

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نباشد تن من مباد بدین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

by THOMAS KLIKAUER
26.09.2019

Propaganda and Politics in the USA, UK and Australia



Photograph Source: Rae Whitlock – [CC BY-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/)

Two weeks ago, former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has analysed the link between politics and the media in three countries – the UK, USA and Australia. In all three countries, Rupert Murdoch's media empire has achieved a decisive influence. Among many others in Murdoch's global media empire, Murdoch runs The Sun in the UK, Fox in the USA and the Daily Telegraph in Australia. Ex-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd explains why Labour (UK), Labor (Australia) and the Democrats (USA) hardly ever win elections despite the fact that many pressing issues would favour the progressive side of politics such as growing inequality, wage stagnation, underfunding of hospitals, desolate public schools, universities increasingly out of reach for the middle class, global

warming, rising poverty, homelessness, etc. Despite all this, in all three countries – UK, USA and Australia – we see conservatives win election after election. Currently, all three countries are governed by conservatives, just as Murdoch wants it. Perhaps this is because Labour (UK and Australia) and the Democrats (USA) are engaged in a two against one fight when it comes to elections. They face two opponents: the conservatives and the powerful force of Murdoch's highly influential media empire. At the same time, the conservative parties face only one opponent in their respective countries: Labour (UK), Labor (Australia) and the Democrats (USA).

Here are just three examples that illustrate the influence of Murdoch's media on politics. The first comes from a while back when all but one of the 175 newspapers owned by Rupert Murdoch around the world supported the war against Iraq in 2003. The outcome of this war was a political, economic and human disaster on a monumental scale.

The second example is global warming – or climate change as the mass media prefers to call it because it is less threatening. In 2010, two men toured Australia on the issue of global warming. One was the distinguished climate expert James Hansen, a NSAA scientist, the other Christopher Monckton, a Lord from Britain with no scientific education. According to Simon Butler, here is what happened with regard to the media's role in politics:

British climate denier Lord Christopher Monckton's tour of Australia in early 2010 overlapped with a visit by US climate scientist James Hansen. Both were visiting Australia to promote their views on climate change. A Media Monitors study, published by Crikey in March, found that Monckton received 455 media mentions. Hansen, one of the world's top climate scientists, received a mere 21 media mentions.

This is How Propaganda Works. The next example is from Brazil. It is about Murdoch's strong support of Brazilian authoritarian strongman Jair Bolsonaro who – together with Murdoch – believes that former president Lula da Silva should rot in prison. This is perhaps because President Lula fought Brazil's very powerful landed aristocracy, trying to save the Amazon's rainforest while making very serious inroads into lowering Brazil's traditionally extremely high poverty rate. Here is the example on the power of the media over politics and politicians:

Two academics calculated that about 95% of the articles about corruption in the Brazilian press before the 2010 and 2014 presidential elections were about the Workers' Party (PT) and only 5% about the conservative PSDB (Brazilian Social Democracy Party), although that was described as the 'dirtiest' by the country's electoral authority.

Meanwhile back in Australia, the UK and the USA, things continue to look bad for Labour and the Democrats. In their a two against one fight, Labour and the Democrats hardly win. And this is exactly what we see – Donald Trump in the USA, ScoMo in Australia and Boris Johnson in the UK.

Thanks in no small part to Murdoch's UK media empire, the UK's conservatives are leading labour by about 8% despite the fact that British conservatives have engineered one of the biggest political disasters in British post-war history – Brexit. And even though Murdoch keeps Labour out of office for most of the time, once elected things do not look much better for Labour as they have to tow the line with Murdoch. As an elected Australian Labor politician said to me once, 'our guide is don't upset the Tely', Murdoch's all-powerful Sydney newspaper, the Daily Telegraph.

A final case in point is the recent non-election of Australia's Labor party. Favoured in polls for months if not years, Labor was set to win Australia's last election. But once Murdoch's media took up the fight, they lost spectacularly – most heavily in those geographical areas where Murdoch has achieved a North-Korean-style coverage as his paper is pretty much the only newspaper in town.

Ever since Salomon's Asch's study on influencing people (1955) we know how easy it is. Murdoch knows that and uses it daily. Perhaps one of the world's most eminent journalists – John Pilger – was right when he described Australia not as a democracy but as Murdocracy. Perhaps that is the plight not only for Australia but wherever Murdoch has set his eyes on.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2019