'm certain that Julian will. I read in the paper the other day that the United Kingdom is thinking, or somebody of the institutions of say that Julian ought not to be allowed to travel to Brussels to make the appeal. I don't know whether that's true or not. I just read it in the newspaper. That would be a great scandal if the United Kingdom prevented Julian or attempted to prevent Julian from appealing to the European Court of Human Rights. Well, let it be another scandal you know.

What would you say to Ms. Clinton that, some years ago, on the Assange's case said to a journalist that anyone who did anything had to pay the consequences?

Hillary Clinton organised the destruction of Libya, participated in the destruction of Iraq and also in the destruction of Pakistan. I mean, nobody takes any notice of the blood soaked, murderous like her: she's not longer a significant figure in the world and the people of the United States when she stood for the presidency, rejected her.

How Julian is dealing with all those things? How is he dealing with the news and all the things that are talking about him?

The smearing and mobbing that Julian experienced and the malice and unscrupulous scandals, lies, is very debilitating. The United Nations rapporteur on torture and unusual punishment, that's Professor Milzer, described that those events, the smearing, mobbing the lies, the unscrupulous scandals the malice, the collapse of due process, the degradation of Julian's human rights. He describes it as torture, psychological torture. And also he went on to explain to us that all torture, physical or mental, aims to change your mind. It doesn't aim to hurt your finger. They aim to do something to your mind. They want you to reveal something or change your mind. So if we keep that in mind that the treatment of Julian has been declared psychological torture in the final analysis of his 26 page report, which he submitted, Melzer, to the United Nations General Assembly. to the United Nations General Assembly and it was received. He describes it as "a slow motion murder before our eyes." I can't say more firmly than that, that we have witnessed and witnessing the United Kingdom and the United States and previously Sweden attempting to murder somebody through process, through degradation of their human rights, abandonment of due process and

malicious persecution.

What do you say to Gabriel and Max, Julian' sons when they ask about their father?

I just say something silly to divert their attention. "Oh look, there's a nice pussy cat... Who is the first one to see a big black dog?". I don't answer, you know, I just divert the attention to, somehow, something nice.

Are they aware about the situation?

They're little. So this is what they're used to. But they do miss their father. It's nice to have a father.

Mr. Shipton, what happened that day in the kitchen when Julian told you about WikiLeaks and its activity?

I just listened, you know, because he had this fantastic idea that he would bring safety to people who were sources of information and publish it in a way that everybody in the world could get access to this information and do their own analysis and consequently form knowledge.

What would you say to all the people that after reading this interview, are going to go back to their life, to their sons and to the normal things?

This is a really good question. The reason why they censor what we say and what we can read is because they understand that the word is important. So all we have to do is speak to each other upon subjects which we have no any exchange ideas, and, as a consequence, build truth. That's all we have to do. And from truth will come action. Not hard.

I don't want to add any more words to you. Thank you so much.

I just would leave you with this... That the last line of Dante's Inferno: "And then we emerged once more to see the stars".

[by Riccardo Ongaro]