

Renowned Australian journalist and anti-imperialist John Pilger passes away at 84

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London, December 31 (RHC)-- John Pilger, the renowned Australia-born investigative journalist who was a trenchant critic of the West's imperialist foreign policy, has died at age 84. His family released a short statement on his social media accounts on Sunday to confirm his passing in London, the British capital, a day earlier.

“His journalism and documentaries were celebrated around the world, but to his family he was simply the most amazing and loved Dad, Grandad and partner. Rest in peace,” the statement read. He is survived by long-time partner, journalist Yvonne Roberts, and his two children, Sam and Zoe.

Thousands of people took to social media to mourn his death and remember his work. “The world just lost one of its finest journalists and a man of utmost integrity,” one user wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter.

“A great journalist, a fine man, and a tower of strength has fallen,” another wrote.

Pilger was born in Sydney, Australia in 1939, but developed much of his career when staying in the United Kingdom, where he began working as a freelance journalist in the early 1960s.

His main focus was uncovering and exposing abuses of power by governments and large corporations. He was an unwavering critic of the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom’s foreign policies, which he considered to be driven by an imperialist and colonialist agenda. He was a strong and active vocal critic of the U.S.-led military interventions in countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

In his book, *The New Rulers of the World*, Pilger exposed the role of the West in the 1960s coup in Indonesia and the US-led “war on terror” that ravaged Iraq.

Pilger was internationally acclaimed for his documentaries, which chose diverse subject matters and uncovered atrocities from around the world.

He made *The Quiet Mutiny* (1970) after a visit to Vietnam. In 1979, his *Year Zero* showed the heart-wrenching aftermath of the overthrow of dictator Pol Pot in Cambodia, propelling him to international fame and directing attention to the plight of civilians in the Southeast Asian nation.

His latest in an illustrious list of dozens of documentaries, *The Dirty War on the NHS*, was released in 2019 and detailed an investigation into the woes of the British health system.

Pilger was also a serious critic of the Australian government’s treatment of his country’s Aboriginal peoples and wrote *The Secret Country* – his best-selling history of Australia – and made several documentaries about the subject.

He had a long history of writing books and articles and making documentaries about the Palestinian people and their brutal treatment by Israel and its Western allies.

Several of his final posts on social media dealt with the carnage unfolding in the Gaza Strip, where nearly 22,000 Palestinians, including many journalists, have been killed so far by the Israeli military since October 7.

“When I was last in Gaza, the Israeli air force terrorised the population by flying fast and loud and low at night,” reads a post from last month. “All children bed-wetted and had violent nightmares, said a psychologist, and were ‘damaged forever’. Such is Israel’s exercise of its ‘right to self defence’.”

Pilger was a staunch ally of jailed Australian journalist Julian Assange and had spent much of the past decade campaigning for his freedom.

“Julian and David are Spartacus,” he wrote in his final published piece last month, in reference to Assange and Australian whistleblower David McBride. “The Palestinians are Spartacus. People who fill the streets with flags and principle and solidarity are Spartacus. We are all Spartacus if we want to be.”

Pilger was a two-time recipient of Britain’s Journalist of the Year award and received numerous accolades around the world, including the Sydney Peace Prize in 2009.

“It is not enough for journalists to see themselves as mere messengers without understanding the hidden agendas of the message and myths that surround it,” reads his quote that adorns his website and social media accounts.

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