

March to Support Alleged Whistleblower Bradley Manning

Manning, an Oklahoma native, faces 52 years in prison for exposing war crimes

What: Solidarity March in Support of Bradley Manning

When: Thursday, August 12, 8pm

Where: Corner of NE 16th and Lincoln to Oklahoma State Capitol

This Thursday, August 12, Oklahomans will show support for and solidarity with Pfc. Bradley Manning, accused of leaking documents about the Afghanistan War, with a march at dusk near the state capitol. The Army intelligence analyst, originally from Crescent, Oklahoma, is being held in the brig at Quantico Marine Corps Base in Virginia.

The action is being organized locally by the Oklahoma Center for Conscience, with support from the Oklahoma Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild.

Private First Class Bradley Manning, a 22-year-old intelligence analyst stationed in Iraq, stands accused of disclosing a classified video depicting American troops in Iraq shooting civilians from an Apache helicopter in 2007. Eleven people were killed, including two Reuters employees, and two children were critically injured. No charges have been filed against the soldiers who did the killing.

News sources have also speculated about Manning's involvement in the leak of over 90,000 secret documents (collectively known as the Afghanistan "war logs") made public by WikiLeaks, a website that publishes leaked material anonymously.

James M. Branum, an attorney that works with OCC on military law cases, calls the Pentagon's treatment of Manning "extreme" and designed to set up the case "as an example of the punishment waiting for others who would consider exposing violations of military regs and international law."

"We are saying that exposing war crimes is not a crime," he said.

The whistleblower behind the Vietnam era's Pentagon Papers, Daniel Ellsberg, has called Mr. Manning a hero. "I admire the courage of Bradley Manning for sacrificing himself to make the public aware of the futility of the war in Afghanistan," says Ellsberg.

"Blowing the whistle on war crimes is not a crime," says former Marine Corporal Jeff Paterson of Courage to Resist, a group teaming up with the Bradley Manning Support Network to raise funds for Manning's defense.

For more information, see centerforconscience.org.

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