

WikiLeaks continues exposure of predatory US foreign policy

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In the face of an unprecedented campaign of US harassment and intimidation, the Internet-based WikiLeaks group is continuing its efforts to expose the predatory role of American foreign policy around the world, releasing secret diplomatic documents every day.

WikiLeaks has acquired over 250,000 leaked US diplomatic cables, most of them generated over the past five years, and it has posted about 700 of them so far on its web site, as well as turning over the entire cache to four news organizations in Europe. One of the four, the British daily *Guardian*, in turn gave access to the *New York Times*.

Material made public Sunday sheds light on the increasingly incendiary state of world relations, under conditions of deepening world economic crisis. In particular, the declining world power, the United States, is seeking to maintain its domination against the rise of rivals like China. This conflict is the focus of a State Department cable on March 24, 2009, describing a meeting between Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, then visiting Washington, and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

According to the summary, Clinton complained during a luncheon discussion about the difficulty of the US taking action to curb China's growing overseas influence, given the huge US balance of trade deficit with China and China's massive stockpile of nearly \$2 trillion in dollar-denominated assets, including Treasury bills. "How do you deal toughly with your banker?" she asked.

Rudd's reply was eye opening. Describing himself as "a brutal realist on China," he said that Australian intelligence agencies were paying close attention to China's growing military strength, and that Australia was building up its naval forces as "a response to China's growing ability to project force" in the south Pacific. He said the US and its allies should make efforts to integrate China into the US-dominated structure of state relations in the Asia-Pacific region, "while also preparing to deploy force if everything goes wrong."

There is no record of Clinton's response to this suggestion that a military conflict between the world's two largest economies, both armed with nuclear weapons, was to be considered as a policy option. Nor was her reaction reported to another declaration by Rudd, that he had invited another nuclear-armed power, Russia, to join his proposed Asia-Pacific Community, in order to forestall any thoughts of a "Chinese Monroe Doctrine." Rudd used that term as shorthand for an effort by China to exclude outside powers—like the United States—from the Asia-Pacific region.

The exchange is reminiscent of the secret discussions held among the Great Powers in the decades leading up to World War I and World War II, as they jockeyed for power and influence while building up their military forces for the ultimate test of force. In both periods, localized and regional tensions—in the Balkans, the Far East, and North Africa—became the spark of a global conflict.

The Middle East is one of the regions most likely to play the role of detonator today, with US forces already deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan and the US and Israel openly threatening military action against Iran if economic sanctions fail to bring the regime in Tehran to heel.

Secret documents made public in summary form Sunday by the *New York Times* and the *Guardian* underscore the rising tensions in that region. A classified memo from Secretary of State Clinton in December 2009 complains that Saudi Arabia and the Arab sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf are the principal financiers of anti-American terrorist activity. "Donors in Saudi Arabia constitute the most significant source of funding to Sunni terrorist groups worldwide," the memo declares.

This assessment is in sharp contrast to the public US focus on Afghanistan and the tribal territories of Pakistan as the base of Al Qaeda terrorism. The real purpose of the war in Afghanistan is to establish a dominant US role in Central Asia, the second largest source of world oil and gas exports.

As the *Guardian* notes in its coverage (but not the *Times*), the US complaints about the Saudi role in financing terrorism play second fiddle to US oil interests. The *Guardian* observed: "The cables show that when it comes to powerful oil-rich allies, US diplomats save their concerns for closed-door talks, in stark contrast to the often pointed criticism meted out to allies in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Instead, officials at the Riyadh embassy worry about protecting Saudi oilfields from al-Qaida attacks."

A second set of cables from the Mideast, summarized in the *Guardian*, cite the view of Iraqi government officials that Saudi Arabia, not Iran, poses the biggest threat of destabilization. A cable from the US ambassador in Baghdad, sent in September 2009, explains that Iraqi leaders viewed the Saudi objective as "to enhance Sunni influence, dilute Shia dominance and promote the formation of a weak and fractured Iraqi government." The newspaper concludes

that this dispatch, “feeds claims, prevalent after the 9/11 attacks, that religiously conservative, politically repressive Saudi Arabia, where most of the 9/11 terrorists came from, is the true enemy of the west.”

The accounts published by the “authorized” newspapers have undoubtedly been cleared in advance with the US State Department and the British Foreign Office to minimize the damage done to ongoing imperialist activities. These reports therefore fail to provide an adequate picture of the sheer skullduggery of American imperialism all over the world.

A few examples—all from a single weekend’s posting on the WikiLeaks site—give a glimpse of the systematic double-dealing that is the essence of the foreign policy of Washington. In each instance, the cable tells the truth, in direct contradiction to the public position of the US government, which is a lie.

September 9, 2009—A cable from the US embassy in Baku, Azerbaijan reports on a visit by two unnamed leaders of the Kashgai tribe in the adjacent region just across the Iranian border. Three months after the disputed Iranian presidential election, the two men note that while members of their tribe regarded opposition candidate Mehdi Karroubi favorably, as a member of another minority ethnic group, the Lurs, “most Kashgai probably voted for Ahmadinejad, as a result of gratitude for improved health, education and infrastructure services and/or monetary inducements.”

This cable undermines the official US lie that Ahmadinejad “stole” the presidential election, one of the principal components of the ongoing propaganda campaign against Iran. The failure of opposition candidates Karroubi and Mirhossein Mousavi to win the vote in non-Persian northwest Iran was invariably cited as “proof” of official ballot-rigging. But the embassy cable demonstrates that the US government knew that their support in that region was weak.

December 26, 2009—A cable from the US embassy in Sana, Yemen relays the Yemeni foreign minister’s request that the Obama administration deny responsibility for US air strikes against alleged Al Qaeda targets in that country, which left dozens of civilians dead. Instead, the official urged the US to “highlight ... indigenous counterterrorism capabilities.”

In other words, the Yemeni government asked the US government to help it lie to its own people, as well as the world, and Washington obliged.

January 15, 2010—A cable from the embassy in Morocco reports a successful US operation against Dadis Camara, leader of a military coup in the West African country of Guinea, who was receiving medical treatment at a Moroccan hospital. The State Department regarded Camara as less reliable than the officer who replaced him during his illness.

Moroccan officials put Camara on board a small plane, telling him he was going back to Guinea, but he was instead flown to Burkina Faso, a neighboring country, and placed under house arrest. In effect, Camara was kidnapped at the behest of the US government, which

publicly denied any role in the affair.

Another series of cables from the US embassy in Paris in March 2010 tracks the visit of French President Sarkozy to former French colonies in Africa, noting shifts in French military and economic policy in that area. The cable notes that while in Niger, Sarkozy acted as a shill for the giant uranium monopoly AREVA.

This dispatch underscores one of the driving forces of foreign policy for all the imperialist powers: the financial interests of the giant corporations. The United States is no exception, as demonstrated by two more excerpts from the weekend postings on WikiLeaks:

The US embassy in Madrid noted the intercession of the American ambassador in January 2009 on behalf of General Electric, which had complained that the Spanish government “was not welcoming US bidders on procurement contracts.” When the Spanish Ministry of Defense awarded a contract to provide helicopter motors to the British-based Rolls Royce, Prime Minister Zapatero “overturned the decision and it was announced that GE had won the bid. The Ambassador is convinced that Zapatero personally intervened in the case in favor of GE.”

Another cable, sent in August 2007 by the US embassy in Bolivia, details attacks on the property of American corporations by the nationalist government of President Evo Morales: “A number of Evo’s recent actions and statements have been seen as anti-investment by the industries affected: to give only a few examples, the forced renegotiation of petroleum contracts, the nationalization of Glencore’s Vinto smelter, Evo’s stated intention to create a state energy and electricity company.”

The embassy adds, “One US investment which is vulnerable is San Cristobal mine, which is 65 percent owned by Apex Silver. San Cristobal would be particularly hard-hit by a bill currently in Congress, which would increase mining taxes.”

Imperialism is the global expression of finance capital, rapacious and predatory. This remains as true today as it was when Lenin wrote his classic work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* in 1915. It is to the great credit of WikiLeaks that the organization has provided irrefutable documentation of this historical reality.



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