



SEEK THE TRUTH AND SERVE HUMANITY

the Beacon

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Defend Courageous Journalists!



EDITORIAL

The recent invasion of a journalist's home and the raid on the ABC raises very serious indeed fundamental issues for the future of democracy in this country. If you couple this attack on the Fourth Estate with the increasingly repressive legislative changes that have been introduced under this current government, a very dangerous picture emerges. It is a picture that is being painted worldwide with a move to the right to protect wealth accumulation.

The world is a gigantic chessboard: the only players are the rich and powerful. The state, (the parliament, the judiciary, the police, the army) are there to ensure the game is exclusive. The stakes they play for range from oil and other natural resources, to strategic sites for bases, to the areas of cheapest labour.

A fundamental weapon of the chess players is the mass media, which they privately own. It is a media they control that is permitted to tell us only what they feel necessary for us to know. How democratic can our society be when essential information, our right to know, is controlled?

In 2011 in the UK the scandalous practices of the 'Murdoch' media were exposed, and a special inquiry called the Leveson Inquiry was established to investigate them. It was tasked with investigating the culture, the practices and the ethics of the press, including the links between the press, politicians and the police.

In the US it is widely claimed that the media industry is wholly unregulated, its corrupt practices ruin lives and it holds its own customers in contempt. They lie, they spin, they obfuscate and ignore their own stated ethical standards.

The media has become an echo chamber that no longer delivers factual news. Journalists lecture us on what to believe and decide which opinions are permissible. Any journalists stepping outside this conspiracy of power are branded, vilified and silenced.

We live in a world of 'them' and 'us'. Let's be clear about this. When leaders call for cooperation, when they claim we can work together for the common good, they speak with forked tongues. Trickle down politics has resulted in increasing poverty and worsening exploitation; trickle down politics have made a small section of the world obscenely rich while a large section of the world dies from lack of fresh water.

We live in a world where at least 80 per cent of humanity live on less than \$10 a day. More than 80 per cent of the world's population live in countries where income differentials are widening. The poorest 40 per cent of the world's population account for 5 per cent of global income. The richest 20 per cent account for three-quarters of world income. There are one billion children worldwide living in poverty without access to basic necessities.

Those that accept the appalling lie that 'we are a team' have given us three incompetent, inadequate and corrupt leaders of the so-called 'coalition of the willing': Trump, Johnson and Morrison. Surely this clearly demonstrates that the real decisions being made about the world's future are not with these leaders, elected with the support of a controlled media, but with the chess players who stride the world stage for their own nefarious interests.

A controlled media destroys our democratic rights, impedes social justice and perpetuates ignorance. We must strongly defend every journalistic attempt to speak out, to bring us genuine information, for when they risk their careers, our silence will silence them. This makes it incumbent on us to ensure we keep informed by defending courageous journalists and by seeking the truth in order to serve humanity.

It's dangerous, it's undemocratic and it's back

Dear Peter,

Scott Morrison wants to introduce the most anti-union laws we have seen in a generation – the so-called Ensuring Integrity Bill. This is a major attack on our democracy.

These laws would give Scott Morrison, big business and their lobbyists power to interfere with how unions are run, to disqualify union officers, to shut down unions, and stop unions from merging.

Just today the IR minister Christian Porter has declared a war on working people and specifically stated that the bill is designed to give the government the power to deregister unions, in this case CFMMEU.

This bill is a serious attack on working people and the trade union movement. It does nothing to stop big business stealing wages. It does nothing to keep people safe at work. It will do nothing about record low wage growth that is causing the economy to stall. It will do nothing to fix insecure work.

In fact, this law will undermine workplace safety, increase wage and superannuation theft, and make it harder for workers to get pay increases and be represented when they need help.

Scott Morrison is trying to make it harder for unions to do our job of standing up for working people. When unions are under attack, all working people suffer. This bill must be stopped.

Scott Morrison doesn't have a mandate to introduce these laws. He didn't announce any industrial relations policy during the election campaign – in fact he didn't talk much about working people at all – but he's going to try and get these laws in place anyway.

When the Liberals tried to get these undemocratic laws through the senate in 2017 and 2018, union members took swift action to ask crossbench senators to block the bill, and those senators listened.

Now we have a new senate, and a government determined to ram through undemocratic, anti-union laws. As Senator Eric Abetz put it recently, the Ensuring Integrity Bill is 'unfinished business' for Scott Morrison's government.

We will need everyone to take action again in coming weeks to stop these anti-worker, anti-union laws in their tracks.

Be ready. We will be back in touch soon.

In unity,

Michele O'Neil
ACTU President
<http://www.australianunions.org.au/>



Australian Government is Dancing to the Dangerous Beat of US War Drums

IPAN (Independent & Peaceful Australia Network)

Why are Australian governments dancing to the dangerous beat of US war drums? How has the US-Australia military alliance deeply enmeshed Australia into US wars of aggression, its military industrial complex and its global imperialist agendas that threaten Australia's peace, security and independence?

How do we in Australia build a people's movement to end our government's involvement and support for US wars of aggression, end the US military alliance and move towards a truly independent and peaceful foreign policy that respects the sovereignty of all countries and contributes to global peace and justice for people and the environment?

Successive Australian governments' obsequious support for the US and its wars of aggression diminishes Australia as the 51st state of the US, carrying out Washington and the Pentagon's global objectives. With the exception of a handful of politicians, both the two main parliamentary parties, the LNP and Labor, are obediently following US global imperialist agendas at home and internationally.

The US military alliance is a dangerous burden on the Australian people and the environment.

THE PIVOT

In 2011, Obama and Clinton announced in the Australian parliament a new US military strategy in South-East Asia called the 'Pivot into Asia-Pacific', which would move 60% of the US global military into this region. The Pivot was directed at rising China, which is challenging US global hegemony. Australia, as the client state of US, is at the centre of this imperialist strategy in the Asia-Pacific. For the first time, US Marines are permanently based in Australia, with Darwin expanded into a major US military base and launching pad for wars with China. The upgrading will enable US nuclear-powered submarines and naval supercarriers to dock around Darwin's coast, increasing the numbers of more active US Marines and their amphibious strike invasion groups.

BASES

Since the Pivot's announcement, US bases and Australia's military facilities have been upgraded, expanded and more deeply enmeshed with the US to make them interoperable with the US global military and foreign policy agendas. Pine Gap is the most important and biggest US military intelligence base outside the US North-West Cape. Another important base for US global military intelligence communications has been re-opened and upgraded.

MARINES

Darwin is hosting 2,500 Marines in Robertson Barracks. They are presently involved in joint military training with US, Japanese and Singapore troops in North Queensland and North Australia in the biannual Talisman Sabre joint war exercises preparing for US wars in the region and beyond.

This year the joint military exercises will practise a scenario of war with China, involving, amongst other exercises, invading and capturing an island to create a base from which to attack the mainland. Recently US Marines have been practising the invasion and capture of Ie Shima island off the coast of Okinawa.

US Marines on the Australian warship HMAS *Adelaide* have been in regular war exercises in the South China Sea, in training for, in their own words, 'invasion, capture and secure'.

Two Australian warships, HMAS *Adelaide* and *Canberra* have been modified to transport amphibious landing gear with US Marines embedded in them. This refitting of Australian warships for amphibious landings on foreign countries has nothing to do with defending Australia. It is purely to assist the US invasions of other countries.

The Australian government is spending \$250 million in upgrading Australian Defence Force facilities in Darwin, solely for use by US in their preparations for war with China.

This includes upgrading and building new air strips throughout northern Australia to accommodate stealth war planes and long-range maritime patrol drones. It's part of the \$150 billion upgrade of the Australian military's interoperability with the US military. Tindal Air Base in Darwin is being upgraded to accommodate B52 and B1US fighter bombers able to carry nuclear weapons.

And recently leaked information revealed that the Australian government is considering building a new naval port at Glyde Point, 40 kilometres from the Port of Darwin, to dock large amphibious warships, mainly US. A \$40 million road was recently built close to the site where the port will be built.

Manus Island is also being eyed by the US for development as a military base for the US Navy and Marines.

FOREIGN POLICIES

In foreign policies successive Australian governments have been involved in and supported every US war in the past 60 years – from the war on the Korean Peninsula, Vietnam War, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Iran, etc. In the United Nations, the Australian governments on cue obediently follow instructions from the US and rubber stamp every US foreign policy and its global strategy to legitimise US wars of aggression, sanctions against sovereign countries refusing to bow to US demands, invasions, regime changes and imperialist occupations e.g. Palestine, Iraq, Libya, Syria, North Korea, Iran, Cuba, South China Sea, Venezuela. Like clockwork, Australia recently fell in line with the US and UK and voted in the UN against returning the Chagos Islands in the Pacific to the indigenous people. Diego Garcia is the main island in the Chagos group of islands colonised by the British and taken over by the US to become a highly secretive major US military base in the Indian Ocean, and forcibly removed and exiled the indigenous people from the island.

The Australian government acts as an agent of the US, promoting its economic and military interests in the Pacific.

INTEROPERABILITY WITH US GLOBAL MILITARY MACHINE

Australia's military and defence are now interoperable with US military and foreign policies, indistinguishable from US global military agendas and interests. The chain of command comes down from the US and has nothing to do with sovereign self-defence and the Australian people's needs for peace and security. It only works against the interests of the Australian people.

Interoperability with the US has embedded Australian military and intelligence personnel in the US military establishments in Washington, the Pentagon and in the Pacific command in Hawaii and vice versa. The America Australia Leadership Dialogue, based in the US embassy in Canberra, grooms current and future potential politicians and leaders from both the LNP and Labor, trade union officials, academics, business leaders and think tanks.

Defence Minister Linda Reynolds proclaimed the \$200 billion spending on defence over the next five years will be for modernisation of the 'joint force' and 'supporting the US-led world order and its advancement in the Indo-Pacific'.

In Australia, \$200 billion of people's taxes will be spent on mainly supporting US wars of aggression and multinational weapons corporations.

DEFENCE INDUSTRIES

Most of the arms manufacturers in Australia are US multinational corporations – Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Boeing and Northrop Grumman – billions of dollars in public funds (that's people's taxes) are handed to them.

In January 2018 a directive was sent from Washington to all its overseas embassies to drum up more business from its allies for US arms corporations.

The US economy, its military and the industrial military complex are dependent on America and the world being in a state of perpetual war. The US alliance locks Australia's economy and military into supporting US imperialist wars.

In announcing the Pivot in 2011, Obama and Clinton sent a clear and loud message that the Australian government will be required to increase its military spending on US wars. This demand has been loudly reiterated by Trump.

Recently the Australian government awarded foreign military contractors \$73 billion in tax-free contracts, because contracts made directly with offshore companies' head offices are tax exempt, even for those with shell companies in Bermuda, the tax haven of multinational corporations.

Foreign multinational companies with local subsidiaries don't have to pay tax in Australia when the contracts are made with the head offices overseas. They are not required to pay tax on their profits made from this \$73 billion tax-free gift from the Australian people. The Department of Defence has revealed it spends one-fifth of its entire budget, the biggest procurement budget in government, on overseas military contractors – even though these contractors have subsidiaries in Australia.

This is despite the global defence giants such as Boeing, BAE Systems, Raytheon and Lockheed Martin having companies registered here in Australia. Billions of dollars in tax evasions by multinational weapons corporations have been syphoned away from social and community needs and the services of Australia's people. But this is nothing new as multinational corporations pay little or no tax in Australia. According to the Tax Office, 15 of the top 21 companies paid zero tax for the three years to 2017, including the biggest of them, BAE Systems.

Recently the Australian government bankrolled Electro Optic System, a so-called Australian company listed on the Australian Stock Exchange, to the tune of \$40 million for the manufacture and export of arms. EOS's major shareholder, US Northrop Grumman (20%), is the world's fourth largest multinational weapons

corporation. The other top 3 global weapons corporations are US corporations: Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Boeing and fifth is BAE (British).

Megaprofits are made by multinational weapons and oil corporations from imperialist wars. Hundreds of billions of people's taxes are taken away from the social and economic needs of people and the environment, and instead are used for imperialist wars and profiteering by multinational corporations.

Australia's economy is more than ever integrated and becoming dependent on the US military industrial complex. Imperialist globalisation has wiped out many of our manufacturing industries and is now turning Australia into a war-based economy.

Australia's defence expenditure for 2019–20 will increase to nearly \$40 billion.

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

Integration into US military agendas erodes our democratic rights. The first casualty of imperialist wars is truth. We have mountains of anti-democratic laws. The AFP raids on the ABC confiscated secret military material and documentation involving SAS activities in Afghanistan. The US is demanding Australia stops the leaking of military secrets, and the Australian

government obliges, threatens and intimidates journalists and the ABC, to reassure the US that the secret war crimes will be protected and kept secret.

Australia has some of the most far-reaching and most extensive so-called anti-terror laws, which originated in the US after September 2001 and were then exported to Australia. US intelligence operatives visited Australia to 'advise' the government on the new US anti-terror laws and roll them out here. These anti-democratic laws continue to be strengthened.

Then there's Julian Assange and the Australian government's compliance with US demands for extradition.

Friends, we have an important and urgent task to build a united front mass movement, mobilise against US wars of aggression, campaign to remove US Marines and US military installations operating solely for offensive wars waged by the US that threaten Australia's peace, independence and security.

IPAN's main objectives are raising awareness and campaigning widely in the broad community for an independent and peaceful Australian foreign policy, removal of foreign military bases and troops, and ending the Australian government subservience and involvement in imperialist wars.



BY JACOB GRECH, LONG-TERM PEACE & ANTIWAR ACTIVIST

A TALK GIVEN AT THE MELBOURNE UNITARIAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY 16 JUNE 2019

WHISTLEBLOWERS: THE NEW 'TERRORISTS'

On Friday evening just passed, our time, the extradition trial of Julian Assange began. At the hearing, Ben Brandon, the British lawyer representing the US government, said that the extradition 'related to one of the largest compromises of confidential information in the history of the United States'. Julian pointed out that 175 years (the sentences of the 18 indictments) of his life were at stake.

However, the judge, Emma Arbuthnot, was having none of it and set a trial date for February next year. Now, just as an aside (because Julian's life has been exposed for all to poke at) it's only fair that we have a look at the judge. Lady Arbuthnot of Edrom, made chief justice by Queen Lizzie, while her husband, Lord Arbuthnot of Edrom was a Tory Member of Parliament and Chairman of the

Defence Select Committee (the mob who scrutinise the Armed Forces Act), in fact one of the people who should probably be charged for some of the war crimes that WikiLeaks exposed. He was also Parliamentary Chairperson of the Conservative Friends of Israel and a Senior Associate of the Royal United Services Institute. During his time as a Tory MP he was involved in an expenses scandal for using government funds to clean his pool and paint his summerhouse.

These are the sorts of people tasked with determining the future of Julian Assange, an Australian man who has been denied his freedom since August 2010, soon to be nine years, for the crime of exposing Western governments' dirty secrets. But he has been denied more than his freedom. He's been denied



his health: medical reports from UN doctors say that he's exhibiting all the physical and mental signs of psychological torture. He is unwell, he's lost a huge amount of weight and just two weeks ago the court system deemed that he was too sick to attend court. Nonetheless, they keep him in a prison built for terrorists and murderers in his cell for usually 23 hours a day, with no access to any of the resources he needs to organise his legal defence.

He has been vilified and demonised and turned into an Emmanuel Goldstein caricature. He has been accused of being a rapist, a spy, a terrorist, a traitor, a narcissist, a misogynist, a control freak, 'Putin's Bitch' and 'in league with Trump' by politicians, media moguls, journalists, courts and activists. As well, of course, as being antisemitic, anti-arab, a zionist, anti-zionist, anti-union, anti-Christian (the Anti-Christ, in fact), unAustralian, unAmerican, a nazi, an anarchist, alt right, alt left, a democrat stooge, later replaced by republican stooge, and even Public Enemy #1, all by people who still seem to garner what passes for respect in the mainstream media.

And yet when any of these individual allegations are investigated, from the Swedish allegations where a condom allegedly torn by Julian mid sex was produced that did not have his, or anyone's DNA on it, to the allegations of being in Trump's camp, when his comment on the US election was that there was a choice between cholera and gonorrhoea (referring to Clinton and Trump I believe respectively) ... to being 'Putin's Bitch' when WikiLeaks have released thousands of documents from Russian sources that do Putins or the Russian government no favours at all. There has not been a single allegation that to a fair mind holds any water.

I once said the same thing at another meeting, and someone told me that they had met him in the early days and that he was 'dismissive and abrasive'. Okay. I say that because it is indicative of the discourse that has grown around him. Just about everyone it seems, even most of those that support him or at least say that they don't think he should be extradited to the US for espionage, wants to push the line that he isn't a nice man. We have all had the privilege in our lives of having spent time with some of the greatest leaders our society has produced. How many of them were not 'dismissive and abrasive' at times? Julian Assange, like all of us, is not an angel. He is not perfect. He is not Francis of Assisi. He is a man ... from Melbourne.

He came here from Townsville to go to Melbourne University as a young man, a computer geek, a nerd, frankly. After playing around, it is rumoured, breaking into the databases of arms companies such as the Canadian giant Nortel, he assisted the Victorian Police with busting a child exploitation ring on the net and then set up our first free public access internet service provider, Suburbia. Why? Because like all of us, he believed in the fundamental truth of the inherent worth and dignity of every person. That everyone should have access to information to help in their search for truth.

Early on he realised that the control of information lay at the very heart of power. It has always been so. As a computer geek of his generation, though,

rather than seeing it in terms of class exploitation, he saw it in terms of communications security and the imbalance of power lying at the heart of the information technology that is state controlled, including the information we have access to, and more pertinently, that the state has free and unfettered access to all of our information.

And so he and his friends set about developing software that would enable all of us to keep our communications secure (at the cutting edge of digital cryptography), the kind of security that only last year led the federal government, with the support of the Opposition, to pass the Telecommunications Assistance Bill, to force IT companies to help them crack in secrecy, of course.

In short, they were taking on the system. But keeping their own communications, our own communications safe, was only half the job. To continue the analogy I started earlier, it's never just about workers becoming more empowered; the other side of the struggle has always been holding the bosses accountable.

And, so, WikiLeaks first incarnation, leaks.org, was born to encourage people with information about what was really going on to come forward. Remember, we're talking here about the early years of this century, the early 2000s. When the news cycle was full of Howard lying about children overboard, the Wheat Board was busy shredding documents about bribes to Iraq... no one knew, or still knows to this day, exactly what happened at the World Trade Centre that September. And then, of course, there were the 'weapons of mass destruction' that were being used as a justification for atrocities which even we at the time could not have foretold in our darkest imaginings.

We can't talk about WikiLeaks, we can't talk about Julian – and it wasn't just Julian, although he was at the centre of it and had the vision and was the sometimes 'abrasive and dismissive' leader, if you like, who ultimately carried it. But we can't talk about WikiLeaks or the broader movement for transparency or any of it outside the context of the times. The time when the Western world, the 'Coalition of the Willing' was going to war on the 'axis of evil', trying to control the narrative to make it sound like some perverted Tolkenesque quest for justice when in fact we know that it was something else entirely.

It was in this climate of street marches every other week, of big public meetings and small cafe conversations discussing the war, of journalists debating weapons of mass destruction, of trade unions taking a stand from the boardroom at Trades Hall to tool box meetings on sites. It was a time when churches, and I don't just mean the Unitarians, were speaking out about these issues from the pulpit.

This is the climate in which WikiLeaks was born. It was a climate where everyone knew we were being lied to, but none of us had the means to prove it. WikiLeaks was born as an organisation to enable people with access to the truth of what was going on to let the rest of us know, in a way that was anonymous, to protect them from repressive laws. Not in order to cause chaos, but in the hope that

when the people were given access to the truth, they would be able to do something with it ... and by making us aware that it was there, to encourage people to use it ... to blow the whistle.

It was born as part of the broad peace movement, with all the hope that that embodied. It was about transparency and truth. It is still about those things.

Without WikiLeaks (and Private Manning) we wouldn't have had access to the Collateral Murder video, that showed an Apache chopper gunning down people it knew to be journalists, medics and children. Without WikiLeaks we would not have had the details of what happened at Guantanamo, at Abu Ghraib. We would not have documented evidence of hundreds of war crimes perpetrated against the people of Afghanistan and Iraq. We would not have evidence of the US government's complicity in the arming and support of dictatorships. We would not have evidence of arms deals, of bribes, of evil and corruption in high places. Sure, we already knew, or at least assumed, but what WikiLeaks gave us was evidence.

Without WikiLeaks we wouldn't have had Edward Snowden's revelations. We wouldn't have had the documents that show that places like Pine Gap and Kojarema were the war fighting bases that we've been saying they were all along. We wouldn't have had the proof, the details of massive government surveillance systems like PRISM and X Keyscore. Without WikiLeaks we wouldn't have had the Stratfor Papers, the Panama Papers, the US Diplomatic Cables leak or the emails from the US Democratic National Committee exposing the filthy campaign they were running to get Clinton elected at any cost.

Without WikiLeaks we wouldn't have had the text of the Trans-Pacific Partnership. We wouldn't have details, hard details, word by word, of the CIA involvement in the French election. We wouldn't know all the programs exposed by the rafts of leaks called Vault 7 & Vault 8. We wouldn't have proof of the Israeli government's conscious plan to starve Gazan civilians.

WHAT WIKILEAKS HAS GIVEN US ARE THE TOOLS TO WORK AGAINST WAR

... and, as a result, they've been relentlessly and viciously attacked by the powers that be. Not just Julian & WikiLeaks: Chelsea Manning is in prison for refusing to testify against him. Edward Snowden is in exile in hiding. Ola Bini is in jail in Ecuador. Aaron Schwartz is dead, suicide apparently.

A journalist compatriot of mine from Malta, Daphne Caruana Galizia, was murdered with a car bomb after being threatened over her work on the Panama Papers. Here in Australia we have Witness K and Bernard Colliery being tried for leaking the information that ASIS bugged the East Timorese cabinet rooms. We have David McBride slated for trial in two weeks' time for leaking the Afghan Files that led to the raid of the ABC HQ last week. David is the son of William McBride, the doctor who broke the news on the effects of thalidomide. We have Annika Smethurst, a Murdoch stable journalist being raided by the AFP for publishing information about the federal government's plans to increase powers to the Australian Signals Directorate, which is part of the Five Eyes Intelligence Network, to spy on Australian citizens ... and it was again the front page story in *The Age* just yesterday.

And, of course, that is not to leave out Julian undergoing a trial to see if he will be extradited to the United States for espionage. Belmarsh Prison isn't any ordinary prison. The BBC called it Britain's Guantanamo Bay in 2004: 'You don't have to go to Cuba to find terror suspects controversially imprisoned. Nine foreigners have been held in London's Belmarsh Prison for almost three years without charge or trial.'

Today it seems that the whistleblowers and the journalists that report their information are the new terrorists. And I'm not just using the analogy rhetorically. WikiLeaks has been referred to as a non-state terrorist organisation. Various pundits and politicians, including Hillary Clinton, have either called for Julian's execution or questioned whether it was possible.

You see, once you call someone a terrorist, anything is possible. You can, as the FBI did, plant a spy in the movement like Adrian Lamo, the guy who lagged Manning. You can have a CIA taskforce aimed at destroying WikiLeaks, which we now know has been in place since at least 2010. You can create narratives of sexual abuse and perversion like they have done with everyone they have labelled a terrorist, from Martin Luther King onwards. You can have whole articles removed from websites and that's just the stuff we know about and have detailed information on.

You can stop their bank and online payment systems, like they did to WikiLeaks. There's also, to get all Rumsfeldian for a moment, the unknown unknowns. Things we may guess at but as yet have no way of knowing about. But we can put one and one together. We can know about very recent undercover police infiltration, for example, of activist

WE ACKNOWLEDGE

Traditional owners of the Kulin Nation, past Warriors, Elders past and present.

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organisations in the UK, US and New Zealand. It's even been reported on in the mainstream press. We can know about historical instances of undercover police operations here in Australia. And then we can look at who the loudest detractors of WikiLeaks and Julian in particular are in the activist community and wonder (some even carry the support of whistleblowers in their names). We can wonder why, here in WikiLeaks own hometown, there has been so much disinformation that a few young blokes have said to me, 'Yeah, I know, but sticking up your head for him is suicide'.

Why? Because once they label you a terrorist, they can justify any expense and any means. Let's not make any bones about it: whistleblowers ARE the new terrorists. And it may surprise you to hear me say this, but ... so they are.

You see, we've come to think of a terrorist as a person or organisation that uses violence to promote their political ideology: hijackings, car bombings, nightclub explosions and the like ... those things terrify me, I'll be honest. And I condemn those acts of violence every bit as much as I condemn the state sanctioned legal terrorism that we see all the time in Syria, Palestine, Gaza, Sudan, Yemen, and they're just the current, dare I say it, popular ones.

But violent extremism is meant to terrify us, the people – not the government, not the state, not the corporations that profit from it all. Violent terrorism

has been absorbed into the capitalist framework. If you look at the share prices of the biggest arms companies in the world, they jump at every terrorist attack. Every Western government uses it to justify more spending on the 'national security apparatus' and to make laws taking away our freedoms.

What does terrify them though is the truth as well as the notion that the people can have access to it. What scares them is that they will lose control of the narrative, and that is why they consider people like Julian, like Chelsea, like Edward, like Daphne, like Aaron, terrorists ... because they are terrified. And so they should be because when your whole system is built on an edifice of lies, the only thing that can bring it down is the truth.

So, to end in the usual way with the age-old question – What is to be done? – at the moment it's a question with two fronts. The first is what is to be done to protect Julian? And all I can say to that is we need to demand. Demand your local member to say something, your union do something and that we as a society do not leave one of our own to be hung out to dry.

The other question is what is to be done about journalists and whistleblowers being treated as terrorists? Julian Assange's answer as he was being carried out of the embassy last month was simple: 'You can resist.'



BY PILAR AGUILERA, 3CR CHAIRPERSON

AN ADDRESS GIVEN AT THE MELBOURNE UNITARIAN CHURCH ON 23 JUNE 2019

POWER RADICAL RADIO: The importance of 3CR



My name is Pilar Aguilera and I'm currently Chairperson of 3CR Community Radio's Committee of Management.

I was born in Chile and have lived in Australia since 1976. I also currently produce and co-present a weekly program on 3CR Radio called *Completada Bailable*. In the late 1970s, I first heard 3CR radio as a child. My family would listen to the Friday evening Spanish language program called *Chile Lucha*. At the time, Chile was under the rule of a brutal, military dictatorship and it was a way of keeping up with the news from back home. It was such an important tool for the community of activists that had arrived from Latin America in the late 1970s, all escaping brutal dictatorships. I then volunteered at 3CR as a 17-year-old, reading the English language news for the El Salvadorean FMLN program in the late 1980s, also important for them in their solidarity with El Salvador which was in the throes of a civil war. In the late 1990s, I volunteered as a Breakfast programmer and also programmed on the Spanish language program

Mujeres Latinoamericanas, that is still on air to date. I worked at 3CR as the Ethnic Resource Program worker in 2001 resourcing all of the non-English speaking programmers and am also a trainer to new volunteers. As a long-time activist, I've always known the importance of 3CR as an alternative voice, and as your church motto suggests, we aim to seek the truth and serve humanity.

I often say in Spanish, 'gente pequeña, en lugares pequeños, haciendo cosas pequeñas cambian el mundo', which loosely translated is 'everyday people, in everyday places, doing small actions can change the world'.

Many of you will already know about 3CR from the church's long association as an affiliate of the station and by hearing its weekly program. Here is a short history of the beginnings of 3CR.

3CR has been on air since 1976 and was one of the first stations to be granted a licence. The idea of broadcasting was part of an intensive public

campaign to expose the degree of monopoly control of the media in Australia, including the 200–300 spare frequency allocations which had been withheld from public use for 25 years to the benefit, particularly, of the commercial sector. This was back in the early 1970s and we still experience the same degree of monopoly control of the media. In its licence application, and at the hearings, the Community Radio Federation made its principles quite clear.

The aims of 3CR would be:

- community participation – the station would encourage community participation in the station and provide training to facilitate this
- access – the station would provide a voice for those denied access to the mass media, particularly the working class, women, Indigenous people and the many community groups discriminated against by the mass media. The aim of the Federation was to actively discriminate in favour of Australian artists and composers and Australian aspirations generally
- financial independence – the station was prepared to stand on its own feet, financially and technically, and would rely on the goodwill and support of the community
- Listener participation – the station would provide a degree of listener participation and control in the station through elected listener sponsor representation in the Federation and listener sponsor advisory meetings

On 10 October 1975 the Minister for the Media, Dr Moss Cass, awarded the licence to the Community Radio Federation Ltd. The Australian Broadcasting Board gave permission to commence test broadcasts from Armadale on 1 May 1976. These continued for six weeks each evening from 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm. 3CR, broadcasting on 840 kHz, commenced full-scale operation on 3 July 1976, from the studios in High Street, Armadale. The licence was granted for five years.

The initial studio/transmitting site was a warehouse behind 112 High Street, Armadale. In October, after three months of full-scale broadcasting and ten months of very intensive volunteer effort to establish the studios and technical facilities, the owner of the warehouse advised that there was no hope of negotiating a long-term lease. 3CR was faced with a serious crisis. To find an alternative site, redevelop studios, aerial and transmitter facilities and recommence operations within three months, without a break in transmission, seemed impossible. Strong support was received throughout this period from organisations wishing to become affiliates (the maximum number was raised from 100 to 150 in November) and from listener sponsors (twenty subscriptions were received each week).

New premises were found at 20 Cromwell Street, Collingwood with the transmitter/aerial site near the Collingwood Town Hall. With the help of the Collingwood City Council and the efforts of several hundred volunteers, 3CR was reestablished within three months. Broadcast hours increased to 138 hours per week, 6.00 am to 12.00 midnight every week

day and 24-hour programming at weekends. There was also a large increase in the number of listener sponsors, with a peak of 3500 being reached (in 1976 there were 800). A number of special broadcasts and concerts were held during the year, including the first 3CR Benefit Concert, 'Jazz in the Park'.

ETHNIC PROGRAMS AT THE STATION INCLUDED TURKISH, ARMENIAN, GREEK AND SPANISH.

During the year, analysis of 3CR's signal strength indicated that 3CR was greatly disadvantaged compared with ABC and commercial stations, and that the station was not adequately covering the 16-kilometre radius for which the licence was issued. The first request was made to the Minister for a moderate power increase. This was to be a long and continuing saga. The 27 June 1978 issue of *The Bulletin* published an article by Sam Lipski labelling 3CR 'The voice of terrorism', because of 3CR's support for the Palestinian struggle. A series of meetings between 3CR, the Jewish Board of Deputies and the Public Broadcasting Association took place. As 3CR was not prepared to give in to the demands of the Jewish Board of Deputies, they initiated a full tribunal hearing about 3CR's coverage of the Palestinian struggle. During two weeks of a 'Fight Back' campaign in November, about 1000 listener sponsors helped distribute nearly 500,000 leaflets throughout the Melbourne metropolitan area, supporting and outlining 3CR's views. 1978 was also the year of the first radiothon. About 1500 posters advertising the radiothon were distributed to shopping centres, schools and other centres. The target of \$9000 in pledges was reached.

In late 1982 an opportunity appeared to acquire the property at 21–23 Smith Street, Fitzroy. In March it was decided to negotiate to acquire it with the goal of obtaining a permanent home for 3CR. In August approval was received for an increase of power from 250 watts to 1000 watts and a change of frequency to 855 kHz. Further application was made for an increase to 5000 watts, which would require a new antenna site, and for an extension of the service area from the 16 km radius. Throughout 1984, an enormous amount of work (legal, financial and physical) went into the renovation and construction of studio space at 21–23 Smith St, Fitzroy. The building was officially opened by the mayor of Fitzroy on Sunday 12 August 1984.

The founders of 3CR were committed activists and their decisions, actions and hard work gave us the station that we know today. They had a vision of owning the station, including the building, the technology and transmitter to give 3CR a broadcast path that was controlled by the community. They did this by fundraising, brick by brick with working bees, door knocking and on-air drives. It is with this surely of ownership that 3CR survives and thrives today. 3CR's most enduring gift has been its purpose, a deeply informed and radical philosophy of what radio and community media can be.

We still fight for every dollar that is raised to keep the radio on air and to resource our community of volunteer broadcasters; we still strive for media

diversity. It is still a revolutionary act to put a microphone in the hand of someone who is denied a voice and more than four decades later 3CR is still here doing just that. Still relevant and still the voice of dissent.

3CR community radio is a busy and dynamic place powered by the efforts and talents of a community of volunteers ... about 400 volunteers who come in every week to do anything from reception desk, mail outs, programming, archiving, etc.

Our programming is diverse in content, languages and people and it is often in this challenging space where the heart of 3CR can be found. A robust, transformative place where we are given an opportunity to listen; to have our ideas, language and values challenged; and hopefully, despite the discomfort, we take that opportunity to grow. Four decades in the making, four decades of growth, this is where 3CR is now, powered by people making radical radio.

3CR has just finished its annual radiothon and the running total raised to date is \$150,000, which is a great effort so far. The target this year is \$250,000 and we've yet to have a few of the scheduled fundraisers as well as programs meeting their targets. We are confident that we will raise the total amount to keep the station running for another year. The response from the community has been great as always.

Across the week you can hear our Indigenous broadcasters' live coverage of the community-led fight to save the Djap Wurrung country sacred trees. You can be inspired by the Defence of Government Schools program (DOGS), talking about the seeds of social transformation through the equality of education. You can tune in and be on a picket line with Stick Together as workers take direct action or be out on country listening to communities fight to save water, land and culture. You can hear thirteen community languages bringing you news from Greece, Armenia, Eritrea or West Papua. Tuning into 3CR any day of the week brings you closer to the struggles taking place around us, in our workplaces, homes and on the streets.

In 2019 it is still considered radical to be talking about Indigenous sovereignty, to be talking about social and environmental justice, inclusion and representation. And after more than forty years of 3CR programming dedicated to these radical ideas, we are still here, talking about these same struggles.

Pushing at the boundaries of social change is the best of our programming. It is redefining not only our ideas of what radical change looks like but also expanding our everyday language to become more inclusive, reflecting the diversity of our communities.

As I mentioned there are 13 community languages that broadcast on 3CR. Throughout the week we can hear broadcasting in Spanish, Tamil, Ethiopian, Greek, Eritrean, Arabic, Turkish, Armenian and Nepalese, to name a few.

3CR is a space where languages can broadcast radical content with no censorship. The non-English broadcasting often reflects the changing landscape of emerging communities. Fortunately, 3CR had

some visionaries at the helm in our early years. A team of dedicated and passionate members raised capital from the community in the late 1970s so that we could own our studios at 21 Smith Street, Fitzroy. In the 1990s we were able to buy our transmitter site at Werribee. This has put us in a strong, asset-rich position, cementing our presence in the local neighbourhood of Fitzroy. The flipside, of course, is that our building and equipment need considerable maintenance.

Presently, funding to maintain the station's infrastructure mainly comes from generous bequests provided in the wills of our supporters. The Committee of Management has earmarked these bequest funds for capital works. Last year we were also successful in attaining matched funding from the State Government through their Community Infrastructure and Cultural Precincts grants as well as the Infrastructure Program from Department of Premier and Cabinet to replace the roof at our Smith Street studios.

We were able to match this funding with bequest funds that literally put a roof over our heads. The roof was completed by the end of 2018, and we now have a shiny new roof, so no more leaks!

Last year we received \$10,000 from Sandra Charles, an avid *Gardening Show* supporter, and \$5000 from George Hall. George was a long-term supporter who not only made regular financial contributions to the station, but even got involved digging fence post holes at our transmitter site!

Both of these supporters understood the value of a media space owned by the community and made a commitment through their bequests to continue to support grassroots community radio into the future.

It's with grants and bequests like these that we'll be able to maintain and improve our infrastructure for many years to come. For information on how you could arrange to leave a gift to 3CR in your will, please contact our Station Manager. (03) 9419 8377 or email stationmanager@3cr.org.au

But this is not our only goal. There is little changed if we are only speaking to ourselves. It is you, our community of listeners and supporters that give our station life. Your continued support and belief in the importance of an independent, community-led 3CR is the real power behind our radical radio.

So, no matter how you're listening, streaming, or podcasting, whether it's analogue or digital, on your phone, computer, in the car or on the tram, tune into 3CR and turn up the radio (855 am digital).

You can also still donate to 3CR by phoning 9419 8377, texting 0488 809 855 or getting online at <3cr.org.au>. There are other ways to support 3CR throughout the year too. An annual subscription is \$75 for the waged and \$35 for the unwaged or concession.

In 2016 we published a book to celebrate our 40th birthday called *Radical Radio: Celebrating 40 Years of 3CR*. It's a fantastic history of social justice activism at 3CR and in Melbourne. You can obtain a copy online or by visiting the station during office hours at 21 Smith St Fitzroy.

from our readers



DEAR BEACON

Please find enclosed an overdue cheque for my subscription – \$20.

Thank you for your coverage of important issues, such as Aboriginal justice, the obscene privatising of almost all our assets, opposition to the Empire's wars, lies and demonising of Venezuela, Cuba and Iran.

Sincerely yours

M McKeon, Vic

DEAR DONNA

My thanks to you and the other editorial members for your courageous and honest comments in the July issue of the *Beacon* – we really need people who are prepared to tell it how it is.

When looking back at our history since white settlement, I can find nothing but an appalling ignorance, arrogance and damage to this land and environment, all of which continue to this day. Add the political games that have been played in our name and we should all hang our heads in shame and embarrassment – we are so sorry!

The only thing that I can be grateful for is that I come from good solid convict stock – so not guilty of invading this land.

Regarding John Setka – his language to his wife and his bullying of her were both disgusting and I'm not at all sure what 'rights' of the male population were threatened in his view. However, he was honest enough to admit his guilt as charged and apologised to his wife. She has forgiven him and is willing to move on. He is sorely in need of the anger management treatment he must undergo. It will take a lot of effort, time and patience on the part of all concerned, but if successful he'll be a much nicer man.

I offer my best wishes to John and his wife and sincerely hope they can repair their marriage and enjoy a very happy future together.

I also hope that you have over-reached your target of \$1,400 in your June radiothon. Please accept my best wishes for your good works as usual.

B Stevens, Vic

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Editorial: Defend courageous journalists!

It's dangerous, it's undemocratic and it's back

Australian government is dancing to the dangerous beat of US war drums

Whistleblowers: The new 'terrorists'

Power Radical Radio – The importance of 3CR

Letters to the editor

Beacon Editorial Board

Peter Abrehart

Marion Harper

Donna Sensi

Julie Stafford

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