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The WikiLeaks Files: The World According To US Empire



Synopsis

What Cablegate tells us about the reach and ambitions of US Empire. Published in collaboration with WikiLeaks. WikiLeaks came to prominence in 2010 with the release of 251,287 top-secret State Department cables, which revealed to the world what the US government really thinks about national leaders, friendly dictators, and supposed allies. It brought to the surface the dark truths of crimes committed in our name: human rights violations, covert operations, and cover-ups. The WikiLeaks Files exposes the machinations of the United States as it imposes a new form of imperialism on the world, one founded on tactics from torture to military action, to trade deals and soft power, in the perpetual pursuit of expanding influence. The book also includes an introduction by Julian Assange examining the ongoing debates about freedom of information, international surveillance, and justice. An introduction by Julian Assange "writing on the subject for the first time" exposes the ongoing debates about freedom of information, international surveillance, and justice. With contributions by Dan Beeton, Phyllis Bennis, Michael Busch, Peter Certo, Conn Hallinan, Sarah Harrison, Richard Heydarian, Dahr Jamail, Jake Johnston, Alexander Main, Robert Naiman, Francis Njubi Nesbitt, Linda Pearson, Gareth Porter, Tim Shorrock, Russ Wellen, and Stephen Zunes.

Book Information

Paperback: 624 pages

Publisher: Verso; Reprint edition (September 20, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1784786217

ISBN-13: 978-1784786212

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 1.7 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Customer Reviews

I don't know how United States history is taught nowadays, but when I learned it, our country was always portrayed as the plucky underdog who stood up to the big bad British and won its

independence. Of course, when you get older you come to realize that the US may have a history of granting equal rights to minority groups that they might not receive elsewhere, but on the other hand, most of these victories are hard won. And like most countries, the US has a history of using questionable means to achieve its ends, something that is the subject of "The WikiLeaks Files: The World According to US Empire," which uses cables (now thanks to WikiLeaks are now available publicly online) to prove this point. After a discussion of US history, and a chapter devoted to giving searchers tips on how to best access the cables for information, the book is organized by continent and specific countries to discuss the US's foreign policy. Much of the information focused on is post 9/11, including President George W. Bush's "war on terror," and will likely bring back some less than pleasant memories of that period. Compared to the first Iraq war (the one with Bush senior that was over before you knew it), the second became a never-ending nightmare for a lot of Americans at home, but - as this book shows - watching the war unfold on the TV and the Internet, was nowhere near as traumatic as what those in the countries where the war on terror was actually fought went through. Dave Barry once summarized the Monroe Doctrine (discussed in detail in this book) as decreeing that other countries weren't allowed to interfere with the US's internal affairs, but not vice versa, and this is how the US is depicted here: as an extremely two-faced bully. Among the US's misdeeds discussed include publicly denouncing but privately supporting dictatorships; labeling its critics (including WikiLeaks) as paranoid or threats to national security; abuse of people held for questioning and suspected of terrorism; blatant disregard for civilians in war zones (including structures like hospitals, mosques and schools); sidestepping accepting responsibility for war crimes and actions that violate the Geneva Convention; funding dissident groups in other countries if their agendas matched the US's at the time; and when attempting to provide aid in war zones, doing so in a haphazard and inefficient manner. Bush Jr. and his Cabinet shoulder a lot of the blame for this, but they are hardly the only ones. If you have Democratic leanings and believe that things have improved since President Obama took over, however, you won't find a lot of evidence of that presented here. (Former President Jimmy Carter's handling of foreign affairs does receive some lukewarm praise.) To say that the US, (whatever it chooses to call itself), comes off poorly in this book is like saying the Titanic suffered some water damage. As an American, even one who came to see the "war on terror" as ultimately costly and pointless, it wasn't easy to read 500 plus pages of proof that pretty much the rest of the world considers us bullies. But perhaps a more constructive response to the information presented here would be not to argue that it's unfairly spun or to sweep it under the carpet, but to address it and even attempt to make sure it doesn't happen again.

The Wikileaks Files puts into perspective the role of the United States in current geopolitics and gives an insight into how the US State Department actually operates versus how it publicizes its actions. The main foundation of the evidence presented is the classified State Department cables leaked by Chelsea Manning and others. These cables are the daily written communications between the US embassies around the world and the head office back home. These cables are really the essence of this book and the Wikileaks site. This book takes us through a journey of the relationship between the US and the rest of the world, usually with an overview of the past century and ending with the state of affairs circa 2014. The analysis of each relationship is far from exhaustive, and beyond the scope of a 500+ book. Instead, each chapter is a generally concise (yet a bit disjointed) overview of the relationships, punctuated by contradictions of how each nation publicizes their relationship versus what is actually believed secretly. Ultimately, this book serves to expose the hypocrisies of the United States government as well as most of the leaders of the world. We are left to believe that the only thing that matters to all the leaders is money and power, with total disregard for human rights, democracy. The leaders of the US look like mere puppets for US corporations (which are actually multinational). Shocking, I know. Of note, there is a chapter dedicated to explaining how to access the cables on the Wikileaks Public Library of US Diplomacy website (PlusD). PlusD has made all of the leaked cables accessible to the public. It has cables dating back to the Kissinger era. Since there's no preview for this book yet, here's the table of contents: Introduction by Julian Assange Part I - Introduction 1. America and the dictators 2. Dictators and human rights 3. War and Terrorism Part II 4. Indexing the Empire by Sarah Harrison 5. US War Crimes the ICC by Linda Pearson 6. Europe by Michael Busch 7. Russia by Russ Wellen 8. Turkey by Conn Halliman 9. Israel by Stephen Zunes and Peter Certo 10. Syria by Robert Naiman 11. Iran by Gareth Porter 12. Iraq by Dahr Jamail 13. Afghanistan by Phyllis Bennis 14. East Asia by Tim Shorrock 15. Southeast Asia by Richard Heydarian 16. South Africa by Francis Nesbitt 17. Latin America by Alexander Main, Jake Johnston and Dan Beeton 18. Venezuela by Dan Beeton, Jake Johnston and Alexander Main

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