

Oppose the jailing of Chelsea Manning

by Davey Heller, 9th March 2009

As part of escalating attacks on Assange, Wikileaks and the free press under the Trump administration, courageous whistleblower Chelsea Manning was jailed on Friday 8th March for refusing to cooperate with a secret grand jury subpoena.

Manning has unsuccessfully attempted to legally challenge the subpoena and confirmed in court on Friday that she would continue to refuse on principle to cooperate with the grand jury. Judge Hilton stated she would be held “until she purges or the end of the life of the grand jury.” Manning faces a maximum sentence of eighteen months in jail

Manning has already been persecuted by the U.S. State for her exposure of a litany of war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan and the machinations of the State Department when she passed onto Wikileaks a massive trove of documents in 2010, when she was a serving in the U.S. army. Perhaps most famously she released [the Collateral Murder footage](#) of journalists and children being gunned down in Iraq. She experienced treatment akin to torture and eventually served seven years of a thirty-five year sentence before her sentence was commuted in one of the last acts under the Obama Presidency.

Chelsea is being subpoenaed as part of the Trump administrations increasing efforts to extradite Assange from

Britain to face sealed charges in the U.S., most likely for espionage. In November 2018, in an apparent filing error in an Eastern District Court in Virginia, references to these charges were made, although the exact charge was not revealed. The Grand Jury is a fishing exercise to try and prove Assange worked with or solicited Manning to get the documents, thus prove he engaged in criminal activity.

Manning refused during her previous imprisonment and trial to implicate Assange in this way. In reality Wikileaks and Assange functioned as a principled publisher and media outlet when they received information from Chelsea, by publishing classified government information that was in the public interest. As Jen Robinson, Assange's lawyer tweeted "No journalist or their source should ever be subjected to this: Chelsea Manning @xychelsea jailed for refusing to testify on Wikileaks"

Classconscious.org stands in solidarity with Manning, now jailed twice by a vindictive U.S. state due to her commitment to the public's right to know. She's a class war prisoner in the capitalist class and Trump's administration's war on Wikileaks and a free press.

Why Chelsea is resisting : Grand Juries as instruments of repression

Chelsea before her imprisonment released several statements explaining why she was not cooperating with the Grand Jury.

I will not comply with this, or any other grand jury. Imprisoning me for my refusal to answer questions only subjects me to additional punishment for my repeatedly-stated ethical objections to the grand jury system.

The grand jury's questions pertained to disclosures from nine years ago, and took place six years after an in-depth computer forensics case, in which I testified for almost a full day about these events. I stand by my previous public testimony.

I will not participate in a secret process that I morally object to, particularly one that has been historically used to entrap and persecute activists for protected political speech.

Chelsea Manning



A [statement released by her support committee](#) after her imprisonment stated

“Chelsea has clearly stated her moral objection to the secretive and oppressive grand jury process. We are Chelsea’s friends and fellow organizers, and we know her as a person who is fully committed to her principles. If Judge Claude M. Hilton and AUSA Gordon Kromberg believe that subjecting Chelsea to more punishment will change her mind, they are gravely mistaken.

Natasha Lennard expanded upon the historical role that Grand Juries have played in suppressing dissent [in her article in The Intercept.](#)

Federal Grand Juries are some of the blackest boxes in the judicial system. Closed to the press, the public, and even attorneys for those who have been subpoenaed, the process is ripe for nefarious state use. For decades, federal grand

juries have been used to investigate and intimidate activist communities – from the late-19th-century labor movements, to the Puerto Rican Independence Movement and black liberationists of the last century, to environmentalists, anarchists, and indigenous-rights fighters more recently.

“While the federal grand jury purports to be a simple mechanism for investigating criminal offenses, it can be – and historically has been – used by prosecutors to gather intelligence to which they are not entitled.”

Prosecutors and other authorities use grand juries to map out political affiliations while sowing paranoia and discord. It is hard to see the subpoenaing of Manning, who gave exhaustive testimony at her court-martial and took full personal responsibility for her leaks, as anything but punitive.

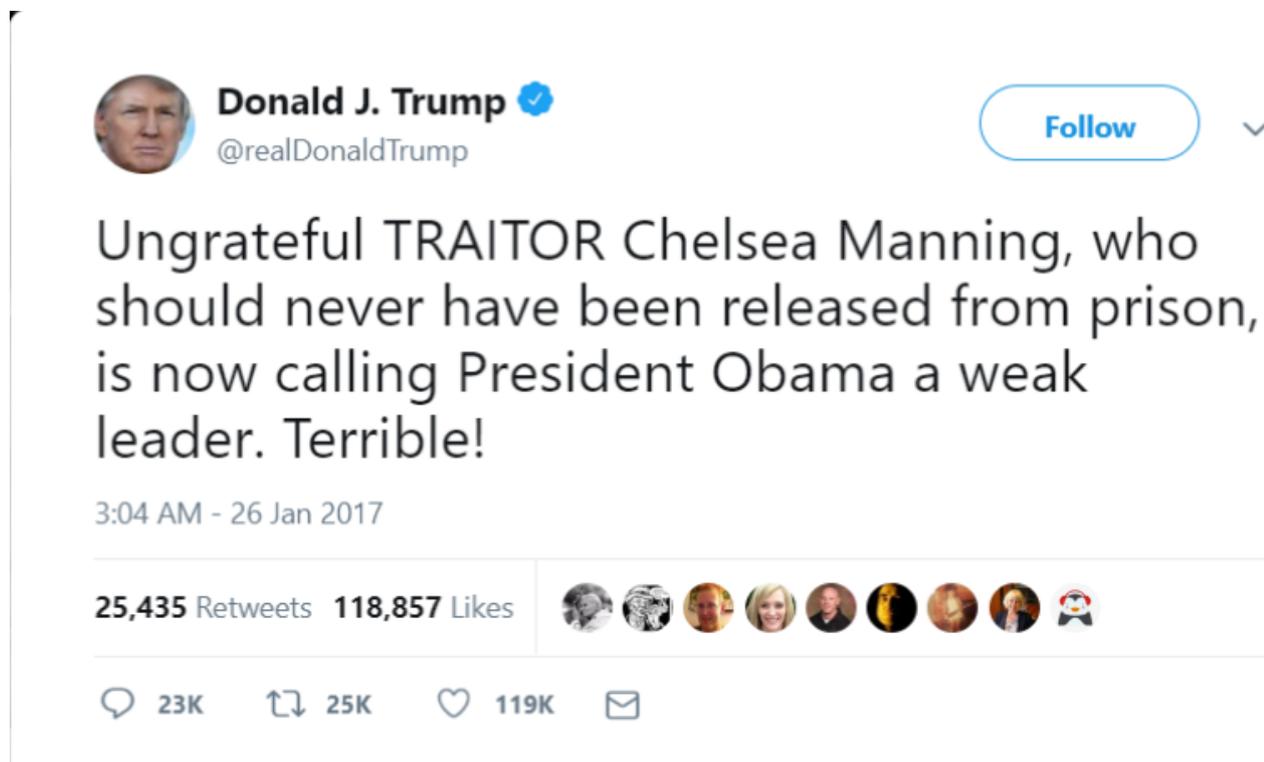
It is worth noting that Chelsea had nothing to gain personally from refusing to testify as she had been granted immunity in regards to her testimony.

Trump and the drive to dictatorship

It should never be forgotten it was Obama and the Democrats that oversaw the original prosecution of Manning and first established the secret Grand Jury to investigate Assange and Wikileaks.

However as Chelsea’s support committee stated:

“It is no secret that members of the current administration have openly expressed their hatred for Chelsea. Donald Trump himself has tweeted about his desire to undo Barack Obama’s commutation and put Chelsea back in jail.”



The jailing of Chelsea occurs as Trump ratchets up tensions on a global level in particular with Russia and China.. Although the U.S. is not yet being ruled under fascism, Trump himself is a fascist and his Presidency is increasingly taking the form of a Presidential dictatorship. He has the Executive and Judiciary firmly under his control and although only controlling one House of Congress actions such as declaring a State of Emergency over “the wall” he is sidelining the Legislature He has has made it clear that he will try and turn the 2020 election into a “war on socialism”, that is a war on the left and the working class. In this context Trump’s declaration that the press are the “enemy of the people” are given form in the persecution of Assange and Manning.

“We got this – how you can help support Chelsea.

Chelsea’s support committee in their statement summed up her principled defiance stating:



Protestors outside the Court in Virginia where Manning was subpoenaed.

“By resisting this grand jury, Chelsea has made the same sacrifice as dozens of activists before her, who have opposed the grand jury system at the expense of their own freedom. Chelsea has already served prison time for standing up against government secrecy and revealing war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan. We know, and so does the government, that she will not turn tail and allow this shadowy grand jury to eclipse her legacy of speaking truth to power.

“To quote Chelsea, ‘we got this.’

It is imperative that workers and youth internationally rally to the defence of Chelsea. She must be placed, alongside the defence of Julian Assange, at the centre of the campaign to fight attacks on the free press and democratic rights.

Classconscious.org maintains that these attacks can only be understood as the desperate efforts of the capitalist ruling class, under conditions of crisis, to suppress the growing threat of revolution from below. Therefore the campaign to defend Chelsea is inseparable from the struggle against the capitalist system itself and for socialism.

DONATE: You can donate to the #Chelsearesists [legal fund here](#).

WRITE TO CHELSEA IN PRISON

Chelsea Elizabeth Manning
William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center
2001 Mill Road
Alexandria, VA
22314

Her jail does NOT accept: -books or cards. You CAN write letters with pen or colored pencils on paper, and send newspapers.

FOLLOW: [@ResistsChelsea](#) and [@xychelsea](#) on Twitter for updates. Visit her support committees website statement [here](#).

Other statements of support

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