

Australia actively involved in Gaza genocide through Pine Gap spy base

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Australia's Labor government has been as bellicose as any in its full-throated backing of the Israeli genocide of Palestinians in Gaza.

The support extends beyond a political greenlight to the mass murder of civilians. Through its integration into the US war machine, Australia is actively involved in the massacre being perpetrated by the Zionist regime in collaboration with the Biden administration.

As part of the US alliance, Australia hosts a vast and increasing battery of war materials, production, basing and surveillance facilities. Among the most significant is the Pine Gap spy base in central Australia. While nominally a joint facility, Pine Gap is effectively controlled by the US government, the National Security Agency (NSA) and other American spying outfits.

Disclosures by US NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden in 2013 had indicated the scale of Pine Gap's activities and its importance to US military operations worldwide.

They showed that the base operated two Orion geosynchronous signals intelligence satellites over the Indian Ocean, which surveil much of the world, from Africa to the Middle-East and Europe. Experts have stated that Pine Gap would more accurately be described as a military planning and targeting base than a passive spy station.

That prior knowledge indicated that Pine Gap would likely have some involvement in the Israeli operations against Gaza. Its role was confirmed in an important article by Peter Cronau for *Declassified Australia* last Friday.

Cronau began: "The Pine Gap US surveillance base located outside of Alice Springs in Australia is collecting an enormous range of communications and electronic intelligence from the brutal Gaza-Israel battlefield—and this data is being provided to the Israel

Defence Forces."

Cronau interviewed David Rosenberg, who worked at Pine Gap as "team leader of weapons signal analysis" for eighteen years, ending in 2008. He was an employee of the NSA for 25 years.

Rosenberg stated, unequivocally, that "Pine Gap facility is monitoring the Gaza Strip and surrounding areas with all its resources, and gathering intelligence assessed to be useful to Israel... Pine Gap has satellites overhead. Every one of those assets would be on those locations, looking for anything that could help them."

Rosenberg indicated this would include identifying targets, purportedly associated with Hamas, which would then be passed on to Israel for aerial bombardment.

In a review of the Snowden disclosures, Cronau noted that "As well as surveillance of civilian, commercial, and military communications, it provides detailed geolocation intelligence to the US military that can be used to locate with precision targets in the battlefield."

He cited documents, leaked by Snowden and first published by the *Intercept*, showing that Israel had extensive access to spying and targeting information collected by the NSA and the US-led Five Eyes eavesdropping network, which includes Australia.

One had noted that the NSA "maintains a far-reaching technical and analytic relationship with the Israeli SIGINT National Unit (ISNU)," which covered "sharing information on access, intercept, targeting, language, analysis and reporting." It added: "The Israeli side enjoys the benefits of expanded geographic access to world-class NSA cryptanalytic and SIGINT engineering expertise."

The *Declassified Australia* report should have been frontpage news. Rosenberg, who knows of what he speaks, confirmed Australia's central involvement in

an onslaught by an advanced industrial state, against an oppressed people, that has few precedents outside of the Holocaust. Cronau has a decades-long record of journalism, including at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) where he was a producer for the prestigious “Four Corners” documentary program.

But the story has not been picked up by a single major corporate outlet, or by the ABC. Cronau submitted questions to the Department of Defence, prior to publication, which have gone unanswered. Not a single professional journalist has questioned a government representative at press conferences or public events about the Pine Gap angle.

The silence is a stark manifestation of the media’s complicity in the unfolding genocide. Led by the ABC, the television outlets have repeatedly featured leading Israeli political figures, who are given a friendly platform to justify their carpet bombing of more than two million people.

Massive protests by workers and young people against the genocide were initially slandered by much of the press as potentially “dangerous” or antisemitic. With those lies having been exposed, the official media outlets are largely ignoring the tens of thousands of people taking to the streets every week in the largest anti-war demonstrations since the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

The line-up of the press means there is little investigation of the extent of Australia’s ties with the Israeli military.

Government figures show that the Department of Defence issued permits for 322 defence exports from Australia to Israel, in the six years beginning at the start of 2017. The highest yearly number of such exports was 2021, with 62 reported. Another 49 were approved in 2022, along with 23 in the first three months of this year.

All governments, including the current Labor administration, conceal the nature of these exports by deploying draconian national security secrecy provisions. The official figures provide only the number of exports approved, not what they consisted of.

Significantly, a coalition of Palestinian human rights organisations have launched legal action in the Federal Court, to compel Labor’s Defence Minister Richard Marles to reveal the contents of the exports. Two of

those organisations, the Al Mezan Center for Human Rights and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, are based in besieged Gaza. They are joined by a third Al-Haq and have received backing from the Australian Centre for International Justice (ACIJ).

In comments cited by the *Guardian*, Rawan Arraf of the ACIJ stated: “Australia’s role in exporting arms material to Israel must be exposed. If Australian-made weapons are being used against Palestinian civilians, our clients and the public deserve to know.”

Arraf added: “Countries providing arms to enable Israel’s brutal violence against the Palestinian people must be transparent. And Australia must not be complicit in that violence.”

The revelations about Pine Gap, the defence exports and the administration’s attempts to shield them from scrutiny demonstrate again that a struggle by workers and young people in Australia against the Gaza genocide, as part of the developing global movement, must take the form of a political fight against the Labor government. It is a de facto participant in the mass murder in Gaza and is also committed to US plans for a catastrophic war against China in the Indo-Pacific.



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