



## Australian Citizens Party

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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## Parliament must demand answers from liar Bill Browder

Almost lost in all the coronavirus drama is the Parliament's inquiry into "targeted sanctions to address human rights abuses" a.k.a. a Magnitsky Act. The Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade inquiry will today hear testimony from Bill Browder, the British hedge fund manager whose claims against Russian officials are the basis for the Magnitsky Acts that have been rolled out around the world. There is a growing body of evidence that has exposed Browder as a fraudster—will the members of the Committee do the bidding of the UK and USA and just accept Browder's claims, or will they do their job and demand real answers before signing Australia up to this agenda?

Browder—whose Hermitage Capital hedge fund is backed by British banking giant HSBC, the world's most criminal bank that gets away with laundering money for drug cartels and terrorists—claims he ran afoul of the Putin "regime" when his lawyer Sergei Magnitsky discovered a massive tax fraud and as a result Magnitsky was imprisoned, tortured and killed by Russian officials. The truth is Browder was engaged in massive tax evasion which Russian authorities discovered in the early 2000s, which is why they investigated his Russian business. Magnitsky, who did not discover the 2007 tax refund fraud against the Russian Treasury (it was reported in the press months before he mentioned it in testimony), wasn't a lawyer, but the accountant who handled Browder's tax evasion and was arrested in that investigation. Browder left him to carry the can and [by his own admission under oath hardly bothered to lift a finger to help](#); and despite Magnitsky's unfortunate death in prison, due to ill-health and likely insufficient medical treatment—not torture—Browder didn't make an issue of it for a number of years, until it became a convenient *cause celebre* in the Anglo-American escalation against Russia.

The committee would be primed to assume that the above refutation of Browder is Vladimir Putin's "talking points", as Browder likes to say. The most devastating exposé of Browder is a film by Russian filmmaker Andrei Nekrasov, [The Magnitsky Act—Behind the Scenes](#), which started as a film to tell Browder's story. But because Nekrasov is Russian, he could see that Browder's Russian-language documents did not say what Browder claimed they said, leading him to do his own investigation. The resulting film shreds Browder's lies so comprehensively that Browder has used his and HSBC's considerable resources to stop almost all screenings where it is scheduled. Despite Nekrasov being an anti-Putin filmmaker, Browder calls him Putin's agent.

In breaking news, however, there is now a third instance where a European institution has ruled against Browder's claims. [The German Press Council has rejected a complaint](#) made by Browder against a 23 November 2019 article in *Der Spiegel* by Benjamin Bidder, "[Death of a lawyer](#)", which Bidder opened with: "When the US imposes sanctions for human rights violations, they invoke the case of one prisoner allegedly murdered in Russia. They are based on the reports of the investor Bill Browder. Is the West taken in by a fraudster?" The full article proves the answer is yes.

The German Press Council stated Browder's claim "is not to be regarded as a proven, and therefore indisputable, fact". Yet this is the claim upon which all the Magnitsky Acts around the world have been enacted! Interestingly, the German Press Council made its ruling, and replied to Browder, in January, around the time Browder made his submission to the Australian parliamentary inquiry. But Browder didn't make it public, and it has only now come to light. Did Browder admit this ruling against him in his submission to the Australian Parliament?

The German Press Council ruling follows a December 2019 [Danish Press Board ruling against another Browder complaint](#) over an article by a Danish financial news outlet, Finans.dk, on his tax evasion and invented Magnitsky story. Significantly, both the Danish and German cases involve mainstream media, which usually toe the US-UK-NATO strategic line against Russia which Browder's story serves. And these press complaint rulings follow a [September 2019 European Court of Human Rights](#) ruling that there was credible evidence that Magnitsky and Browder were engaged in a conspiracy to commit tax fraud and that Magnitsky was rightfully charged.

### Targeted sanctions are tools for war

Targeted sanctions against individual officials in foreign governments are a new weapon in the Anglo-American Trojan horse of using human rights to destabilise governments targeted for regime change. As a US State Department official [wrote in a 2017 memo](#) to then new Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, the USA only uses human rights against its adversaries, like Russia and China, and not against its

allies, like head-chopping Saudi Arabia. If Australia passed a Magnitsky Act, it would be tagging along with the USA and UK in picking fights with other governments to keep international tensions on the boil, even to the detriment of our own economy.

It's no coincidence that it's the anti-China gang in Parliament who are pushing for an Australian Magnitsky Act. Bizarrely, they are mostly pumped up juvenile MPs, including Kimberly Kitching, Andrew Hastie, James Paterson, and freedom boy Tim Wilson, who call themselves "the Wolverines" after the heroes of the paranoid 1984 Cold War movie *Red Dawn*, and leave stickers of claw marks on the doors of parliament house. These are the people who hold the economic security of Australia's beef and barley exporters in their hands.

If the members of the Joint Committee do not question Browder about these rulings, and on his many lies that have been repeatedly exposed, they will be aiding and abetting a fraud. If they then use that fraud to ram through an Australian Magnitsky Act to use as a diplomatic weapon against China over fake human rights concerns, Australia's political leaders will be further endangering the economy even more than it is, and exposing Australia to the danger of war on a lie as blatant as weapons of mass destruction.