



Australian Citizens Party

Craig Isherwood, National Secretary

PO Box 376, COBURG, VIC 3058

Phone: 1800 636 432 **Email:** info@citizensparty.org.au **Web:** citizensparty.org.au

MEDIA RELEASE

24 October 2019

Demand justice for Julian Assange!

The following article on justice for Julian Assange was published in the Australian Alert Service on 23 October. In latest news, 11 federal MPs have joined forces to agitate for the Morrison government to bring Assange home to Australia. These MPs deserve praise for their principled position. If anyone is still in doubt about the Assange case, [former British Ambassador Craig Murray's latest 22 October report](#) clearly shows Assange is a political prisoner and has suffered horrific torture under British authorities.

Shortly before Julian Assange was silenced and then imprisoned, he said, "I love my birth country Australia but as a state, it doesn't exist." In kowtowing to the corrupt US and British judicial process with respect to the Assange case, Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his counterpart shadow, Anthony Albanese, clearly display this lack of sovereignty, not to mention a lack of courageous and principled leadership. But encouragingly, other political leaders are speaking out on the Assange case, which farcical proceedings make a mockery of "justice" in the Western world.

"In essence, Assange reported on war crimes in Iraq", Member for Clark, Andrew Wilkie told Parliament on 16 October, "and normally when an Australian citizen speaks out about war crimes they would be seen as patriotic and treated as a hero. But this hasn't happened to Assange. Instead, he's facing 175 years in a US jail—effectively a death sentence—simply for reporting war crimes." Wilkie then demanded "to end this geopolitical madness", and that Assange be allowed to return to Australia.

Notably former Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce is urging Australia stop the extradition of Julian Assange to the United States. "I, in no way shape or form, give a character recommendation about Mr Assange. That's not the issue. The issue is the sovereignty of the laws", he told reporters in Canberra on 14 October. "And the law is for those you both like or dislike, or have no opinion on." And former Foreign Minister Bob Carr has challenged the government to make "firm and friendly" representation to US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, believing Australians would be "deeply uneasy" at a fellow citizen being transported to the "living hell of a lifetime sentence in an American penitentiary".

Calls for justice are coming from the United Kingdom too. "Assange is now, plainly and without argument, a political prisoner", former British ambassador Craig Murray wrote in an [article titled, "The World's Most Important Political Prisoner" on 17 September](#). "He is not in jail for bail-jumping. He is not in jail for sexual allegations. He is in jail for publishing official secrets, and for nothing else. The UK now has the world's most famous political prisoner, and there are no rational grounds to deny that fact."

Chris Williamson, British MP for Derby North wrote a forceful letter to the Secretary of State for the Home Department on 27 September: "I was appalled to hear that Julian Assange is to remain in prison.... Julian, through his work with WikiLeaks, helped to expose war crimes committed by the United States and has published a number of uncomfortable exposés, in the public interest, about criminality and abuse of state power. He has done a remarkable job as an investigative journalist and it is because of this that he is now being punished in the most grotesque way. ... Allowing him to be extradited on trumped-up charges of computer hacking would not only be unjust, it would also imperil our country's freedoms."

In a 31 May statement, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture, Nils Melzer published a scathing condemnation of the "psychological torture" and injustice inflicted on Julian Assange. Melzer said the evidence is overwhelming and clear. "Mr Assange has been deliberately exposed, for a period of several years, to progressively severe forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the cumulative effects of which can only be described as psychological torture."

By contrast, most of the Australian mainstream media is remaining silent on Assange, despite running a coordinated campaign on 21 October protesting government secrecy, with the front pages of all the main newspapers featuring black redaction marks. It is disgustingly ironic that most of the same journalists who are demanding journalists be exempted from government secrecy laws refuse to acknowledge that their fellow countryman Assange is a journalist.

Recent court rulings confirm corrupt justice system

District Judge Vanessa Baraitser in September ruled Assange should remain in jail even though his sentence for bail violation ended on 22 September. This clearly proved what supporters of Assange knew all along. Concocted charges of bail violation and [bogus rape allegations in Sweden](#) were never the issue. This should have been obvious when Stockholm's senior prosecutor Eva Finne found on 25 August 2010 that the conduct alleged by the police "disclosed no crime at all". Swedish prosecutors dropped the rape investigation in May 2017 following years of political pressure from US and UK authorities to keep the case open.

"Vanessa Baraitser is a disgrace", wrote Craig Murray in the above-mentioned article, as he described the arbitrary nature of Assange's sentencing. Now in her latest ruling, District Judge Baraitser has told Assange his full extradition case will begin on 25 February. Assange's legal team asked for more time "to gather evidence", but Baraitser refused to extend the proceedings. It's clear apologists of war criminals and corrupt bankers want to send a strong signal to any future whistleblowers. Such blatant abuse of power may inspire the opposite reaction than intended, as we are starting to see glimmers of in some leaders. The march to tyranny should not intimidate us. Now is the time for all citizens to show courage and demand justice for Assange, while we still can.

Congratulate the following 11 MPs for standing up for justice for Julian Assange and urge your federal MP to join them.

Steve Georganas, ALP; Julian Hill, ALP; George Christensen, Nationals; Barnaby Joyce, Nationals; Rex Patrick, Centre Alliance; Rebekha Sharkie, Centre Alliance; Adam Bandt, Greens; Richard Di Natale, Greens; Peter Whish-Wilson, Greens; Zali Steggall, independent; Andrew Wilkie, independent.