

Terry Hicks, father of former Guantánamo Bay prisoner David Hicks, supports Julian Assange

5 June 2018

Terry Hicks, the father of former Guantánamo Bay prisoner David Hicks, issued the following statement to the World Socialist Web Site, endorsing the June 17 demonstration at Sydney's Town Hall Square demanding freedom for the WikiLeaks editor.

Hicks campaigned tirelessly for his son David's release from Guantánamo Bay where he was incarcerated by US authorities for over five years on trumped up terrorism allegations. In the face of mass opposition over the treatment of the Australian citizen, the Howard Liberal-National government in 2007 made a deal with Washington to repatriate Hicks to Australia, but only if he pled guilty to "providing material support to terrorism."

In February 2015, a US Military Commission Review Board overturned the "terrorism" conviction against David Hicks. It was further proof that the US-led "war on terror" and its associated crimes—illegal detention, torture and kangaroo courts—were based on lies.

Statement of Terry Hicks on the June 17 Sydney demonstration to demand freedom for Assange

The bottom line with Julian Assange is that he is being denied basic human and legal rights.

Assange has not committed any crime but has been virtually jailed in the Ecuadorian embassy in London for six years. No one should be treated this way. There was all this hullabaloo in Sweden, but there were never any charges, and then, all of a sudden, it was just dropped. He's been accused of treason, called a spy, a

terrorist and all sorts of other things by American politicians and the media. These are just lies and part of an orchestrated script.

If Julian Assange walks out of the embassy he will be taken to the US and put on trial for crimes that have been cooked-up by the US government. People say extradition, but I prefer to use the word kidnapping. We cannot allow this to happen.

The Australian government is saying nothing about Assange. Turnbull is kowtowing to the US and hopes that people will just forget about it. The real story is that Australian governments have washed their hands of Assange and like good deputy sheriffs are following Washington's orders.

The same thing happened with my son David. The Howard government was prepared to let him rot in Guantánamo for years and then have him dragged before a US military tribunal on made-up charges of terrorism. David was released because we fought back. We pulled apart all the government and media lies and character assassination against David and we never gave up. This is what we have to do for Assange.

I stand alongside Julian Assange and all those who are fighting for his democratic and legal rights. People have to dig their heels in and make clear that he must be given immediate freedom. He must be allowed to return to Australia and keep exposing government crimes.

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