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Prosecutors Revive Long Discredited Narratives for Assange Trial

Claim Assange intended to 'injure' US through leaks Posted on [April 15, 2019](#) Categories [News](#) Tags [Ecuador](#), [Wikileaks](#)

As US prosecutors gear up for an attempt to prosecute WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, they are combing through years of public talking points, never tested in court, but often bandied about as something that makes this more than just a First Amendment question.

Assange's actions, after all, are centered around informing the American public of the actions of the American government.. It proved embarrassing for highly placed officials, but actual crimes, if any, are going to have to be built around ideas that [he knew or intended to "injure" the US through the leaks, and the solicitation of the leaks.](#)

These aren't new arguments, of course, dating back to the Chelsea Manning case. In 2010 officials claimed Assange had "[blood on his hands.](#)" While they maintained the leaks were risky, they later conceded that [no one was actually outed](#) by WikiLeaks, and the claimed "harm" never held water.

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) later revised this from harming America or harming actual, real people to "harming the war effort," and that's really what the bulk of the leaks were about. Embarrassing officials, and revealing the excesses of the American warfare state to the American public were a blow to selling the public on constant war. It's not that this is illegal,

as such, but it's just not done, which is why officials struggle with Assange's actions being effectively the meat of what journalists are intended to do.

It is a testament to how little the prosecutors have on Assange that long-discredited arguments are still being offered as the centerpieces of the case. Those arguments may never have actually faced any courtroom scrutiny in the past, but the fact that they failed so miserably in the court of public opinion years ago can't possibly bode well for proper trials.

Beyond allegations of what Assange did, Ecuador is offering a series of after-the-fact allegations against Assange, [accusing him of using the embassy for spying](#). The evidence for this isn't very strong, but Ecuador clearly feels it needs to make better excuses for expelling him than simply wanting money from the IMF.