

Trish Roberts

As an Australian, I realised that I've been propagandised to the hilt most of my life. I discovered this around 2013 after watching a programs by independent journalist Abby Martin, her latest offering "The Empire Files. Until this revelation, the widespread global corporate media and their propaganda had lead me to believe some rather outlandish lies about the many target countries of US empire. In retrospect the corporate media has also kept the racist white supremacist narratives on the slow boil for many decades. Thanks to independent journalism, I also woke up to the global corporate media's ongoing efforts to manufacture consent for more war. I realised they were just propaganda arms of the US National Security State - the invisible unelected government that runs seamlessly through each US administration. In a nutshell, the aim of this was to assist the world's greatest Empire to steal resources and obtain full spectrum dominance. To call it an Empire is appropriate as it has 800 plus bases worldwide.

Since 1945, the US has overthrown the governments of at least 50 plus countries. It has assassinated or attempted to assassinate many world leaders who have become inconvenient to their aim of full spectrum dominance or were unwilling to be or become a US puppet.

The US Empire continues to invade and meddle globally with the help of the corporate media, corporate-owned politicians (of which there are many) and with the indispensable help of capitalism's invisible army – the CIA. And for those who are not aware, the CIA has admitted to helping oust one of our best prime ministers Australia has ever had – Prime Minister Gough Whitlam. It's been a neoliberal mess ever since. For that alone, I have an axe to grind.

But all Empires fall eventually.

As a human on this planet, I do not want to live in a world where our species and all other species are on the edge of extinction due to the West's rapacious capitalism and also (and many may not realise this) because most of us are not vegan. I no longer wish to live in a patriarchal system which is becoming increasingly violent in part due to capitalism (as Lenin noted) being inextricably linked with imperialism and because end stage capitalism can only lead to fascism.

I no longer want to live in a world where the US government (no matter what major US party) is dictating white supremacist foreign policy to Australia and dragging us into endless wars that are killing millions of people in Western Asia and other countries.

I do not approve of any corrupt system which allows a few questionable members of any Western government decide what countries we will invade, and what economies and democracies we will destroy etc.

I do not consent to that.

These decisions to invade and endlessly occupy countries that have not threatened us are made without any discussion with other elected officials and are made without transparency nor the knowledge of the Australian public. The massive protests throughout Australia against the Iraq war in 2003 were ignored by the conservative Prime Minister at the time- John Howard.

Right now we have weapons-industry funded neocon think tanks like the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) "informing" our parliament about China. The ASPI is rabidly promoting a war on China.

Their motivation and information is highly questionable. Did any of our Australian politicians see Australian journalist John Pilger's 2016 documentary "The coming War on China"?

US Major General Smedley D Butler who, at the time of his death in 1940, was the most decorated Marine in U.S. history said:

"I spent 33 years and four months in active military service and during that period I spent most of my time as a high class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism."

War is never the answer, and it is clear that these wars have nothing to do with any "threat" from any of these US targeted countries.

As a global citizen, I am distressed at the ridiculous and dangerous sabre-rattling towards China and Russia that Western governments are engaging in at the US government's behest. Australian politicians appear to be happily getting behind US national security state narratives like an obedient puppy.

Why is Australia provoking China?

Because the US empire feels threatened economically by China (It's called competition) and cannot deal with China becoming the next great economic power. The coming war on China has nothing to do with anything else but protecting US capitalist interests as usual.

I am equally disgusted that we have been selling arms to Saudi Arabia while it has been committing a US backed genocide of Yemeni people. Since 2014, the US has been backing this appalling crime against humanity. Yes that's right. It wasn't Trump or Bush who originally backed the genocide. It was started during the Obama/Biden administration.

The Australian government has been mostly silent for many decades about the atrocious human rights abuses against Palestinians. The Australian government should wholeheartedly condemn the ongoing genocide of Palestinians by apartheid Israel which has been going on since the Nakba in 1948. At best it is silent.

Why?

Because the US uses Israel for its proxy wars and Israel benefits from 10 million dollars a day of military aid from the US to continue to oppress the Palestinians and to be a proxy for Empire.

How beholden is the United States to their ally Israel?

In May 2021, according to Truthout, 330 members of the U.S. House of Representatives signed a letter late last month insisting that the \$3.8 billion in annual military aid the United States provides Israel remain unconditional. However Human Rights Watch (which often supports US imperialist narratives) takes a different position. In a 213-page report by Human Rights Watch "A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution," released in April 2021 condemned Israel stating "Israeli authorities are committing the crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution". Human Rights Watch Australia director Elaine Pearson said the International Criminal Court needed to investigate. In addition Ms Pearson said it was concerning "that Australia recently rejected an International Crimes Court (ICC) ruling confirming its jurisdiction over Palestine".

As an Australian citizen I am appalled at our degrading treatment of asylum seekers who are fleeing our endless wars. We are literally making refugees pay for entry into Australia. Through our

participation in US imperialist wars and US crippling economic sanctions, we destroy their countries, their homes, their families, their lives, their country's economy, and then when they flee in desperation with their children, if they survive the dangerous voyage, we lock them up indefinitely till they self-harm.

In Australia we have committed a genocide against indigenous people and we continue to treat indigenous people poorly to the point where we have very young indigenous people taking their own lives. Ask Australian suicide prevention activist Gerry Georgatos of his experience of this. Is it any surprise our government enacts sadistic and racist policies towards black and brown people who flee to our shores? We continue on our white supremacist attitude. And it is not just the conservative authoritarian wannabe government of Scott Morrison that is the problem. The federal Australian Labor party and the Australian Green party are also a problem with its silent complicity, supporting US foreign policy.

I am equally appalled at the Australian government's abandonment of Australian publisher/ journalist Julian Assange whose only "crime" was exposing US war crimes and political corruption via Wikileaks. We have delivered him into the sadistic hands of US empire. The kangaroo court in the UK allows Assange to rot in the appalling torturous confines of Belmarsh prison, despite his poor mental and physical health. The US was embarrassed by Assange's exposure of war crimes and they (Obama, Trump, Biden administrations) have been determined to make the most extreme example of Assange. As a UK journalist said, the persecution of Julian Assange is the equivalent to putting a severed head on a pike outside the city gates so no one ever thinks about exposing US war crimes again.

This is what Nils Melzer, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture; Human Rights Chair, Geneva Academy; Professor of International Law, University of Glasgow said about Julian Assange two years ago:

... "He (Mr. Assange) showed clear signs of prolonged psychological Torture. First I was shocked that mature democracies could produce such an accident. Then I found out it was no accident. Now, I am scared to find out about our democracies."

Australia continues to persecute whistleblowers like David McBride (Afghan Files) as well for exposing war crimes. The US repeatedly persecuted whistleblower Chelsea Manning with 7 plus years in prison, mostly solitary, including imprisoning her and fining her 400K dollars for not becoming an accessory in the persecution of Mr Assange. The US government is persecuting numerous whistleblowers who are facing long term imprisonment for exposing war crimes. Daniel Hale comes to mind.

The US continues to hold in solitary confinement numerous Black Panther Party members, some have been in mostly solitary confinement since the 60s and 70s. I could go on about the almost endless human rights abuses within the US but instead I would like to direct your attention to Pulitzer prize recipient Chris Hedges interviews and also the independent media program "The Empire Files" with Abby Martin and Mike Prysner which can be found online.

There are Australians today who are still under the misapprehension that we are on the "good" side. Many of us believe it is important to have the US as an ally. I guess if one considers (worse than) Mafia-like "protection" important, because that is what it amounts to. But according to a Morgan poll in late 2020 more than 80% of Australians are not happy about our participation in these wars.

Every year, Australia honours those who were simply cannon fodder in WW1 – the ANZACs. We uphold and put on a pedestal soldiers who go to countries, occupy and invade on lies for resources. Our government continues to keep the whole ANZAC legend alive in order to keep militarism in the public's mind as "noble". After all, we need more cannon fodder to keep our rapacious ecocidal end-stage capitalist system going, don't we?

We honour alleged war criminals in the SAS, like Ben Roberts-Smith (see the Afghan Files). We Australians like to tell ourselves these "war crimes" are an aberration. We tell ourselves these soldiers are just "bad apples" or we make excuses for them, anything but own up to the truth that this is normal behaviour by the US military and by many in our military. It is a culture.

"Collateral Damage", a war crime exposed by whistleblower Chelsea Manning (2007) via Wikileaks is not an aberration. According to veterans speaking out against US imperialism, mowing down Iraqi citizens by Apache helicopter or AC130s (Angel of Death) or by soldiers on the ground is an almost daily occurrence. "Free fire zones" is one term for it. Terrorising the civilian population multiple countries in Western Asia is a normal and a daily occurrence. Droning wedding parties or funeral processions and then "double tapping" those who come to their aid. It is all part of the terrorist activities of Empire. The majority of drone strike killings are every day civilians including hundreds of children. Ask Iraq war veteran Michael Prysner who is producer of "The Empire Files". Michael Prysner realised that it was he who was the terrorist and occupier.

Our corporate media, Silicon valley, most of our politicians would say anything other than admit to the fact that we are involved in daily crimes against humanity. Our participation in any of these wars is in itself a war crime, period, because war is a crime.

Look how the US bombed the civilian population of Nagasaki and Hiroshima Japan with nuclear weapons maiming and killing 10s of thousands, even though Japan had already decided to surrender. Why do we think this the US is a "force for good"? Read William Blum's "Killing Hope" or A People's history of the United States by Howard Zinn or Pulitzer prize recipient Chris Hedges' America: The Farewell Tour.

Through media-sector deregulation over decades, both major Australian political parties have enabled conservative billionaire Rupert Murdoch to help control public debate, and even help choose our prime ministers and also manufacture consent for the next war. We have allowed Murdoch to control most of our media and at the same time we do our best to destroy any kind of semblance of press freedom and democracy by allowing a rapacious sadistic insatiable Empire get their hands on Australian citizen and publisher / journalist Julian Assange. It is beyond shameful. The silence of most of our Australian politicians indicates that their careers appear to be more important to them than democracy and peace. They care little about a father whose two young children and partner (Stella Moris) he rarely sees and if Assange is extradited to the US, it is essentially a death sentence.

Where is there even any discussion of the endless wars by the corporate media or by any of our politicians? We have no real Fourth Estate to speak of. Any debate anywhere is virtually non-existent. Speaking out against US imperialism is apparently verboten in our political sphere and it is all but absent in Australian society.

What does that say about us?

It says democracy is in its death rattles.

It says we are lost.

It says we are heading toward a spiritual death. We are fast becoming what many claim we abhor. What this says is that we are infected with the same cancer, the lack of empathy and the same fascistic tendencies that have become a feature in the US.

Look at the countries that are close allies of the US empire - The head-chopping monarchy of Saudi Arabia and the ethno-supremacist apartheid state of Israel. And yet this is the country we are allowing to dictate through fear, our foreign policy.

Is this the kind of country we want Australia to become? A smaller version of the US – a country which at this point is a failed state and displays the 14 defining characteristics of fascism?

As an imperialist pushing, anti-China Professor Mearsheimer said on a visit to Australia (and I paraphrase): you are either with us on China, or you are against us, and if you are against us, then you can expect to become like Cuba.

That was his arrogant threat.

In reality, the world is fast becoming a multipolar world, and this is something that US empire cannot accept. China, Russia, Iran, Venezuela and other countries including even Germany are realising the threat and that the US empire cannot be trusted. They are becoming allies. China is helping build up economies while the US is tearing them down. Eventually the multipolar world will isolate the bully and put it in its corner where it belongs. China Russia Iran and Venezuela and other countries that are targets of the US understand that they need to be in solidarity with each other, otherwise the US will pick them off one by one as it has done in the past. It is in their best interests to band together. It is only logical.

And here's something Australia needs to understand.

It is in Australia's best interests to join in solidarity with these countries and move toward a more peaceful equitable cooperative world. It might seem unthinkable to leave the US alliance but it is an imperative that needs to be done and soon.

Of course every country has its problems. Democracy is in bad shape throughout the world. But no State is causing anywhere near the violence that the US is. Their annual military budgets are staggering, yet they have abandoned their citizens. The duopoly will not even give their citizens free health care in a pandemic or give them a basic a living wage. Their militarised police execute Black people on a regular basis on the flimsiest of pretexts. George Floyd was just one of hundreds of Black people who have been executed by militarised police. They National Defense Authorisation Act, the NDAA allows the State to arrest and lock US citizens up without counsel indefinitely and even assassinate them. The US has dozens of hate groups throughout the country. Their last president, President Trump, bragged in front of a massive crowd about ordering the execution on Sept 3, 2020 by the State police of a US citizen, Michael Reinhoehl. Trump incited an insurrection, a coup, at the Capitol building on Jan 6, 2021 in a final attempt to remain in power. He expanded the existing wars and increased the carnage tremendously. I could go on. But something we need to understand is, that President Trump was just Empire with the mask pulled off. These fascistic tendencies are only becoming stronger and are being carried on by the current president Joe Biden.

The US has interests, it does not have allies. It has said as much and we should believe them.

The US wants full spectrum dominance at any cost and by any means necessary and that is not hyperbole. We could all end up in a mushroom cloud because rather than accept a multipolar world, the US, depending on how unhinged the politicians are, may decide to just end everything. Who knows? Or it could simply happen by accident.

If Australia and the rest of the world do not want to be sucked further into this widening black hole and if Australia does not want to continue being on the wrong side of history, then we need to act now and stop sleepwalking into this nightmare.

As Martin Luther King Jr said 11 months before he was assassinated by the FBI (and I paraphrase) There are 3 evils – racism, poverty and militarism.

"Somehow these three evils are tied together. The triple evils of racism, economic exploitation, and militarism. The great problem and the great challenge facing mankind today is to get rid of war ... We have left ourselves as a nation morally and politically isolated in the world. We have greatly strengthened the forces of reaction in America, and excited violence and hatred among our own people." MLK jr, May 10, 1967

Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated for those positions. Anyone who threatens Empire, just like Julian Assange, Malcolm X, MLK jr, the Black Panther party etc is likely to feel Empire's sadistic wrath. The US National Security State has no qualms about assassinating presidents if they threaten the CIA (which JFK did) or cause them to think they will interfere with the military industrial complex (which JFK did). Eisenhower warned of the problems associated with the military industrial complex in the 50s.

Finally, in case one hasn't gathered all these issues are related. I am deeply saddened and tired of living in a system that is anti-human and anti-nonhuman. An end stage capitalist system where we have to beg over and over to save the planet from corporate pillaging and environmental destruction; where we have a sense of learned helplessness in the face of endless war and corporate crimes against the planet. It is pitiful and shameful that many have to vote in a dysfunctional system where many politicians are openly corrupt, where there is no recourse, no accountability and where many serve corporations and have little interest in serving the people.

The Australian people and many people in countries globally are tired of the immoral austerity imposed by neoliberalism which works perfectly for the billionaires, the 1%, the capitalist class. Neoliberalism is ecocidal and is an expression of fascism.

Time for us to evolve past this destructive patriarchal capitalist white supremacist system and have a vision and move toward a new peaceful and just world. That new world should, as a moral imperative, also include ending our exploitation and killing of trillions a year of nonhuman sentient animals by going vegan.

No system is going to save us. Only a true transformation within each of us will save us and bring peace.

May there be peace for all. It starts with each one of us.

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