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Chapter 2

WikiLeaks, Australia and Empire

Richard Tanter

Resistance and displacement, Jacqueline Rose reminds us, are two key analytical terms shared by international relations and psychoanalysis, in both cases dealing with the attempts by the ruling forces to order the world, outer and inner, at whatever human and psychological cost.¹ In history and international politics, ‘resistance’ is usually a positive term denoting challenge to the powers that be, and ‘displacement’ a matter of forcible removal or migration. Yet the very different psychoanalytic connotations and explorations of these terms can throw considerable light on the place of Australia in empire, past and contemporary, and its residues in our politics and outlooks. Understanding the salience of WikiLeaks to Australia and Australian responses to WikiLeaks revelations about Australia requires us to attend to questions of resistance and displacement in both senses.

While the United Nations recognises upwards of 65 million people ‘forcibly displaced’ worldwide, and more than 21 million ‘official’ refugees globally – almost equivalent to the population of Australia – the immigration politics of Australia today and much of its foreign policy exemplify the psychoanalytic sense of being at the mercy of an unconscious substitution of objects of terror and blame:

We are the past masters at getting rid of something un-masterable so that we can panic at the threat, which then becomes as inflexible as our own violent response to it, of something else. From displacement to projection is a single step.²

In all liberal democracies, Australia included, national self-regard resists identification with the harsh implications of reliance on, or celebration of, military force – unless it can be viably represented as defence of freedom, just war, or wars against unspeakable Others. And, in the case of liberal democracies originating in a settler state with ongoing unrecognised conquest of indigenous peoples, the racially inflected violence at the foundations of state-formation and national identity continues to ramify through the default settings of contemporary foreign policy.³

WikiLeaks has posed a threat to a compelling part of the Australian unmasterable – our unrecognised connected history to the sources of ongoing profound global inequality and our continuing role in militarily containing the consequences of that shared imperial history. The

¹ Jacqueline Rose, *The Last Resistance*, Verso, 2007.

² United Nations High Commission for Refugees, *Figures at a Glance, Global Trends 2015*, www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html; and Rose, *The Last Resistance*, p. 42.

³ Richard Tanter, ‘Tightly Bound: Australia’s Alliance-Dependent Militarization’, *Global Asia*, vol. 13, no. 1, Spring 2018. <https://www.globalasia.org/v13no1/cover/tightly-bound-australias-alliance-dependent-militarization-richard-tanter>.

largest element of this threat was constituted by WikiLeaks' massive publication of almost half a million secret US military documents leaked by the US Army whistleblower Chelsea Manning. In July 2010 WikiLeaks published 91,000 secret US military documents about the conduct of the war in Afghanistan, and three months later released an even larger tranche of 391,000 US documents about the war in Iraq. Each presented graphic information about the pervasive criminal characteristics of Australia's two main alliance wars of the time.⁴

WikiLeaks embodies the contemporary spirit of resistance to imperial power, when the external structure of empire derives from the fusion of two systems: on the one hand, material power represented by the more than 1,000 United States military bases outside its own territory, and on the other the less visible but critical and equally potent digital networks of the US government communications and computing infrastructure that the US military calls the Global Information Grid (GIG) – the globe, of course, being in American eyes presumptively US territory.

The scale of this imperial enterprise is clear in the Defense Department's definition of the GIG as:

the globally interconnected, end-to-end set of information capabilities for collecting, processing, storing, disseminating, and managing information on demand to warfighters, policy makers, and support personnel.⁵

WikiLeaks is not the global civil society shadow of the GIG: the nearest contemporary approximations to that are the internet and its search capabilities and crowd-generated datasets such as Wikipedia. But, of course, the limitations of these global civil society would-be simulcra of the GIG also make clear the extraordinary importance of WikiLeaks and similar groupings in both identifying and filling critical gaps in those enterprises, and

⁴ See John O'Loughlin, 'The Perils of Self-Censorship in Academic Research in a WikiLeaks World', *Journal of Global Security Studies*, vol. 1, issue 4, November 2016, pp. 338–339. For a useful brief review of WikiLeaks releases to early 2011 relevant to Australia, see Michelle Fahy, with Bill Williams, Sue Wareham and Gerry Schulz, *What has WikiLeaks Revealed?*, Medical Association for Prevention of War, January 2011, <http://www.mapw.org.au/files/downloads/What%20WikiLeaks%20has%20revealed-Print.pdf>.

⁵ Department of Defense, *Management of the Department of Defense Information Enterprise (DoD IE)*, Directive No. 8000.01, 10 February 2009, p. 10, <http://www.acqnotes.com/Attachments/DoD%20Directive%208000.1,%20Management%20of%20DoD%20Information%20Resources%20and%20Information%20Technology,%2010%20Feb%202009.pdf>. On US bases outside the United States, see Chalmers Johnson's classic *Sorrows of Empire* trilogy; the latest edition of the Pentagon real estate guide, Department of Defense, *Base Structure Report Fiscal Year 2015 Baseline*, www.acq.osd.mil/eie/Downloads/BSI/Base%20Structure%20Report%20FY15.pdf; and David Vine's important updating of Johnson in his *Base Nation: How US Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World*, Metropolitan Books, 2015. However, Nick Turse's 2011 comment is still salutary: 'There are more than 1,000 US military bases dotting the globe. To be specific, the most accurate count is 1,077. Unless it's 1,088. Or, if you count differently, 1,169. Or even 1,180. Actually, the number might even be higher. Nobody knows for sure.' Nick Turse, 'Empire of Bases 2.0. Does the Pentagon Really Have 1,180 Foreign Bases?', *Tomgram: The Pentagon's Planet of Bases*, TomDispatch.com, 9 January 2011, www.tomdispatch.com/blog/175338/.

providing at least a preliminary map of the governmental and corporate sources of those areas of information darkness so inimical to global democracy.

Two remarkably consistent characteristics of responses to the successes of WikiLeaks by the academic and journalist defenders of empire in the United States and in Australia have been to say, on the one hand, ‘this is an act of treason which will lead to the death of intelligence assets and more generally undermine “the defence of the west”’, and on the other hand, that ‘there is nothing new in these files, nothing to see here’.⁶ The fact that these two common responses are so contradictory and absurd reminds us that in both cases we are dealing with resistance in both senses, political and psychological.

WikiLeaks and Research on the Militarisation of Australia

One way I can sketch the dimensions of the contribution of WikiLeaks to my understanding of empire today and Australia’s place within it is to look back at the ways in which I have relied on that unique body of material in my published research on Australia’s defence policies, its current wars, the ‘joint’ US–Australian military and intelligence bases in Australia, and the parallel case of US and Japanese signals intelligence facilities in Japan.

Sometimes, WikiLeaks documents, in small doses, show Australian and United States political leaders speaking to each other offstage, in tones markedly different from their remarks in public, especially about Australia’s alliance wars. One sequence from the US Embassy in Canberra in 2008, released by WikiLeaks in 2010, demonstrated the brazen duplicity of the Australian government towards the Australian public about the state of what was to become Australia’s longest war, beginning in 2001 and still ongoing today. At the same time as he was publicly predicting success in the war, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd told visiting US politicians ‘that the national security establishment in Australia was very pessimistic about the long-term prognosis for Afghanistan’. Ric Smith, the former Secretary of the Department of Defence and subsequently the government’s special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, was reported by US Embassy officials in Canberra to have ‘described the ... mission in Afghanistan and Afghan government presence as a “wobbly three-legged stool”’.⁷ Given that there were no domestic political benefits to be gained from the ADF’s Afghanistan deployment, Rudd’s lying was aimed at bolstering the real rationale

⁶ For representative Australian instances, see Barry Everingham, ‘Woolcott on WikiLeaks: Idle Diplomatic Gossip Overblown ... and Maybe Useful’, *Crikey*, 3 December 2010; and ‘Assange May Have Committed Offence: ADA’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 July 2010. In the latter, the director of the Australian Defence Association, Neil James, remarked that ‘much of the 92,201 assorted US military, intelligence and diplomatic documents leaked by Wikileaks would not be new to anyone familiar with the Afghanistan war or wars in general ... What Wikileaks and its apologists ignore is the clear legal and moral differences between the actions of rule-of-law democracies applying international humanitarian law in UN-endorsed warfighting (however imperfectly at times), and the deliberate rejection of such law by the Taliban and its Islamist allies ... ISAF’s [the UN sponsored International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan] battlefield mistakes are the result of typical wartime tragedy, accidents and at times incompetence or personal failure, not deliberate or institutional policy.’

⁷ Philip Dorling and Nick McKenzie, ‘Afghanistan: Our Secret Fears’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 December 2010.

for the costly and strategically counter-productive Afghanistan deployment – demonstrating loyalty to the United States and maintaining the US alliance.

These revelations about the Rudd government's policy also generated fresh insights into the psychopathology of the Australian prime minister. In mid-2010 David Marr's 'Power Trip: The Political Journey of Kevin Rudd' had provided the first sustained public insight into Rudd's increasingly dysfunctional and disintegrating political persona.⁸ In late 2010, as coalition casualties were rising in Afghanistan, WikiLeaks gave insight into another aspect of Rudd's – and Australia's – obsequious attitude to the dominant ally, and the shared US and Australian contempt for less bellicose NATO allies showing at least a modicum of caution in Afghanistan. At its height, the International Security Assistance Force was made up of contingents from almost 50 countries, with predictable organisational and operational limitations. But as far as the United States was concerned, Australia was one of the small number of allies it could rely on to conduct war as it 'should be conducted', unlike major European allies such as Germany and France, which the US thought were too concerned with peace and reconciliation.

Australia's attitude to this divide among US allies in attitudes to war was confirmed by comments made by Prime Minister Rudd to visiting US political figures in January 2008, later revealed by WikiLeaks. Rudd quipped: 'In the south-east, the US, Canada, Britain, Australia and Dutch were doing the "hard stuff", while in the relatively peaceful north-west, the Germans and French were organising folk dancing festivals'.⁹

In fact, contrary to the insinuations of Rudd's distasteful borrowed machismo, the French had by that time lost 50 soldiers in Afghanistan, the Germans 45, and Australia 21.

Rudd became prime minister in 2008 riding a wave of good will in part based on relief that an Australian leader conspicuously spoke Mandarin and had a deep knowledge of China. The prevailing assumption, that this meant he was well-disposed towards contemporary China, was in fact quite wrong. Well before Rudd's deep antagonism to China became public knowledge, WikiLeaks had revealed this facet of his foreign policy outlook, once again by presenting off-stage alliance management conversations. In the language of the remarkably incoherent 2009 *Defence White Paper*, and the following year's joint statements from the AUSMIN Australia–US ministerial meeting, the rise of China was expected to cause 'disruption and turbulence' in the East Asian status quo. Both statements, of course, were silent on the awkward problem of China being at once creditor to a virtually bankrupt United States and saviour of Quarry Australia. The WikiLeaks documentation of Rudd's self-styled 'brutal realism' in advising Hillary Clinton in March 2009 to contain China, by force if necessary, confirmed the presumption that Rudd had effectively dictated the blunt and crude

⁸ David Marr, 'Power Trip: The Political Journey of Kevin Rudd', *Quarterly Essay* 38 (June 2010).

⁹ 'Australian PM Derided French Afghan War Effort, WikiLeaks', RFI English, 10 December 2010, www.english.rfi.fr/asia-pacific/20101210-france-role-afghanistan-limited-organising-folk-dancing-festivals-cables-show; Phillip Coorey and Kirsty Needham, 'Smith Forced on the Defensive over Folk Dance Faux Pas', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 December 2010, www.smh.com.au/technology/technology-news/smith-forced-on-the-defensive-over-folk-dance-faux-pas-20101210-18sxd.html; and 'Codel Hoyer Meets With Prime Minister Rudd, Date: 2008 January 7, 06:05 (Monday)', WikiLeaks, Canonical ID:08CANBERRA8_a, https://WikiLeaks.org/plusd/cables/08CANBERRA8_a.html.

formulation of the China threat in the 2009 *Defence White Paper*. The March 2009 cable from the Canberra embassy reported Clinton as noting:

the challenges posed by China's economic rise, asking, 'How do you deal toughly with your banker?' Calling himself 'a brutal realist on China', Rudd argued for 'multilateral engagement with bilateral vigor' – integrating China effectively into the international community and allowing it to demonstrate greater responsibility, all while also preparing to deploy force if everything goes wrong.¹⁰

Of course, the almost half million US official SIGACTS (Significant Activities) documents released by WikiLeaks in 2010 provided a great range of documentation concerning American strategy in Afghanistan, but one report was particularly salient to the puzzle noted by Hugh White and others: why was the Australian populace so quiescent as this war, so irrelevant to (and indeed inimical to) Australia's principal strategic interests, dragged on, with a rising toll of Australian dead and severely wounded?¹¹

Part of the answer lies in the March 2010 WikiLeaks publication of a Central Intelligence Agency Red Cell report from the same month, outlining methods of manipulating European public opinion to support the war in Afghanistan.

This document exemplified the continuation of methods from the earliest days of the Cold War of 'psychological operations' as an instrument of 'political warfare' authorised by the nascent National Security Council in December 1947.¹² The CIA became the lead carrier of this mission, working with a variety of other government agencies and even wider range of private or non-government organisations worldwide. One set of vehicles for CIA influence were covertly-funded (and in important cases, CIA-founded) cultural organisations such as the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Europe (and its companion US and Australian groups) which published magazines such as *Encounter* in Britain and *Quadrant* in Australia.¹³

Another widely used approach of US and allied country agencies was to influence mass-media publications either by direct approaches to editors and journalists, or to provide or support publication of material favourable to US foreign policy and those of its allies of the day. One Australian example in 1965–66, with enduring consequences for Australian foreign

¹⁰ 'US Embassy Cables: Hillary Clinton Ponders US Relationship with its Chinese "Banker"', *The Guardian*, 5 December 2010, www.theguardian.com/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/199393. Cable: https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09STATE30049_a.html.

¹¹ See, for example, Hugh White speech at the launch of the Australian Forces Abroad Briefing Books, Nautilus Institute at RMIT, 29 June 2009, <https://nautilus.org/publications/books/australian-forces-abroad/security-general/launch-white/>; and Richard Tanter, 'Out of the War: Eight Steps to a Sustainable Peace in Afghanistan', *Austral Policy Forum* 10-03A, Nautilus Institute, 15 December 2010, <http://nautilus.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Out-of-the-war-tanter-afghanistan.pdf>.

¹² 'Psychological Operations', Memorandum From the Executive Secretary (Souers) to the Members of the National Security Council, NSC 4-A, 9 December 1947, <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-4.htm>.

¹³ In the voluminous and acrimonious history of CIA involvement with Cold War cultural production, see a useful summary and analysis in W. Scott Lucas, 'Mobilizing Culture: The State–Private Network and the CIA in the Early Cold War', in Dale Carter and Robin Clifton (eds), *War and Cold War in American Foreign Policy 1942–62*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2002. On the Australian case, see Cassandra Pybus, 'Quadrant magazine and CIA largesse', *Overland*, no. 155, Winter 1999, pp. 9–15, and her *The Devil and James McAuley*, University of Queensland Press, 1999, Chapter 7.

policy, involved the Australian Department of External Affairs colluding with Australian media leaders to control reporting of the great killings of up to a million Indonesian leftists by the Indonesian army and its domestic allies. External Affairs officials worked systematically to ensure that Australian media coverage of the extraordinary events sweeping Indonesia was done in ways that conformed to a request from the Indonesian army to report on the massacres in the army's preferred manner that minimized army responsibility. By late 1965, the department's public affairs officer, Richard Woolcott, was able to report to his supervisors that 'we are now in a position to influence the content of leaders in practically all major metropolitan newspapers'.¹⁴

These time-tested allied approaches to covertly shape media framing of issues of foreign policy concern continue today, though with less frequent instances of public discovery until the WikiLeaks releases. As the Afghanistan war dragged without an end in sight into 2010, the CIA's Red Cell had been 'charged by the Director of Intelligence with taking a pronounced "out-of-the-box" approach'.¹⁵ The Red Cell's task was to recommend how to prevent a reprise of the fall of the Dutch government due to its involvement in the Afghanistan war one month earlier.¹⁶ The CIA accurately recognised the wider implications, as the Dutch collapse demonstrated 'the fragility of European support for the NATO-led ISAF mission'. The essential mission was to provide media editors with material that would help prevent the known but latent majorities against the war in NATO countries crystallising into mobilised opposition. In a section headed 'Public Apathy Enables Leaders To Ignore Voters', the report recommended crafting media strategies appropriate to each country of concern. More generally, the CIA report sought to build on already well-publicised anxieties about the Taliban's attitudes to women, saying 'Afghan women could serve as ideal messengers in humanizing the ISAF role'.¹⁷

Given more than half a century of such apparently successful attempts to displace attention from the actual nature and consequences of US foreign policy and that of its allies,

¹⁴ Richard Tanter, 'The Great Killings in Indonesia through the Australian Mass Media' / 'Pembunuhan Massal di Indonesia dalam Tinjauan Media Massa Australia', in Bernd Schaefer and Baskara T. Wardaya (eds), *1965: Indonesia and the World / 1965 Indonesia dan Dunia*, Jakarta, Kompas Gramedia, 2013 (bilingual edition), pp. 129–144 and 372–391. This draws on the work of Karim Najjarine, including in Karim Najjarine and Drew Cottle, 'The Department of External Affairs, the ABC and Reporting of the Indonesian Crisis 1965–1969', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 49, no. 1 (March 2003), pp. 48–60.

¹⁵ CIA Red Cell, *Afghanistan: Sustaining West European Support for the NATO-led Mission – Why Counting on Apathy Might Not Be Enough (C/NF) – A Red Cell Special Memorandum*, CIA, 11 March 2010; released by WikiLeaks, 'CIA Report into Shoring up Afghan War Support in Western Europe', 26 March 2010, https://wikileaks.org/wiki/CIA_report_into_shoring_up_Afghan_war_support_in_Western_Europe_11_Mar_2010.

¹⁶ Stefan Bos, 'Dutch Government Collapses over Afghanistan Mission', Voice of America, 19 February 2010, www.voanews.com/a/dutch-government-collapses-amid-disagreement-on-afghan-troop-withdrawal-84830287/112761.html.

¹⁷ For an introduction to the large literature on gender and counter-insurgency doctrine and practice in Afghanistan, see Kelly McBride and Annick T.R. Wibben, 'The Gendering of Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan', *Humanity*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2014, pp. 199–215, <http://humanityjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/3.2-The-Gendering-of-Counterinsurgency-in-Afghanistan.pdf>.

it is surprising how little academics in Australia have directly utilised the documentary evidence provided by WikiLeaks and Edward Snowden, or used the issues raised by them as a stimulus to further inquiry. Displacement on an institutional scale prevails, in part as a result of purposive state action, and partly the consequence of academic self-censorship.¹⁸

WikiLeaks and the Five Eyes Intelligence Community

WikiLeaks' most important revelations for my own work have concerned what the United States calls the collection of intelligence by technical means, or sometimes National Technical Means of Intelligence. Over more than a decade and a half Desmond Ball and I worked on two parallel intelligence research projects that benefited considerably from the work of first WikiLeaks, and then later Edward Snowden. One was a project to document Japanese and US signals intelligence activities and facilities in Japan between 1945 and 2015.¹⁹ The second, which also involved other colleagues, was a study, still ongoing, on the Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap outside Alice Springs, one of the largest US intelligence facilities in the world.²⁰

Overall, more revelations about Pine Gap itself have come from documents released by Edward Snowden than from WikiLeaks, but WikiLeaks provided solid documentation of previously unknown or unverified aspects of the US-orchestrated Five Eyes transnational intelligence and surveillance structure that Jeffrey Richelson and Desmond Ball first described three decades ago in *The Ties That Bind*.²¹

In December 2010, WikiLeaks began releasing more than a quarter of a million confidential US Embassy cables from around the world. Among those from the Wellington embassy in New Zealand was clear documentation that, despite the public suspension by the United States of its obligations under the ANZUS Treaty following the Lange government's passage of the *New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Control Act 1987*, New Zealand continued to maintain cooperation with the National Security Agency (NSA), and operated two major signals intelligence facilities at Tangimoana and Waihopai under the UKUSA Agreements, without interruption.²² Cooperation was 'fully restored' in August

¹⁸ On self-censorship in academic international relations, see the Forum 'Censorship in Security Studies' in the *Journal of Global Security Studies*, vol. 1, issue 4, November 2016, pp. 323–360, especially Benoît Pelopidas, 'Nuclear Weapons Scholarship as a Case of Self-Censorship in Security Studies' and Richard Ned Lebow, 'Self-Censorship in International Relations and Security Studies'.

¹⁹ See the five books and papers by Desmond Ball and Richard Tanter in the Japan SIGINT Project collected at <http://nautilus.org/uncategorized/the-japan-sigint-project/>.

²⁰ As of February 2017, eight papers on Pine Gap by Desmond Ball, Bill Robinson and Richard Tanter (and other collaborators) in the Pine Gap Project have been published by the Nautilus Institute, at <http://nautilus.org/briefing-books/australian-defence-facilities/pine-gap/the-pine-gap-project/>.

²¹ Jeffrey T. Richelson and Desmond Ball, *The Ties That Bind: Intelligence Cooperation Between the UKUSA Countries – the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand*, Allen & Unwin, 1985.

²² Richard Tanter, 'Standing Upright There: The New Zealand Path to a Nuclear-free World', *Nautilus Institute, Policy Forum*, 3 October 2012, <http://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-policy-forum/standing-upright-there-the-new-zealand-path-to-a-nuclear-free-world/>.

2009, but, with a visit from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in the offing, the two governments decided this state of affairs ‘should not be acknowledged in public’.²³

In fact, the level of cooperation had already been increasing, albeit without any felt need on the part of either government to burden the New Zealand population with such knowledge. In a cable later released by WikiLeaks, on 4 August 2004, the US ambassador in Wellington recommended approval of a request from the NSA for the appointment of ‘a new, permanent position in Wellington attached to, but not residing at, the Embassy (reftel) – a Deputy Special US Liaison Officer’.

In fact the new diplomatic position was to be housed at New Zealand’s Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) – the headquarters of the ‘fifth eye’.

The new position will advance US interests in New Zealand by improving liaison and cooperation on vital signals intelligence matters. This is an area where the US and NZ already work together closely and profitably, and continuing to build and expand that relationship clearly stands to benefit both countries. This is especially true in the post-September 11 environment, where NZ sigint capabilities significantly enhance our common efforts to combat terrorism in the region and the world. The Embassy already has a close working relationship with the NZ Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) that will be enhanced by the establishment of this new position.²⁴

Important though the New Zealand ‘fifth eye’ is, the Australian Five Eyes intelligence connection centring on Pine Gap is far more significant for the United States. Of the four separate space-related surveillance systems operating currently at Pine Gap, two are regarded as the jewels in the ANZUS alliance crown. Pine Gap’s original raison d’être, and still its most important function, is to operate as a command and control and data downlink and processing facility for three giant Orion signals intelligence (SIGINT) satellites sitting in geosynchronous orbit above the equator north of Australia. Their forest of antennas, large and small, collect vast amounts of different types of electronic transmissions from across more than half the earth’s surface from the middle of the Pacific Ocean to the far west of Africa. The second system, more recently established, consists of three antenna ground systems (two parabolic antennas and one multibeam torus antenna) operating on an industrial scale to intercept transmissions beamed to the ground from foreign geosynchronous satellites, especially communications satellites.²⁵

²³ Nicky Hager, ‘WikiLeaks: Leaked US Cables Spill the Beans on NZ Ties’, *Sunday Star Times*, 12 December 2010, www.nickyhager.info/WikiLeaks-leaked-us-cables-spill-the-beans-on-nz-ties/.

²⁴ ‘(U) NSDD-38 Request For New Position in Wellington. Date: 2004 August 4, 23:18 (Wednesday)’, WikiLeaks, Canonical ID:04WELLINGTON662_a, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/04WELLINGTON662_a.html.

²⁵ See Desmond Ball, Bill Robinson and Richard Tanter, *The SIGINT Satellites of Pine Gap: Conception, Development and in Orbit*, Nautilus Institute, Special Reports, 15 October 2015, <http://nautilus.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/PG-SIGINT-Satellites.pdf>; and Desmond Ball, Duncan Campbell, Bill Robinson and Richard Tanter, *Expanded Communications Satellite Surveillance and Intelligence*

According to a 2008 cable from the Canberra embassy published by WikiLeaks, a senior Republican congressman on the Select Intelligence Oversight Panel of the Appropriations Committee told Rudd at a meeting on 6 January that ‘the US has no better friend on intelligence issues than Australia and hoped the relationship would continue to thrive’.²⁶

The following month that claim was substantiated by decisions taken at the 2008 AUSMIN Australia–US meeting of defence and foreign ministers. Since the beginning of the Australian involvement in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, there had been a steady stream of AUSMIN and other joint announcements of expansion or development of United States military access to existing or new Australian facilities.

New joint facilities were announced at AUSMIN meetings at North West Cape (2008 and 2010), and at Kojarena near Geraldton in Western Australia (2007). In the latter case, the announcement involved the doubling in size of the Australian Defence Satellite Communications Ground Station with the building of ground facilities for the US Mobile User Objective System (MUOS) and the US Wideband Global SATCOM System (WGS).²⁷ Australia paid \$927 million for one of 10 WGS satellites, in return for global access to the entire constellation’s capabilities.²⁸ This gave the ADF greatly expanded communications capabilities worldwide, useful for both deployments in the defence of Australia and in distant allied wars. But as Malcolm Fraser emphasized, this utility came at a cost of technological vulnerability to a potential US veto over Australian participation in conflicts of which it disapproved.

New or increased United States access to a number of existing training facilities was announced, in many cases hardwiring the facilities into US military networks: the Bradshaw Field Training Area (2004), the Delamere Air Weapons Range (2005) and Shoalwater Bay

Activities Utilising Multi-beam Antenna Systems, Nautilus Institute, Special Reports, 28 May 2015, <http://nautilus.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Torus-SATCOM.pdf>.

²⁶ ‘Codel Hoyer Meets with Prime Minister Rudd, Date: 2008 January 7, 06:05 (Monday)’, WikiLeaks, Canonical ID:08CANBERRA8_a, https://WikiLeaks.org/plusd/cables/08CANBERRA8_a.html. Just to make clear the limits of US intelligence, the cable concluded ‘All members of the delegation, Republican and Democrat, left the meeting deeply impressed with the new Prime Minister’s grasp of the issues and interpersonal skills. Majority Leader Hoyer remarked that, although Rudd had not begun his career as a politician, he had become an exceptionally good one.’

²⁷ Brendan Nelson, Minister for Defence, ‘Australia–US Joint Communications Facility to be Hosted at Geraldton’, Department of Defence, Media Release MIN7/07, <https://web.archive.org/web/20070523052129/http://www.minister.defence.gov.au/NelsonMintpl.cfm?CurrentId=6375>.

²⁸ ‘Doorstop, Sydney’, Brendan Nelson, Minister for Defence, 3 October 2007, https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/media/pressrel/KFHO6/upload_binary/kfho62.pdf;fileType=application/pdf#search=%22wideband%20global%20system%202000s%202007%22; and ‘Australian Defence Satellite Communications Station, Kojarena’, *Australian Defence Facilities*, Briefing Book, Nautilus Institute, <http://nautilus.org/publications/books/australian-forces-abroad/defence-facilities/australian-defence-satellite-communications-station-kojarena/>; ‘Australian and United States Defence Satellite Cooperation at Geraldton’, Media release, Department of Defence, 21 July 2008; and *Selected Acquisition Report (SAR), Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS), As of FY 2020 President's Budget*, Defense Acquisition Management Information Retrieval (DAMIR), Department of Defense, December 2018, p. 29, https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/FOID/Reading%20Room/Selected_Acquisition_Reports/FY_2018_SARS/19-F-1098_DOC_86_WGS_SAR_Dec_2018.pdf.

(2004) in the Northern Territory; the Joint Combined Training Centre (2004); and the Yampi Sound Training Area northwest of Derby, Western Australia. The 2010 AUSMIN announcement of the establishment of new facilities in the form of a Space Radar and an Advanced Space Telescope at the Harold E. Holt Naval Communications Station at North West Cape was part of a publicly announced policy of Australia joining the US military-led Space Surveillance Network.

The public joint communique from the 2008 AUSMIN consultations reported a number of developments in military cooperation, including that ‘Australia and the United States signed a Statement of Principles establishing a military satellite communications partnership’.²⁹ This followed on the earlier announcements of the expansion of the Australian Defence Satellite Communications Ground Station for the MUOS and WGS facilities.

However, significant as all these were for alliance relations, a 2011 WikiLeaks publication made it clear that there had been another, distinctly unpublicised set of secret decisions at the 2008 AUSMIN meeting that would tie Australia even more deeply into the US global intelligence system.

The last substantive sentence in the 2008 AUSMIN public communique had stated that ‘Australia and the United States also agreed on principles for enhancing aspects of the intelligence relationship’, with no further elaboration.³⁰ In fact, at a closed session of the 2008 AUSMIN talks, the officials from the two countries signed a Statement of Principles on Geospatial Intelligence Cooperation. Geospatial intelligence (or GEOINT) is a rapidly growing area of technical intelligence, which, according to the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation (AGO), refers to ‘intelligence derived from the exploitation and analysis of imagery and geospatial information about features and events, with reference to space and time’. For the US military, GEOINT is an increasingly important element in the fusion or ‘mashing’ of different forms of technical intelligence, including from space-based platforms, made available on a global basis to all levels of combat commands through the Global Information Grid.³¹

This decision, marked SECRET in the cable, was not announced publicly, and has never subsequently been acknowledged by either government.³² Reporting the WikiLeaks

²⁹ *Australia–United States Ministerial Consultations 2008 Joint Communiqué*, <http://dfat.gov.au/geo/united-states-of-america/ausmin/Pages/australia-united-states-ministerial-consultations-2008-joint-communicu.aspx>.

³⁰ *Australia–United States Ministerial Consultations 2008 Joint Communiqué*, <http://dfat.gov.au/geo/united-states-of-america/ausmin/Pages/australia-united-states-ministerial-consultations-2008-joint-communicu.aspx>.

³¹ The new ground facilities for US military communications systems at Kojarena announced in 2008 and 2010 are crucial enablers for this capability, to which Australia has access. See Richard Tanter, ‘Home Base’, *Australian Financial Review*, 23 January 2015, pp. 1R, 6R–7R, at <http://nautilus.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Home-Base-text-and-photos.pdf>; and Richard Tanter ‘The US Military Presence in Australia: Asymmetrical Alliance Cooperation and its Alternatives’, *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol. 11, issue 45, no. 1, 11 November 2013, <https://apjif.org/2013/11/45/Richard-Tanter/4025/article.html>.

³² ‘AUSMIN 2008: Session IV: Alliance and Defense Partnership, Date: 2008 February 25, 04:13 (Monday)’, WikiLeaks, Public Library of US Diplomacy, Canonical ID: 08CANBERRA180_a, https://WikiLeaks.org/plusd/cables/08CANBERRA180_a.html.

publication of the AUSMIN 2008 cable, Philip Dorling remarked that this agreement ‘provides the context for the little-noticed decision, mentioned in the May 2009 Defence White Paper, to acquire an Australian spy satellite as a “high priority”’.³³

Most significantly, the cable stated that the GEOINT agreement was ‘to take GEOINT cooperation to the same level that signals intelligence has reached between the two countries’. Since Australian SIGINT cooperation with US counterparts is at the highest possible level, the GEOINT agreement augurs a huge expansion in alliance cooperation. This provided a good reason to keep the decision secret, especially as, according to the cable, Defense Secretary Gates remarked that the political environment had changed so much for the better that the simultaneous Wideband Global SATCOM satellite communications agreement ‘was not expected to generate any public controversy’.³⁴ Communications cooperation may be acceptable in the eye of the Australian public, but alliance managers were wary of being too open about their plans for drawing Australia still closer into the American intelligence empire.

Interoperability and the ‘Arms Deal of the Century’ as Integration into Empire

One rhetorical vehicle for the heightening integration of allied forces into US-led global strategic intervention capacity has been the mantra of ‘interoperability’, a US-coined term originally used in military circles generally to refer to technological compatibility between, say, communications equipment or weapons systems software used by two militaries likely to be operating in concert at some time. What is usually represented as an essentially technical matter dissociated from politics, or even from a strategic argument, turns out, courtesy of documents released by WikiLeaks about another country’s decision to buy the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, to be a vehicle for transnational reproduction of Australia’s place in empire.³⁵

For more than half a century Australia and other countries in the US global alliance system have participated to a greater or lesser extent in a congeries of US-driven multilateral committees and military agencies such as the American, British, Canadian, Australian Armies’ Program (ABCA), the Multinational Interoperability Council (MIC), the Technical Cooperation Program (TTCP), the AUSCANNZUKUS Naval C4 Organization, the Air and Space Interoperability Council (ASIC), and the Combined-Communications Electronics Board (CCEB).³⁶ For much of the long life of these alliance management bodies, for

³³ Philip Dorling, ‘Australia and the US Agree on a Spy Satellite Deal’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 February 2011, www.smh.com.au/technology/technology-news/australia-and-the-us-agree-on-a-spy-satellite-deal-20110206-1aii0.html.

³⁴ ‘AUSMIN 2008: Session IV: Alliance and Defense Partnership, Date: 2008 February 25, 04:13 (Monday)’, WikiLeaks, Public Library of US Diplomacy, Canonical ID: 08CANBERRA180_a, https://WikiLeaks.org/plusd/cables/08CANBERRA180_a.html.

³⁵ Srdjan Vucetic and Rebecka S. Rydberg, ‘Remnants of Empire: Tracing Norway’s F-35 Decision’, *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol. 36, no. 1, 2015, pp. 56–78.

³⁶ Thomas-Durrell Young, ‘Cooperative Diffusion through Cultural Similarity: The Postwar Anglo-Saxon Experience’, in Emily O. Goldman and Leslie C. Eliason, *The Diffusion of Military Technology and Ideas*, Stanford University Press, 2003; and Richard Tanter, ‘Interoperability’, *Australian Forces*

European allies of the US and generally for Australia, interoperability in practice minimally meant compatibility and complementarity.

However, in Australia the interoperability mantra has come to function as a kind of intellectual solvent which results in the dissolving or dismissal of otherwise salient distinctions about the nature of alliance. From the mid-1990s onward, interoperability became the watchword for the shared views of the Howard and Rudd–Gillard–Rudd governments of a need for Australia to cleave ever closer to the United States in terms of military matériel, operational procedures, and doctrine. The most developed Australian argument for a move towards ‘a politico-strategic conceptualization of interoperability’ was proposed by Adam Lockyer in a discussion about the 2002 decision by the Howard government to participate in the US-led industrial consortium to produce the Lockheed Martin F-35 Joint Strike Fighter – the centre of ‘the arms deal of the century’. This commitment to the aircraft’s development eventually resulted in a 2009 Rudd Labor government decision to purchase 72 of the F-35A version of the Lockheed Martin aircraft. As of April 2019, four F-35A aircraft were being operated by the RAAF’s No. 3 Squadron at RAAF Base Williamtown, with initial operating capability expected by December 2020.³⁷

As in most of the 13 US allied countries which have now signed agreements to acquire F-35s, the Australian decision was the subject of much debate. Lockyer’s contribution to a 2013 global academic forum on ‘The International Politics of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter’ attributed the Australian F-35 acquisition decision to enduring Australian foreign and defence policy concerns ‘to hedge between dependence and self-reliance’ on the one hand, and on the other to the implications of the industrial logic of military aircraft capability development – and the resultant almost exponential increases in cost to government. Nations are, Lockyer asserted, ‘entering an era when they will not be able to respond to the full-spectrum of contingencies because the ability to afford a defence force that is capable of responding to the full spectrum is coming to an end’.³⁸

As Australia’s regional neighbours strengthen their economies and hence military purchasing capacities, Australia will not be able to afford large numbers of the kinds of highly expensive US-built advanced aircraft that have given Australia, courtesy of the US alliance, a history of technological edge over neighbours. Hence, Lockyer argued, Australia will have to make hard choices, and eventually settle for smaller numbers of such aircraft, with a resulting diminution of strategic superiority: ‘Partnerships will become increasingly important’.

While it might be thought that Australian defence planners such as Paul Dibb (especially in his 1992 argument on the strategic and conceptual foundations of Australian defence policy and force structure) have been wrestling with similar problems for some decades,

Abroad Briefing Book, Nautilus Institute, 2008, <https://nautilus.org/publications/books/australian-forces-abroad/security-general/interoperability/>.

³⁷ *F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Fast Facts: Australian F-35A Project – AIR6000 Phase 2A/B*, Defence Department, Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group, April 2019, www.defence.gov.au/casg/Multimedia/F_35_Fast_Facts_April_2019-9-9296.pdf.

³⁸ Lockyer, ‘Logic of Interoperability: Australia’s acquisition of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter’, *International Journal*, Vol. 68, No. 1, The international politics of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (Winter 2012-13), pp. 71-91p. 86.

Lockyer's conclusion is that Australia should move from 'an operational to a politico-strategic conceptualization of interoperability', a new and deeper conception of alliance for the 21st century.³⁹ Working from a strategic presumption that since Australia has critical defence requirements both at the local/regional level, and at a distance, effectively at a global level, the solution is for the US and Australia to 'increase their faith in each other's support in times of crisis', and 'explicitly state that they will take responsibility for different types of contingencies. This might take a redrafting of the ANZUS treaty to clarify what each nation can expect from the other in various situations.' The upshot would be an explicit division of labour whereby Australia would globally focus on 'low-end contingencies', consequently buying fewer F-35s and similar expensive assets, while the US assisted Australia in this by deploying its own F-35s to Australia, but principally continuing 'to prepare for high-level conflicts with regional powers'.⁴⁰

One of the editors of the special issue of the journal that published Lockyer's 'Logic of Interoperability' essay on the Australian F-35 decision was Srdjan Vucetic, a Canadian political scientist well-known in Australia for his subtle theoretical and historical work on the concept of the Anglosphere as racialised identity.⁴¹ Two years after the special issue on 'The International Politics of the F-35', which had included an article on the Norwegian decision to purchase 40 of the F-35A aircraft, Vucetic and a Norwegian colleague, Rebecka Rydberg, returned to the Norwegian decision.⁴² The centrepiece of Vucetic and Rydberg's re-analysis of the Norwegian process was a set of six cables sent to the State Department by the US embassies in Oslo and Stockholm between July and December 2008. The WikiLeaks publication of these cables in 2010 'greatly complicate' the otherwise accepted 'official' story that the F-35 won out over its Swedish competitor, the Saab JAS-39NG Gripen, following what was presented as an open and fair technical assessment competition. To the contrary, Vucetic and Rydberg relied on the WikiLeaks cables and interviews with government and industry officials to argue that the decision had been substantially influenced both by covert United States government interference in the procurement process, and by an unspoken and otherwise hidden bias of a significant group of high-level government officials.⁴³

³⁹ Paul Dibb, *The Conceptual Basis of Australia's Defence Planning and Force Structure Development*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 88, 1992, <http://sdsc.bellschool.anu.edu.au/experts-publications/publications/3155/conceptual-basis-australias-defence-planning-and-force>; and Lockyer, 'Logic of Interoperability', p. 89.

⁴⁰ Lockyer, 'Logic of Interoperability', p. 91.

⁴¹ Srdjan Vucetic, *The Anglosphere: A Genealogy of a Racialized Identity in International Relations*, Stanford University Press, 2011.

⁴² Jens Ringsmose, 'Investing in Fighters and Alliances: Norway, Denmark, and the Bumpy Road to the Joint Strike Fighter', *International Journal*, vol. 68, no. 1, The International Politics of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (Winter 2012–13), pp. 93–110; and Srdjan Vucetic and Rebecka S. Rydberg, 'Remnants of Empire: Tracing Norway's F-35 Decision', *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol. 36, no. 1, 2015, pp. 56–78.

⁴³ Richard Tanter, Submission to the Defence Sub-Committee, Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Inquiry into the Benefits and Risks of a Bipartisan Australian Defence Agreement, as a Basis of Planning For, and Funding of, Australian Defence Capability, 2 November 2017; and 'Bad, Bad BADA (aka Bipartisan Australian Defence Agreement)', *Pearls & Irritations*, 1 March

Vucetic and Rydberg are cautious in their claims, well aware that ‘the most important decision-making moments in this policy domain are rarely committed to paper or otherwise reliably recorded’, and that their analysis should only be taken as ‘a rough, first-cut reconstruction of Norway’s F-35 decision’. To be clear about their claims, it is worth quoting their summary at length, with its stress on the role of various interlocutors and advocates seeking to acquire public support to legitimise the decision:

First, the Americans – meaning a loosely institutionalized network of officials from the Departments of State and Defense, the Joint Program Office, which oversees the making of the stealthy fighter jet, plus Lockheed Martin representatives and supporters – substantially interfered with the Norwegian policy process via multiple channels, both private and public.

Second, key Norwegian brokers – a group of influential politicians and bureaucrats – not only understood and to different degrees endorsed the positions and preferences held by the ‘imperial’ centre, they sometimes also advanced them on their own initiative.

Third, the two sides consulted and coordinated on how to most effectively legitimate the F-35 in front of different Norwegian audiences, thus diffusing domestic political opposition to the deal and the Norway–American alliance in general.⁴⁴

Interoperability was a key feature of the many public discussions about the choice between the F-35 and the Gripen. One clear concern in media discussions, familiar in comparable Australian decisions, was not about the technical capabilities of the aircraft as such, but simply whether to join in cooperation with the Swedes or the Americans. When the criteria of interoperability included a requirement for Norway’s operational capability centred on ‘out of area missions’ under NATO, interoperability:

almost always denoted commonality or identity, implying the need of the RNoAF to operate the same fighter jet as the USAF. In effect, the term worked as code for the F-35. To a lesser extent, the same can be said about the argument that the RNoAF required the ‘best available’ gear in order to deter the latent Russian threat or the one about the need of the Norwegian defence industry to plug into the supply chain for the ‘most advanced’ military systems.

Vucetic and Rydberg emphasize the role of public discussion as a path to national decisions that will be seen as legitimate in mass democracies that but which are in fact inserted into an international system of hierarchy they characterise as ‘empire by invitation’. In these circumstances, they argue, ‘mass politics, publicity, and democracy all compel the

2018, <https://johnmenadue.com/richard-tanter-bad-bad-bada-aka-bipartisan-australian-defence-agreement/>.

⁴⁴ Vucetic and Rydberg, ‘Remnants of Empire’, p. 57.

metropolitan and local brokers to give substantial weight to their political communication strategies’.

Vucetic and Rydberg conclude that the WikiLeaks cables provide evidence that “empire” in Norway–American defence relations operates as a pattern of indirect rule that links superordinate and subordinate polities through locally brokered asymmetric contracts and in terms of specific modes of public legitimation.

The Australian parallels are evident and highly salient, given the clear evidence of covert American intervention in the decision-making of another US ally that, like Australia, also hosts significant US military and intelligence facilities. What is striking from an Australian perspective is that, to the best of my knowledge, no Australian researcher or policy analyst has published on the question of the salience of these revised findings about the Norwegian F-35 decision for Australia’s largest ever weapons purchase.

The Five Eyes *Über Alles*

One of WikiLeaks’ biggest Five Eyes signals intelligence stories was the 2015 publication of a large number of reports of National Security Agency intercepts of phone communications by Japanese political, bureaucratic and corporate leaders, revealing Japanese concerns and positions to be taken in a range of negotiations on climate change and trade.⁴⁵ The reports appeared in the NSA’s *Global SIGINT Highlights Executive Edition*, which indicates that their subjects were of significance for the highest levels of the US administration. Marked either Secret or Top Secret, most were also marked NOFORN, indicating that their contents were not to be disclosed to non-US personnel, while one was to be released to all Five Eyes countries.⁴⁶ The documents list the phone numbers which provided the ‘selector’ identifying what source was to be intercepted.

WikiLeaks summarised the target list as follows:

The telephone interception target list includes the switchboard for the Japanese Cabinet Office; the executive secretary to the Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga; a line described as ‘Government VIP Line’; numerous officials within the Japanese Central Bank, including Governor Haruhiko Kuroda; the home phone number of at least one Central Bank official; numerous numbers within the Japanese Finance Ministry; the Japanese Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry

⁴⁵ ‘Target Tokyo’, Press Release, WikiLeaks, 31 July 2015, <https://WikiLeaks.org/nsa-japan/>; and Philip Dorling, ‘US Bugs Japan on Trade and Climate’, *The Saturday Paper*, 31 July 2015, www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2015/07/31/exclusive-us-bugs-japan-trade-and-climate/14383094602196.

⁴⁶ The 2008 report, marked ‘TOP SECRET//COMINT//REL TO USA, AUS, CAN, GBR, NZL’ to be released to all Five Eyes agencies was published by WikiLeaks as ‘NSA Global SIGINT Highlights, US Bugged Japan’s Confidential G-8 Proposals on Climate Change’, WikiLeaks release, 31 July 2015, https://WikiLeaks.org/nsa-japan/intercepts/WikiLeaks_NSA_Spy_Japan_G8_Proposals.pdf.

Yoichi Miyazawa; the Natural Gas Division of Mitsubishi; and the Petroleum Division of Mitsui.⁴⁷

There is no indication of how many targets were selected all together, but it is reasonable to assume that beyond those considered important enough to have been reported in the *Global SIGINT Highlights Executive Edition* there were many others of significance – a ‘comprehensive harvesting’ as WikiLeaks put it, both deep and broad.

There was no indication of just how these phone communications were intercepted, and what interception platforms were employed. Some are labelled ‘Unconventional’, which could indicate NSA–CIA Special Collection Service units operating from the US Embassy in Tokyo and the NSA’s STATEROOM phone surveillance system in the embassy.⁴⁸ However, others are labelled ‘Unidentified’. Communications interception of this kind is one of the key purposes of the FORNSAT/COMSAT (Foreign Satellite/Communications Satellite) interception capabilities of Pine Gap and the ‘Ladylove’ operation at its large NSA companion station at Misawa in Japan. The FORNSAT/COMSAT data collected at these and other facilities globally are processed by the X-Keyscore system (often abbreviated to XKS), a Digital Network Intelligence (DNI) Exploitation or data-retrieval system, and other sub-programs.⁴⁹ Both Pine Gap and Misawa would have been technically capable of intercepting Japanese communications satellite traffic, though other NSA stations, such as the STATEROOM system at the Tokyo embassy Tokyo. It is also possible that other Five Eyes embassies, including Australia’s, may have been used.

Irrespective of source, the three startling certainties revealed by the WikiLeaks ‘Target Tokyo’ collection are that Five Eyes comprehensive targets include other US allies; that corporate and trade intelligence is a priority Five Eyes concern; and that, after the United States, the other Anglosphere countries that make up the First and Second Parties to the UKUSA Agreements, for all the obvious primacy of the United States, still retain their privileged position at the apex of an aggressively hierarchical US alliance system. The WikiLeaks *Global SIGINT Highlights* reports make quite clear that US allies far more important than Australia, Canada and New Zealand, such as Japan, while legally UKUSA Third Parties, are quite simply Five Eyes targets.

⁴⁷ ‘Target Tokyo’, Press Release, WikiLeaks, 31 July 2015, <https://WikiLeaks.org/nsa-japan/>.

⁴⁸ Peter Koop, ‘[Analysis of the New WikiLeaks Revelations Concerning NSA Spying on France](#)’, matthewaid.com, 27 June 2015. (Confusingly, Matthew Aid published another article by Koop with the same title but containing a different, though related text on 24 June 2014.

⁴⁹ On FORNSAT/COMSAT capabilities at Pine Gap, see Desmond Ball, Duncan Campbell, Bill Robinson and Richard Tanter, *Expanded Communications Satellite Surveillance and Intelligence Activities Utilising Multi-beam Antenna Systems*, pp. 6–12 and 29–32, <http://nautilus.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Torus-SATCOM.pdf>; Desmond Ball, Bill Robinson and Richard Tanter, *The Militarisation of Pine Gap: Organisations and Personnel*, Nautilus Institute, Special Report, 14 August 2015, pp. 22–26, <http://nautilus.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/The-militarisation-of-Pine-Gap.pdf>; and Desmond Ball, Bill Robinson and Richard Tanter, *The Antennas of Pine Gap*, Nautilus Institute Special Report, 22 February 2016, pp. 61–63, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-special-reports/the-antennas-of-pine-gap/>. On Misawa, Operation Ladylove and X-Keyscore, see Desmond Ball and Richard Tanter, *US Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) Activities in Japan 1945–2015: A Visual Guide*, Nautilus Institute, Special Report, 24 December 2015, pp. 320–360, <http://nautilus.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/US-signals-intelligence-SIGINT-activities-in-Japan-final-v2.pdf>.

WikiLeaks, Australia and the Global Democratic Deficit

This Anglosphere grouping of signals intelligence agencies, 70 years after the end of World War II, still forms a network that is, as Richelson and Ball described several decades ago in *The Ties That Bind*, ‘a truly multinational community’, able to shroud itself in secrecy and ‘the mantle of national security to an extent unmatched by even the national defence establishments’.⁵⁰

In Australian discussions of the asymmetries of alliance, questions of national sovereignty must be central, with the aim of maintaining democratic policy-formation at a national level. But WikiLeaks revelations point beyond maintaining an adequate level of national sovereignty to the need to establish cross-national processes of democratic control – a missing element of democratic global governance relevant to multinational institutions of truly global reach and deep penetration into the political cultures of national democratic polities.⁵¹

To paraphrase the acute analysis by the political scientist Allan Patience of he calls a dependent middle power allied to the United States, Australia does have voice and agency in international affairs, but only when the dominant ally agrees with the Australian position, or does not care.⁵² The WikiLeaks revelations show the true political – and psychological – character of Australia’s relationship to empire. The Turnbull government’s response to Trump provided plenty of evidence of the persistence of these traits. In a US speech pandering to what she described as ‘the indispensable power’, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop called on the US to stay the course and preserve what she and all recent Australian governments called, entirely without irony, the global ‘rules-based order’.⁵³ In echoing the US remonstrations to all but itself to construct and abide by a global ‘rules-based order’, one can only think of Gandhi’s reply to a question about his view of ‘Western civilization’: ‘I think it would be a very good idea.’

Life under empire involves both our inner and outer lives, and WikiLeaks has become an icon of global resistance to empire, and as such has provoked deep and irrational resistance in turn. In psychoanalytic terms, Rose says, ‘Resistance is blindness ... the strongest weapon or bluntest instrument the mind has at its disposal against the painful, hidden, knowledge of the unconscious’.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Jeffrey T. Richelson and Desmond Ball, *The Ties That Bind*, pp. 292–296.

⁵¹ Richard Tanter, ‘American Bases in Australia Revisited’, in Brendan Taylor, Nicholas Farrelly and Sheryn Lee (eds), *Insurgent Intellectual: Essays in Honour of Professor Desmond Ball*, ISEAS, December 2012, p. 192; and Richard Tanter, *The ‘Joint Facilities’ Revisited – Desmond Ball, Democratic Debate on Security, and the Human Interest*, Special Report, Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability, 12 December 2012, p. 12, <http://nautilus.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/The-Joint-Facilities-revisited-1000-8-December-2012-2.pdf>.

⁵² Allan Patience, ‘The Two Streams of Australia’s Middle Power Imagining and their Sources’, *Australian Journal of Politics & History*, vol. 60, issue 3, 2014, pp. 449–465; and his *Australian Foreign Policy in Asia: Middle Power or Awkward Partner?*, London and New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

⁵³ Henry Belot, ‘Julie Bishop Calls on US to Increase Role in Region, Raises Concerns over South China Sea’, *ABC News*, 27 January 2017, www.abc.net.au/news/2017-01-27/bishop-calls-on-us-to-increase-role-in-region/8216704.

⁵⁴ Rose, *The Last Resistance*, p. 19.

All we need is an Australian foreign minister trying to appease a US president to give us the Groucho Marx punchline to his complaint about his brother in law who thinks he's a chicken: 'We don't talk him out of it because we need the [alliance] eggs.'

