

NEW REPUBLIC

TRANSPARENCY

The Dangerous Logic of the Bradley Manning Case

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After 1,000 days in pretrial detention, Private Bradley Manning offered a modified guilty plea for passing classified materials. But his case is far from over—not for Manning, and not for the country. To understand what is still at stake, consider an exchange that took place in a military courtroom in Maryland in January.

The judge, Col. Denise Lind, asked the prosecutors a brief but revealing question: “Would you have pressed the same charges if Manning had given the documents to WikiLeaks but directly to the *New York Times*?”

The prosecutor’s answer was simple: “[Yes Ma'am.](#)”

The question was crisp and meaningful, not courtroom banter. The answer was dead serious. I should know. I was the expert witness whose prosecution testimony they were debating. The judge will apparently allow my testimony. If the prosecution decides to pursue the more serious charges to which Manning pleads guilty, I will explain at trial why someone in Manning's shoes in 2013