

'Spying & threats': Assange complains of 'more subtle' silencing than Khashoggi

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Julian Assange has accused his Ecuadorean hosts of spying and feeding information to US authorities, and slammed attempts to block his journalistic work as a more subtle way of silencing than the murder of Jamal Khashoggi.

Suggesting there were “*facts of espionage*” inside the embassy, the WikiLeaks co-founder expressed concern during a hearing in Quito on Wednesday that Ecuadorean intelligence is not only spying on him, but sharing the data it has harvested with the FBI. Ecuadorean intelligence clearly spent a sizable amount of money equipping the embassy for surveillance, Assange added.

He accused Ecuadorean authorities of “*comments of a threatening nature*” relating to his journalistic work and [compared](#) attempts to silence him to the murder of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi, who was tortured and cut up in the Saudi embassy in Istanbul in October, but “*more subtle.*” The comparison elicited a harsh reaction from Ecuadorean Prosecutor General Inigo Salvador, who [accused](#) Assange of biting the hand that feeds him.

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Assange told the Ecuadorean court that the living conditions in the embassy were so detrimental to his health that they may put him in the hospital – and suggested that may be the point, because once he leaves the building, he's fair game for UK and US authorities.

US prosecutors accidentally revealed the existence of a sealed indictment against the whistleblower last month and have since stonewalled reporters' inquiries into what the indictment might contain.

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While Assange was being held incommunicado earlier this year, his suspicions about his hosts' spying were confirmed in a May report by the Guardian that revealed Ecuador spent about \$5 million on surveilling the WikiLeaks founder and his visitors in the London embassy from 2012 until 2017. However, that paper's recent [publication](#) of blatantly "fake news" involving Assange casts its earlier coverage into doubt as well.

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Assange was in court appealing a strict set of rules handed down in October governing his conduct, which he has called a violation of human rights. He submitted 15 "*facts of evidence*" along with letters from individuals and groups barred from visiting him at the embassy. An earlier [attempt](#) to sue his hosts over the restrictive measures was ultimately dismissed by a judge last month, while Assange [rejected](#) Ecuadorean President Lenin Moreno's offer to leave the embassy in exchange for a guarantee he would not be executed.
