



QUOTIDIANO



# Liberi



Sunday 19 may 2024  
London

Progetto artistico editoriale di Nicola Angrisano  
[Instagram.com/liberi\\_edizioni](https://www.instagram.com/liberi_edizioni)

DIRETTORE  
NICOLA ANGRISANO

**Julian Assange has been imprisoned for over 5 years,  
following 9 years of forced confinement in an Embassy**

# LET HIM GO JOE

**Now is a time to stand by Mr Assange, and to do so  
on principle, for the sake of his freedom - and ours**

**T. G.**

There can be no divide over the attempt by the United States to have the WikiLeaks founder extradited from Britain to face charges under the US Espionage Act, which reaches a critical stage in London this week. The application embodies

not just a threat to Mr Assange personally. It is also, as this newspaper has consistently argued over many years, an iniquitous threat to journalism, with global implications. It poses the most fundamental of questions about free speech. On these grounds alone, Mr Assange's extradition should be unhesitatingly opposed.

Four years ago, during the Trump presidency, the

US justice department indicted Mr Assange under the 1917 Espionage Act, which contains no public interest defence. But a free press still matters, as the US Supreme Court declared in its 1971 ruling. And even national security, and certainly the national security of a global superpower, cannot in every single circumstance invariably override the public interest in publication and the right to know. That was the core issue in the Ellsberg case as it also was in the WikiLeaks and Edward Snowden cases. In Espionage Act prosecutions, however, that public interest argument is always muzzled.

This week, Mr Assange's lawyers will seek leave to appeal against the extradition decision made in 2022 by the then home secretary Priti Patel. If he is extradited, and unless the UK relents or President Biden intervenes, he faces a criminal trial in which his arguments will be silenced. Then life in a supermax prison.

The implications for journalism are every bit as serious. This newspaper's journalism, and that of potentially every newspaper based in the US or allied country, would be at risk, too. If the prosecution succeeds, the New York Times lawyer in the Pentagon Papers case has said, "investigative reporting based on classified information will be given a near death blow". That prospect is on the line in the courts this week. A society that claims to uphold freedom of the press cannot possibly remain indifferent.



**MAYDAY!  
MAYDAY!  
MON 20th MAY**

**JULIAN ASSANGE  
UK COURTS  
EXTRADITION DECISION**

**PROTEST  
FROM 8.30am**

**Royal Courts of Justice  
Strand | London WC2A 2LL**

Nearest tubes Holborn and Temple

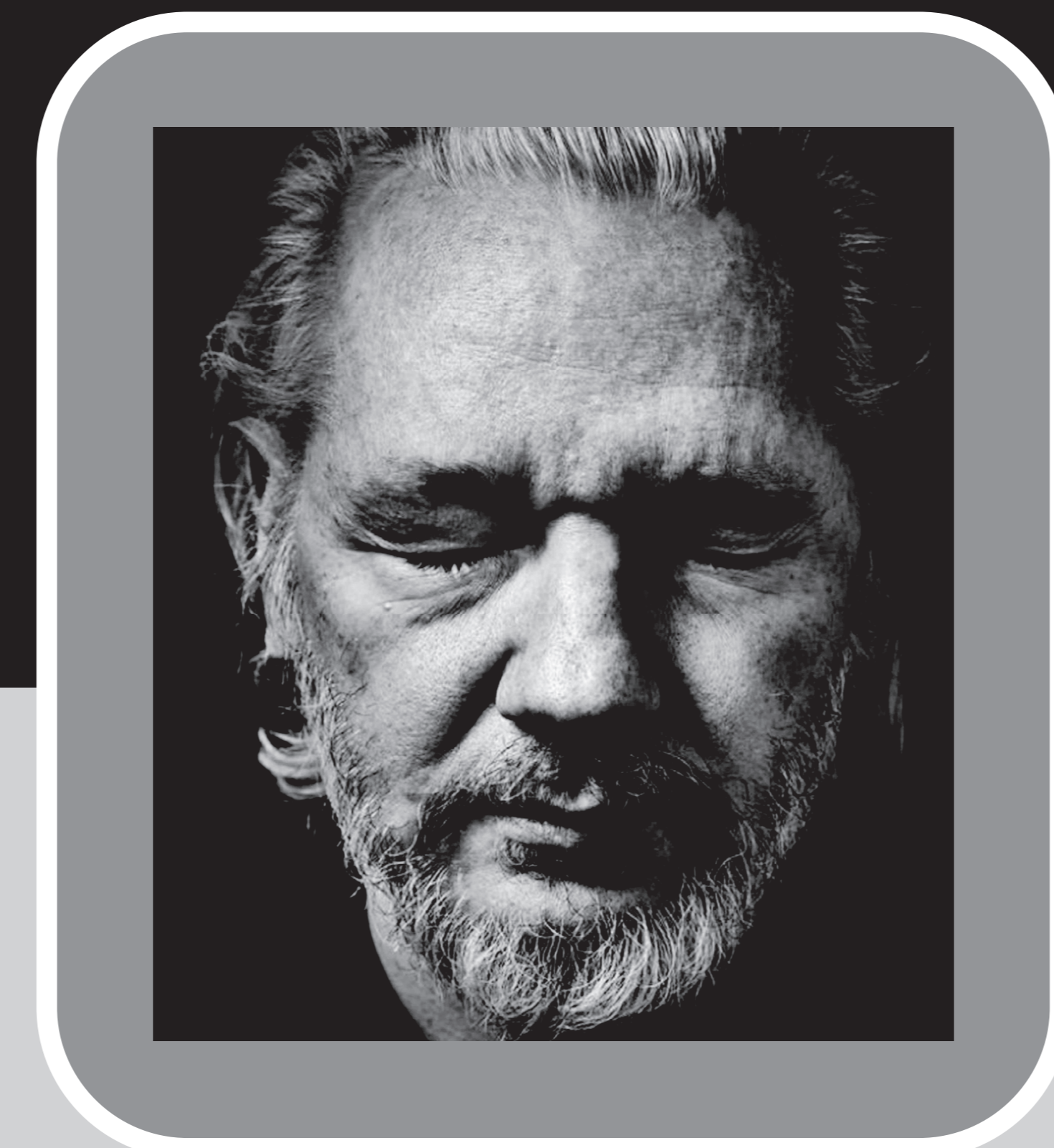


Photo: Andy Gotts