

Comment by Michael C H Jones

Will the Julian Assange legal odyssey, just departing the UK for Sweden and perhaps soon relocating to the USA, be to the Gillard Labor Federal Government what the David Hicks incarceration was for the Howard Federal Liberal Government? The Hicks plea-bargain conviction on a US law later held to be unconstitutional was a travesty. The intricacies of the Swedish rape laws are unfathomable for English speaking countries whilst the US judicial reach in matters of 'national security' are positively draconian and some would argue extra-territorial. Were we asking too much of Howard, and again too much of Gillard, to at least make a fuss?

What constitutes genuine national independence in today's world. Is political sovereignty really possible beyond the traditional pressures of global economics and military power given the more recent instant technologies in communications that facilitate nation-destroying financial flows/decisions by non-state transnational corporations and the super-powers?

Democratic government is absolutely dependent on the free flow of information. Control the information and peoples thinking/opinions are controlled or at the very least seriously manipulated. Whether through the process of government secrets concealing true intentions or news as property that can be sold at the highest price, even more than ever elite institutions are running the world and an entrenched international class based on insider connections has emerged wherein public assets are pillaged for private benefits. The accelerating differentials in wealth in all countries are just examples of this social trend globally.

Julian Assange and his WikiLeaks with all his/its imperfections is just one of many push-back phenomena currently underway - the Occupy Movement is another. Over-all the positives far out way the negatives. But as per usual the "ins" for the time-being character assassinate and financially strangle initiatives that inevitably will go down in history as markers towards more egalitarian and free societies. Republican Tea Party intellectual Luddites financed by trillion dollar corporate barons are the hand maidens of authoritarianism - the appeasers of feral capitalism. In their make-believe society tolerance and inclusiveness, and therefore diversity and multiculturalism, are very threatening and to be eliminated.