# Julian Assange Released After Striking Plea Deal in US Court



**Julian Assange Walks Free After Plea Deal in US Court**

Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, was released from custody after striking a plea deal with the U.S. government. The agreement saw Assange plead guilty to a single charge under the Espionage Act, leading to his release based on time served. Assange appeared in court in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, on June 26, 2024, where the U.S. dropped 17 additional espionage charges against him.

Assange had been incarcerated at Belmarsh Prison in London for five years, predominantly in solitary confinement, while contesting extradition to the U.S. He departed the UK on June 24, 2024, and arrived in Saipan via Bangkok after the plea deal was formalized on June 19.

Outside the courthouse, Assange’s lawyer, Barry Pollack, described the prosecution as unprecedented under the Espionage Act and emphasized the significant suffering Assange endured. Assange boarded a flight to Australia immediately following his release, reuniting with his family.

Assange’s case centered on the release of classified documents that detailed civilian casualties during conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, implicating U.S. military actions. Despite the legal resolution, debates over press freedom and national security continue in the context of Assange's publications.