

Why Trump's Victory Wasn't a Surprise

America's liberal elitists, who look down on the discontented working class and put up a presidential candidate representing a failed Establishment, set the stage for Donald Trump's victory, journalist John Pilger tells Dennis J Bernstein.

By Dennis J Bernstein

Despite Donald Trump's long history of stiffing workers, dodging taxes and abusing women, he will become the 45th President of the United States, a remarkable turn of events that has a lot of liberals and Democrats scratching their heads and wondering how he could have beaten the powerful Clinton political/money machine.

One person who was not surprised was journalist and filmmaker John Pilger, who was born in Sydney, Australia, and now is based in London. Pilger has reported from all over the world, covering numerous wars, notably Vietnam. When he was in his 20's, he became the youngest journalist to receive Britain's highest award for journalism, Journalist of the Year, which he won twice. He also has an Emmy and his most recent book is *Hidden Agendas and the New Rulers of the World*.

Dennis Bernstein: I'm going to ask you later on about the new film, which I'm very excited about. But let's begin with [the Nov. 8] victory over Clinton, by Trump. Were you surprised? What do you think was at the core of the Trump victory?

John Pilger: You know, I wasn't surprised. Brexit undoubtedly helped this. I wasn't surprised. I think I'm quite surprised by how decisive his victory is. But I must say I felt rather angry, and I think we probably expended enough anger on Trump. He'll, no doubt, provide us with plenty of material coming up. But I think it's time for people, so-called liberal people, to look in the mirror.

Who created Trump? Who created this disastrous election, so-called campaign? In my opinion the enablers of all of this was the liberal class, in the United States. The liberal class has refused to acknowledge, in its arrogance, the huge disaffection and discontent among ordinary people. And painting them in such broad strokes has been... what did Clinton call them?... "deplorables" and "irredeemable"? That's really disgraceful.

DB: Yes, that's my father.

JP: You know, Clinton was an extremely dangerous prospect. Dangerous because she

represented a war making, rapacious status quo. The status quo would have, actually, altered slightly under her. It's my understanding, in fact, I believe that she might have provoked a very major war, with Syria and with Russia.

We don't know what Trump will do. We have to now, putting aside all the parodies and the abuse, we have to now be thinking in terms of practicalities. He's running the show. What will he do? But I think before we do that, again, we have to reflect on all the myths.

I heard a Harvard professor on the BBC, on the very night, before the count began, talk about the hard left in the Democratic Party, and how she would have to embrace the idea of Bernie Sanders and what he stood for. You know, this kind of drivel, and misrepresentation has been everywhere. The media, personally, and I'm speaking of journalists, produced probably the most unfettered propaganda I can remember at any time. In my career, this has been the worst.

There was no serious attempt, really, to analyze and examine either candidate and what they stood for. Trump was dismissed as a demon, with all the salacious stuff around him, undoubtedly some of it true, and all of that. But he was a serious candidate, he was never analyzed, and that's why there's a great surprise, and a great shock.

And, it's something that liberal America has to start coming to terms with itself. We had Barack Obama presented seriously as a candidate of hope and real change. He was nothing of the kind. He was in fact a warmonger. He's got four wars going at once. He conducted an international terrorist campaign using drones. He has prosecuted more whistleblowers than any president in American history. And, you know, when you think of Trump's disgraceful remarks about throwing people out of the country, and building a wall... who is the Deporter-in-Chief? The liberal Barack Obama. He has deported more people than any other president.

So, all of these facts have been lost and they represent a real crisis for the opposition in the United States, the broad opposition. Barack Obama's great achievement was that he killed off the anti-war movement, because people, do-eyed from the beginning, thought that Barack Obama was some kind of genuine inspirational liberal, instead of the warmonger that he is. I think there's a lot of these people [who] are going to be listening to your program, they need to hear this.

Say that there is a real opposition to Trump and what he's going to do. We don't know what he's going to do, but also an understanding of his constituency, the majority of Americans eligible to vote voted for him. That's a fact that has to be come to terms with, we have to come to terms with.

DB: You know I think, John Pilger, you know I'm thinking about all the things Hillary Clinton accused by Trump of, oh, you know, supporting Bill Clinton's attacks on women, and molestations. I'm not really interested in that, at this point, because what I'm interested in is how she sustained Bill Clinton's war policy. You remember Layla Al-Attar, right? You remember how Bill Clinton sowed his oats in his first days of his presidency by killing this leading artist of the Middle East who welcomed women into the art world, an unusual situation. It happened in the context of Hillary Clinton giving her famous speech in Beijing about women. But she never mentioned Layla Al-Attar. She never apologized to the family. Layla's daughter was blinded, in that attack. She was getting operations, getting medical treatment near Stanford where the Clintons would go visit Chelsea. And she never said a word. But, anyway, more on that?

JP: Yeah, well, that's a very good and rather notorious example. Clinton's war making is on the record, her destruction, and she was the lead destroyer of a modern state, Libya. And as a result of that destruction—which she gloated, on camera, she gloated about the gruesome murder of Gaddafi—in that destruction some 40,000 people died. Honduras, she was responsible for the coup against the democratically elected government.

DB: They call her there the Deposer-in-Chief.

JP: Yeah, yeah. And the idea that among certain liberal people that she represented some kind of honorable alternative to the verbose and unpredictable Donald Trump is so absurd. I think, again, I think all this is important because there will not be an opposition, there won't be an opposition to Trump, and there won't be an opposition to the great national security machine that really runs the United States.

I mean, okay, he's anti-establishment, but that establishment isn't going anywhere. And, yes, he will bring in his own establishment. He's talking about defense secretary. Who is it? Senator Jeff Sessions, a Republican of Alabama. And national security advisors will have a hawkish edge: General Flynn and Representative Duncan Hunter of California, there. So all this is unknown. The point is, there was very little between Trump and Clinton. And what really distracted people, diverted people, from understanding this was what is unfortunately called, because there has to be [...] a better term, identity politics.

Clinton was said to represent an advance for women. She's anything but. She's a diametric opposite of that. Clinton, the Democrats were meant to be an advance for people of color. Well, it was Clinton, the two Clintons, Bill and Hillary Clinton in the mid-90's, who devised the so-called welfare reforms that most historians, political historians, now agree was the trigger for sending so many

African-Americans into the gulag that is America's prison system.

So these, these have to be confronted because an opposition is going to be needed. At the present, there isn't one, in my opinion. There was never an opposition to Barack Obama, a violent president, who seduced the media. It's interesting that the more unpopular or that Donald Trump was made, with the media, and all of them were against him, all of them, bar some Murdock outlets, and others. But most media was against him. I think that helped to give him support. The media is held in such low regard by ordinary people. The so-called elites are held in such low regard by ordinary people. This is a class issue. There was a class issue running right through this campaign. And that has to be understood.

DB: Indeed, that word class does not come up in the United States. We're the upwardly mobile society. Everybody can make it.

JP: Well, it didn't. But it is, you know, that's what I mean by identity politics. Gender and race are separated from class. And it's not who you are, or what the color of your skin is, sometimes it is, perhaps often it is, but in the final analysis it's the power you serve. And that's class. And until the resistance to an intelligent understanding of that is swept aside, people are going to be mired in this, the distractions of identity politics. Where they don't feel any obligation, really, to find out. To find out about how the rest of humanity, how the rest of their compatriots in the United States live and what their problems are. It's all about "me, me, me." And until that is understood and discarded, discarded, and real feminism returns, not the kind represented by Hillary Clinton, real feminism, to take one major issue, then the Trumps will triumph.

DB: Real feminism? What do you mean by that John, real feminism?

JP: Well, I mean feminism that is part of class. The feminism that understands that it's not just simply the privileges of bourgeois women. That's it not simply the privileges of the readers of the New York Times, and the Guardian in this country. It is the rights of women everywhere. It is the right of women to life, in places like Iraq, but are bombed by Americans. I think it was actually the New York Times source for this but one extraordinary statistic I read not long ago, there were 700,000 widows created since 2003. The last 13 years in Iraq, widows, women...

DB: 700,000...

JP: 700,000... Now until those proclaiming themselves as feminists but keeping their feminism very parochial, very tight, and saying that a woman should be in

the White House even if she's Hillary Clinton, I would suggest they consider that fact. Those women have a right too. And those deaths were caused by American policies. And, all I'm saying is that the so-called identity, single issues have to stop being single issues. Feminism should be part of class, all the time. Because it's poor women who suffer most. And a lot of the people who voted for Trump were those women. I read that, is it 52% of white women voted for him?

DB: Something like that, yeah.

JP: Well, that has to be understood. Those women have rights too.

DB: In a little bit, I want to talk more about the press. I'm going to do that with you in the context of Jeff Sessions. Let's talk specifically about one huge foreign policy issue. How do you understand... were you able to understand the difference between Clinton, Syria, Russia and Trump? You know, we know that the Clinton machine played Trump as a dupe of Putin, in Putin's pocket, the Russians sabotaged the election, that's what most people who were supporting Clinton probably now feel that Hillary would have won if the Russians didn't subvert. But the actual policies, what do you understand about that?

JP: If they believe that, Dennis, then they suffer from, I'll be gentle, terminal naiveté. I really want to say that they are stupid. Because it's really stupid to believe that. And it's been proven to be stupid: that it was all down to the Russians. I mean, for God's sake, what nonsense. You know? Those myths... projected by the media, should be rejected, immediately. We have to learn to deconstruct and reject these propaganda messages that come out. But that one is a particularly obvious one. How could people believe such nonsense? I find that, actually, quite depressing. And I've heard it from people. How could they believe such nonsense? That the Russians were actually on the side of Trump, he was in league with them, and all of that nonsense.

What wasn't reported was there was a strand running through a lot of Trump's speeches that sounded to me like a kind of America first, what they used to call isolationist politics. We're going to deal with our people at home, we're not going to spend the treasure on overseas, and especially in going to war with countries. I mean, frankly, for those of us living outside the United States, who are not American, that's encouraging. I always find it remarkable that I've got to this stage in life and that I haven't really... and that I've survived American foreign policy.

So, Clinton was a very dangerous prospect. Trump may be a dangerous prospect too. We don't know. Will he do as he said, as he said in his acceptance, victory speech? We will have relationships, we will not have conflict with other

countries, and all that. That could be just rhetoric. Trump is Mr. Rhetoric, so who knows? I think the most important thing is that an opposition is built, a genuine movement. Now, having been seduced and subverted by Obama, and largely by Clinton and others, there has to be a real opposition in the streets. And it has to be informed. It can't accept these terrible myths.

DB: Hillary Clinton, just to bring it to Syria for a moment, she was very strong on a no-fly zone. And it did appear that Trump was a little more interested in negotiating. What do you see the dangers of a no-fly zone? That, to me, was perhaps the most frightening part of what her policy could have been.

JP: I don't know. I mean, he has said contradictory things on the Middle East. Very contradictory. He's been bellicose, in one sense. But in another, he's been... a thread that has run through Trump's speeches, fairly consistent, and that is that he wants to do a deal with Russia. He doesn't want to fight them.

It's ironic, because, as we speak... and I read only the other day, hundreds of thousands of NATO troops, Americans, British, and others, in effect, massing on the borders of Russia. Now what will happen to them? What will happen to that provocation? That's a very, very dangerous provocation. Now, will Trump diffuse it? Will he step back? I don't know.

It's interesting, he has spoken against NATO. In fact, for the Republican Convention Platform his people were asked to remove one issue, and that was that NATO would receive renewed shipments of weapons. And they were quite specific about removing that. That was pointed out to me by Professor Steven Cohen, who's been very interesting on this at New York University, and taken a lot of criticism for taking seriously, or at least analyzing some of the things that Trump has said over Russia. But, you know, we never know if he meant it. He's contradicted himself. So, now we're about to find out.

DB: I'm laughing a little bit because I think I'm a little bit afraid of the potential, in terms of where this could go. I'm not sure if I would be more frightened if Hillary was elected. A lot of people are furious with me for taking this perspective. But I, as you've outlined, Iraq, Libya... given the history, you know Honduras, Hillary Clinton, her hands are full of blood.

JP: Dennis, it's an uninformed, and often the... and often a willfully uninformed and ignorant fury that you're describing. It's a knee-jerk. You know we're in the age of the knee-jerk, of social media, knee-jerk, government by Facebook, war by media. It's an anti-intellectual time, not to think through. So the fury you describe, I would suggest, is almost a willfully ignorant one. Because what are we if we're not questioning, and what are we, if we're not pointing out that which the mob, as they used to call them in the 19th century, disagrees with?

DB: Now, let me sort of put Henry Kissinger and Jefferson Beauregard Sessions, as he's known inside Alabama, together in a question about the media. It was very interesting to me... I mean I have investigated a number of church burnings, probably 30 or 40 that took place in Alabama when Jeff Sessions was the attorney general. Before that he was the U.S. attorney prosecuting phony voter fraud.

But Jefferson Sessions is the pre-eminent racist. I was interested, everybody was upset about David Duke. Well, he's a frightening fellow, former Klan member. But it was Sessions who was the uptown Klan. He was one of the funders, he was one of the prosecutors of the same kinds of stuff that continue in terms of undermining people of color's rights to vote, and poor people's' rights to vote in this country. But the media, they were upset about Duke, but they don't know who Sessions is.

JP: No, they don't know. Isn't that interesting? And Sessions is being considered, as I understand it, as Trump's Defense Secretary.

DB: Well, for him, anything outside the border of Alabama is foreign policy.

JP: Yeah. Now, if that's correct, then [...] how you've described him, of course, it's worrying. This is a new situation, entirely new situation. And this is Trump now building a completely new, presidential establishment. But I do stress, that the so-called old establishment, the Pentagon, the intelligence, the NSA, the CIA, and all the rest of them, are going nowhere. They are the establishment. They will remain the establishment.

Actually, Trump reminded us, in his acceptance speech that he had something like 200 generals and admirals... I suppose there must be a lot of generals and admirals, former ones anyway hanging about. But he had 200 of them. Hillary had a lot of them because the Pentagon serving generals and admirals came out and demanded that Trump be beaten. Just as the CIA demanded that Trump be beaten. And the State Department demanded that Trump be beaten. He's building his own establishment but those... the old establishment will remain as powerful as it's always been.

What will give Trump power is the fact that he has both the houses in Congress, including many of his enemies in the Republican Party. And they also demanded that he be beaten. So that's a volatile situation.

DB: Indeed it is. What about this? How do you see this sort of parallel structure that people talk about in terms of the relationship... you mentioned it in the beginning of the interview, between the Brexit vote and Donald Trump? Is this sort of a parallel structure?

JP: Yeah, I think it's related. And your first question, you know, was I

surprised? Yes. Ah, no, I wasn't surprised that much, because of Brexit. I think we are at a stage in contemporary history where people almost feel like a Greek chorus, they can see and they are aware of what is happening, but they feel they can't do anything about it. I think that's widespread.

And it doesn't only apply to working people. I think it applies, in the United States, of course, we go back to the issue of class. It certainly does apply to working class people, but it applies to many in the middle class which has been destroyed by these extreme neoliberal economic policies, in recent years.

So, that's what happened here, in Brexit. I always felt that Brexit was a rebellion. It was a rebellion. It was people saying, "We're fed up with these arrogant elites, taking away our basic rights, ignoring us, not hearing us." And I think many people...it wasn't... it was painted, of course, by the liberal class in Britain, as the result of a possibility of increased immigration. Yes, that was part of it. But it wasn't... it was only part of it.

It was about impoverished people, people losing the very underpinning of their security and the security for their families. And that's exactly true in the United States. You go to places like Kentucky where... in those ravaged coal areas, where the life expectancy, I read recently is less than that of Ethiopia. Alright, that may be right at the end of the spectrum. But, you know, it applies to all the states that Trump won. Pennsylvania, particularly, Ohio, and others.

Yeah, and that applied here in a different sense, but not really. It's about... it's about a rebellion. In the United States, there is a vacuum on outside the establishment. I would say that both Clinton and Trump were extreme right-wing. That's how I would describe them.

DB: Well, it was a riveting moment, I guess you could say, when I think it was in a debate with Bernie Sanders, Hillary Clinton evoked, as one of her key advisors, Henry Kissinger.

JP: Yeah.

DB: That was pretty extraordinary, right?

JP: Yeah, well, you know as someone who should have been prosecuted a long time ago, has been wrong on practically everything anyway, I'm not surprised. She is extreme right-wing. Trump is extreme Populist right-wing. And we're still to find out what that means.

But my point is, that that, even in the center, in the social democratic space, in the former, going way back, Democratic Party space which now doesn't... Democratic Party as far as a reforming party is long gone. But that doesn't

exist. The United States has never had a Labor Party. They've got a Labor Party, we've got a Labor Party here, but that's been corrupted by our very own, although rather different in personality, Clinton-type character, Tony Blair. And all the others. That's been corrupted.

And that... in Britain, that has given rise to the extraordinary popularity of Jeremy Corbyn, who never wanted to be leader of the Labor Party, but was really swept up in it by a popular movement, that came straight from this disenchantment, this disaffection, this rejection of the political system.

The same disaffection and disenchantment is in the United States. But who do people vote for? Who do people vote for? In comes Trump, trumpeting all the American stuff about, you know, I'm a rich man, but I got rich because I knew how to do it, and you can too. Speaking this populist language. I don't think Sanders was ever a threat. And really Sanders is a disgrace. You know, his embrace of Clinton was so false some, to the point where Clinton could declare him as an ally. So he was never a threat. He joined, he joined up.

DB: That was really troubling, and obviously, a lot of young people who supported Bernie Sanders, were profoundly troubled. And, I've spoken to some of them, and they are furious, and they didn't show up for Hillary even though they had it drummed into their heads, things like, "Even if it's just the vote on the Supreme Court, that alone is worth it." The appointment of liberal judges.

JP: Yeah. This is grasping for straws, really. And people have got to be, got to stop being disappointed. They've got to be stopped being shocked. Stop being surprised. They've got to understand why something happened. They've got to inform themselves. And they've got to be part of a real movement, a real oppositional movement. Nothing less than that will do now.

DB: John, you've got a new film that's just coming out now, about to come out. Among other things, it's sort of a document that calls attention to the fact that the United States, under Barack Obama, has been engaged in a massive, and very dangerous nuclear buildup. This is in the context of Hillary Clinton being Secretary of State. So would you tell us a little bit about what you've learned about Obama and about the film?

JP: Yeah, not only... well, it's about China as a target. At present... and, Dennis, this is truly shocking, in the northern hemisphere, there is the biggest buildup of U.S. led NATO forces since World War II, confronting Russia. In the Asia-Pacific, there is the biggest buildup of U.S. Naval forces confronting China. This was not an issue. This was not an issue. It is truly something in the election campaign that we just had. And the... you know, we're faced with so much provocation [that] has gone on, and that's what my film is about. It has to do

with the Asia-Pacific. But the nuclear issue has returned.

Under Obama, nuclear warhead construction and spending increased massively. It increased in spite of Obama's pledge in 2009 to help get rid of nuclear weapons. The opposite happened. There's something like a trillion dollars has been earmarked to be spent on nuclear weapons development in the coming years. Nuclear... the whole nuclear issue is so urgent, it's so urgent because of this, these provocations against Russia, against China, both of them nuclear armed powers. China has reportedly changed its nuclear weapons policies to first strike, as a direct consequence of this pressure from the United States. Now what will happen to that? That's such an important question, because war and peace really should be at the top. If a kind of apocalyptic war broke out then all other issues are irrelevant.

DB: We see this in the so-called U.S. Pacific Pivot, how dangerous this is getting. Again, because of idiotic U.S. press, all attention is on this so-called maniac in North Korea that we have to do something about. But I think the point here is that we've got another... when it comes to nuclear proliferation, and weapons, we've got a maniac in the White House.

JP: Well, yeah, that's it. And there's always been a maniac in the White House, I'm afraid. And that's why I said recently I am always grateful that I'm still here, that I haven't found myself witnessing my own demise in some nuclear apocalypse, that was the result of U.S. foreign policy. Our understanding of who's the maniac... I don't think North Korea is a threat, really, to anybody, frankly.

What North Korea wants is a peace. They want a peace treaty with the South. They want a peace treaty with the United States. They almost had it a while ago. That's what they want. And I don't think they're a threat. But they're exploited. With their recent test of, I think a nuclear missile, the U.S. has employed, or is about to employ these THAAD missile defense system. These are very aggressive. They got the word defense in there but they're very aggressive.

DB: And they're aimed, they're meant to be aimed, at China.

JP: They're aimed at China. They're not aimed at North Korea, well maybe in the end, North Korea. But North Korea is regarded, really, contemptuously, as an opposition of power. They're aimed at China. And China is being told now—this is from Clinton's speeches, that WikiLeaks released—according to Clinton, you know, the threat against China is that you control North Korea or we'll let you have some of their missiles, but they're all aimed at China. And when I was in Okinawa recently, there's no question, 400 – 500 miles from China, that in the 132 U.S. bases on the island, they were all aimed at China. Now that is a

massive, provocative situation. Will Trump dismantle it? Or will he appease it? Or will he use it? These are the questions.

DB: These are big questions. And this may seem a little bit silly but I think it makes a lot of sense. In the midst of everybody talking about the crazy person in the north, we learn that Park [Geun-hye], the current president, the daughter of the late and bitter dictator of South Korea has been... one of her key advisors has been a seer. That she's been taking advice from somebody who has been essentially sort of a phony, if you will, a crystal ball reader who has the attention of the president. And so we find out that policy coming out of our allies in the south, with this huge massive military operation happening in Jeju and other places. She's taking orders... people made fun of Nancy Reagan.

JP: Yeah, well I'm not surprised. I mean, South Korea is a colony. It's not an ally. It's an American colony. But it's a colony that, as a lot of colonies, can cause you a lot of trouble. The French found that with Algeria. And it's got potential for trouble. It could, you know, it could... it has some very extreme people there, and they could start a war. But it is a colony. It has thirty odd thousand U.S. troops, bases all over it. And as you mentioned, it has this... the South Koreans have built this new naval base on Jeju Island, with facilities for nuclear submarines, and Aegis missile destroyers and all the rest of it.

So... these places are flashpoints. They're flashpoints in... almost in a war waiting to happen, or in a war that is being beckoned. During the old Cold War—and I think we're in the second Cold War now—during the old Cold War, there were red lines, at least, [that] you didn't cross, there were spheres of influence. And you might probe but you didn't really cross the red lines marked down by the Soviet Union, and...which were mostly in Europe, to protect itself, of course. And the Soviets, although they supported liberation movements in the developing world, did not confront the Americans there. So there were these red lines. There are no red lines now. That's the difference. It's much more dangerous, now, in my opinion.

DB: Well, and, you know, it's interesting I'm on my way out to North Dakota, at Standing Rock, and where we see the Indigenous communities of North America trying to once again warn the genocidists of the United States government, how dangerous it is to be destroying the Earth, the water flow, not to mention destroying sacred burial grounds. We see, we've got Bull Connor coming back, in the sense that we've got dogs, an incredible, heavily armed force, brutally going after people who are resisting with their bodies, with their buffalo, with their beliefs. And the lines are drawn again. And no major candidate mentioned Standing Rock, I don't think.

JP: Yeah.

DB: Trump is invested, by the way. He's invested there.

JP: None of these pressing issues were mentioned. That's why it's a very strange time. What is going to happen now? But, again I repeat, I think it's time for people to organize. There has to be an independent, an extra-parliamentary, if you like, opposition. An opposition, a movement of the streets, a movement among people having been shamed into silence almost, during the Obama years. People have got to come back now.

DB: It's amazing how many smart people can be so stupid. I guess they are well schooled but they don't have any ability to understand foreign politics. I don't know. This country is desperate in that regard. How little the politicians know about the rest of the world. It's incredibly troubling.

JP: Yeah, so in one sense it's up to us, in the broader sense of us. Not to believe the myths. Not to accept the propaganda, not to retreat in our own introspective worlds of me. But collectively to do something.

DB: John, I left upstairs, all the background on your film. Could you remind us the name of the film and what's the schedule in terms of the distribution, and how people can pay attention?

JP: Yeah. Well, my new film is called "The Coming War on China." And it will be broadcast on the ITV network in Britain, which is the biggest television network in Europe. It will be broadcast here [England] on the 6th of December. It will be released around the same time. As yet, we don't have a distributor in the United States, and it's always difficult but we're doing work on that. And it really is about the recurring theme in much of my work, and that is the imposition of great power on people, and their resistance to it. And it's very much, as I've mentioned, about the renewal of the nuclear danger. But it traces the history of the abuse of people in order to achieve a nuclear supremacy. Part of the film is set in the Marshall Islands where between 1946 and 1958 the equivalent of more than one Hiroshima was exploded every day. People were guinea pigs.

DB: And they're still suffering.

JP: And they're still suffering. So the film traces this across a broad landscape. It starts there and it brings us across the Pacific to the 400 U.S. bases that ring China. One of which, a very important one, is in the Marshall Islands. So it tries to explain the geopolitical situation in the Asia-Pacific, and the resistance to it. It has some extraordinary people resisting this militarism in Okinawa, and Jeju, and the Marshalls. And we've got a lot to learn from them.

DB: And just to note, I mean it is interesting the Chinese are not sitting still for this and they've just joined, if you will, with the Russian fleet on their way to Syria. So this is getting pretty ugly.

JP: Yeah.

DB: This is a touchstone for more terrible things. Well, John, I do thank you for spending the hour with us. It's always enlightening, to have you. I want to tell people that your name is John Pilger. And you're, really, an inspiration to me and many journalists who really believe in getting down and finding out what's really going on. One of your latest books is *Hidden Agendas and the New Rulers of the World*. You've got your film coming out *The Coming War Against China*. And you wrote a piece most recently *Inside the Invisible Government War: Propaganda, Clinton and Trump*. And you did an excellent interview with Julian Assange.

JP: Yeah, yeah. Interestingly, that interview with Julian Assange went out on, RT, Russia Today, and one of the reasons it did, well they a good job of it, such a good job that it ended up with something like four million viewers. But no other broadcast, mainstream broadcast would take it. They have their own agendas. And that has to be understood by people. If you want to find out what is going on, you abandon the media as it's presented to us. It's unwatchable, it's really just a product of enduring propaganda.

DB: And if you happen not to like Donald Trump, you can thank the corporate media who didn't mind getting rich on Trump. And sort of gave him 50 to 1 coverage compared to the other candidates.

JP: Yeah, yeah.

DB: Unbelievable. What a struggle.

Dennis J Bernstein is a host of "Flashpoints" on the Pacifica radio network and the author of *Special Ed: Voices from a Hidden Classroom*. You can access the audio archives at www.flashpoints.net.
