

John Pilger urges participation in SEP (Australia) rallies to defend Assange

19 June 2019

World-renowned investigative journalist and filmmaker John Pilger issued the statement below endorsing the Socialist Equality Party rallies in coming weeks in defence of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.

The protests in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane will demand that the Australian government fulfil its obligations to Assange as a citizen, by using its legal discretion and diplomatic powers to secure his immediate return to Australia, with a guarantee against extradition to the US.

Pilger is a trustee of the Courage Foundation, which raises funds for the legal defense of persecuted whistleblowers, journalists and publications, including Assange and WikiLeaks. He has spoken at SEP rallies in defence of Assange in March, 2019 and June, 2018.

Julian Assange has committed no crime. The First Amendment of the US Constitution protects publishers and journalists; the espionage charges are concocted and ridiculous. If he is extradited and found guilty in a show trial, his life will effectively end, perhaps literally, and his example will be used to pursue any journalist who conscientiously does his or her job and gives the public the information to which it has a right.

In my career, there has never been a more important case. If we lose Julian and Chelsea Manning to the dungeons of a rogue America, once-liberal societies will never be the same again; democracies will be in name only.

As the raid on the ABC made clear, Australia is the most vulnerable—if Australians allow it: if journalists do not wake up: if people do not stand up. The SEP has been at the forefront of defending Julian and Chelsea. I urge you to join their rallies in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.





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