

INTERVIEW: *Gabriel Shipton*

# If Free Speech Is Suppressed, Nuclear War Is Inevitable

*Gabriel Shipton is the half-brother of Julian Assange. He traveled and spoke tirelessly for Assange's release from prison until that release was achieved earlier this year. Shipton is the chairman of the Assange Campaign.*

**Tim Rush:** I'm here with Gabriel Shipton, and we're at the Rage Against the War Machine [rally in Washington, D.C.] on September 28th. Gabriel, what's the message that you brought to the rally here today?

**Gabriel Shipton:** I brought the message that the conviction against [WikiLeaks publisher] Julian Assange—he was convicted under the [U.S.] Espionage Act with a single count—is a threat to the First Amendment, a threat to press freedoms in this country. It's a pathway for the U.S. Department of Justice to now go after anybody who publishes classified information; anybody who communicates with a source, who solicits classified information, who publishes classified information, can now be expected to receive a five-year conviction—a five-year jail sentence for an Espionage Act conviction.

And unless we secure a pardon or signal pardon for Julian, which would be a signal to the Department of Justice, and any president or any president's administration, that this won't stand—that even if the weaponized DOJ comes after people like this, that it would be wound back by a president with a pardon. So, [we need] a sign to the DOJ that: Don't waste your time pursuing journalists and publishers, under the Espionage Act.

**Rush:** Do you have any sense that there's any avenue, or political force that is mobilized to be able to push this through in terms of a pardon?

**Shipton:** Yes, certainly. We have supporters in [the

U.S.] Congress, supporters in the [U.S.] Senate, who are supporting these calls on the [President Joe] Biden administration, as well as many people who are supposedly in the [Republican presidential candidate Donald] Trump camp—people like Robert Kennedy, Jr., who called for a pardon for Julian; Tulsi Gabbard, who called for a pardon for Julian. So, on both sides of politics, there are people who see what's at stake here, and what's been done here via the Espionage Act, and what's at stake for Americans. And so, we hope that these cooler heads prevail and are able to convince leaders that it is to their benefit actually to grant a pardon for Assange.

**Rush:** Some of the recent cases of government intimidation have been targeted at people like Scott Ritter, Dimitri Simes, and Tulsi Gabbard, who, like Julian, have been outspoken against the policies of war. Do you think there is an increased risk of nuclear war from the attempts to silence these kinds of voices of sanity today?

**Shipton:** Yes, the stakes are unbelievably high with conflicts around these nuclear powers. So, the need for transparency, the need for more information to the public, truthful information, factual information, source documents like Wikileaks published, source documents from within governments, from within corporations—there hasn't been a greater need for it than there is now.

We know that these revelations can bring an end to conflict, and we know that they can bring about policy-change. And when they're denied like they are at the moment, and being clamped down on with these chilling threats of five-year jail terms for people publishing this sort of information, then I think a nuclear war or any or continued endless war is inevitable.