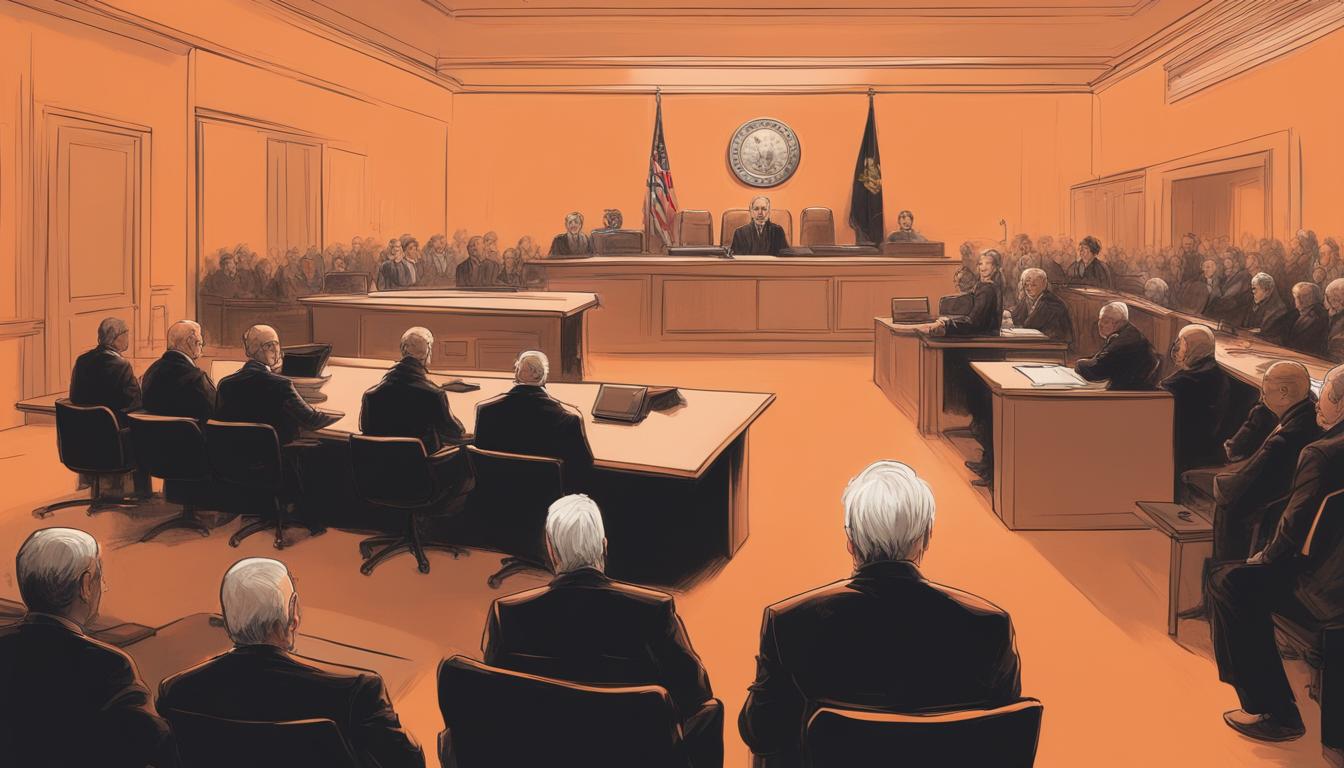
# UK High Court Grants Julian Assange Leave to Appeal Extradition to US Amid Press Freedom Concerns



The UK High Court has granted WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange leave to appeal against his extradition to the United States. Assange faces 18 charges in the US, including 17 under the Espionage Act, related to WikiLeaks' 2010 publication of US state department cables and Iraq and Afghanistan war logs, provided by whistleblower Chelsea Manning. The High Court's decision raises concerns about freedom of the press and Assange's ability to invoke the First Amendment during his trial.

The case continues to attract international attention and criticism, including from press freedom advocates, law professors, lawmakers, and leading newspapers. The US government has yet to satisfy the court's requirements for Assange's extradition, with concerns that the First Amendment may not fully protect Assange at trial. Additionally, there is an ongoing debate over whether foreign nationals can claim First Amendment rights.

The Biden administration has been urged to drop the case against Assange, with arguments suggesting that prosecuting him under the Espionage Act sets a dangerous precedent for national security journalism. The decision by the UK court adds further complexity to the issue, highlighting inconsistencies in the US's stance on press freedom.

In a related context, concerns about a potential second term for former President Donald Trump include fears of increased hostility towards the press. Previous actions by Trump’s administration included attacks on media credibility, changes to libel laws, and increased leak investigations. In contrast, the Biden administration has restored regular media briefings and enhanced media access to government information. However, preparations are underway among press freedom groups to address potential restrictions in a future Trump administration.