

Assange's Extradition Hearing a Total Sham

February 2, 2010, Sydney NSW

Sydney Stop the War Coalition extends its support to Julian Assange as he undergoes an extradition hearing in London early next week, a hearing which can only be described as a total travesty of justice.

The extradition hearing for Julian Assange has never been about charges he faces in Sweden (charges which have yet to be specified). Rather, Assange is being pursued because of the role that Wikileaks has played in exposing the hypocrisy and lies of the the US government and its allies throughout the world.

Whilst they wage war in the name of promoting freedom and democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan, US State Department cables and other classified documents revealed by Wikileaks shows the reality of these wars: brutal attacks on Iraqi civilians from helicopter gunships; dramatically higher levels of civilian deaths than previously revealed to the public; conspiracy with the Yemeni dictatorship to cover-up recent US bombing of civilians, etc...

Recent events in Egypt have brought to the world's attention that, far from being a force for democracy in the Middle East, the US have a long history of providing political, economic and military support for some of the most autocratic regimes in the world.

"The response to the Wikileaks revelations of the US Government and its allies, including the Australian government, has been just as outrageous as the conduct revealed in the cables," said Robert Callan of the Stop the War Coalition.

"The supposed promoters of democracy and freedom worldwide vilify Assange as a terrorist and accuse him of putting peoples' lives at risk – all part of an attempt to suppress the untrammelled access to the truth that a functioning democracy relies upon," he continued.

"It is the Western leaders responsible for the brutality and death in Iraq and Afghanistan that should face trial."

The Sydney Stop the War Coalition likewise opposes the maltreatment of Private Bradley Manning, who stands accused of leaking information from within the US military to Wikileaks, and has been placed in solitary confinement for the past seven months.

We call upon Julia Gillard to oppose the global witch-hunt Assange faces and call for the release of Private Bradley Manning.

We encourage members of the Australian public to attend the protest on February 6 to support Julian Assange and stand up for genuine democracy and freedom.

DEFEND WIKILEAKS
Support Julian Assange
Free Bradley Manning
Defend Freedom of Speech

