

Syrian Elections and the ABC's Farce

By Wayne Sontter Thursday 5 June –

Given the Syrian presidential elections had just been held and Syria has been in the spotlight quite a bit over the last few years, I thought I'd turn on my radio (fairly) early this morning and see if I could catch the results. I thought I would tune into the Australian Broadcasting Commission – "Australia's most trusted, independent source of news" apparently – and see what was reported. ABC Radio National had news at 6am, 6.30am, 7am, 8am and 9am, at which time I went off to work. In between the news reports were continuous breakfast current affairs programs.

The only mention of the Syrian elections during this time was in the 6am news, which dismissed the elections in a few sentences: "Syrian president Bashar al-Assad has been re-elected in a landslide win, after a vote in which much of the country could not take part. The speaker of Syria's parliament, Mohammad al-Laham, says Mr Assad won the election, with 88 per cent of the vote. The constitutional court in Syria says the turnout for the election was 73 per cent - an unlikely figure given that the vote did not take place in opposition-held parts of Syria. The US Secretary of State John Kerry said the election was "meaningless". "With respect to the elections that took place, the so-called elections, the elections are non-elections, the elections are a great big zero," Mr Kerry said.

That was it. It seemed Mr Kerry's dismissal was sufficient for the matter to be dismissed generally. (the on-line version of the news report is no better – see: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-06-05/syrias-assad-re-elected-president-in-farce-election/5501422>).

By the way an international delegation of parliamentary observers from Russia, Iran, Brazil, Venezuela, North Korea, Tajikistan, the Philippines, Uganda, as well as representatives of Canada, the United States, Ireland, Pakistan, Malaysia and Bahrain, were present during the elections and have unanimously declared that, "the expression of people's will was valid and the polls passed in a democratic and positive atmosphere." See: <http://en.itar-tass.com/world/734657>

When I came home this evening I thought I'd check and see if the ABC had provided any further coverage on the Syrian elections during the day. The only other reporting was in 'The World Today', between noon and 1pm. It was not mentioned in any further news broadcasts that I heard, nor was it featured on PM, the evening current affairs slot. For all intents and purposes the Syrian elections had exhausted their news worthiness.

The World Today's four-minute report was not only dismissive, but also insidious – and worth deconstructing a bit.

While claiming it was "unsurprising" that Assad was elected in a landslide (it must have been rigged, get it!), voting it reiterated, was only in government held areas (including Lebanon?) and excluded large areas in the north and east held by the "rebels" (i.e., the foreign, mercenary, jihadi death squads). That these areas are mainly rural with a relatively small population was not mentioned. Certainly though the areas

under Syrian government control (plus the refugees in Lebanon), are very likely to hold the great majority of the population, including those internally displaced who fled rebel-plagued areas for more secure, that is government held areas.

And if the western-imperialist narrative is believable – that overseas Syrians have fled to escape the ruthless Assad – why would countries like United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Turkey and Jordan (especially), the United Arab Emirates and Egypt, not want Syrians in these countries to vote, where they are definitely beyond the control of the Syrian government? Yet these the governments of these countries (and also Australia) denied Syrians their right to vote in the Syrian elections. One can only assume it was feared that the votes in these countries would prove the lie of the imperialists' propaganda, and raise the question among their own populations – why are these governments working for regime change in Syria, if Syrians, whether inside or outside the country endorse the existing Syria?

The reporter then “finds” a local activist (who is actually talking to Al-Jazeera, not the ABC correspondent), in this case a certain Radwan Ziadeh, who reports on the terrible barrel bombing going on in his home town Darya and says the election will change nothing – it is only Assad proving his popularity among Alawites. Bit of a bummer isn't it Radwan?

But who is this Radwan Ziadeh? In fact he has not lived in Syria since 2007, but resides in USA, where he has been a spokesman for the US-fabricated, Muslim Brotherhood dominated Syrian National Council. He works in the “independent”, but pro-SNC/FSA think tank, the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (see: [http://www.ispu.org/pdfs/ISPU_Report_DissectingUnfldngCrisis_normal_\(1\).pdf](http://www.ispu.org/pdfs/ISPU_Report_DissectingUnfldngCrisis_normal_(1).pdf)) a body closely associated with the New America Foundation (see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_America_Foundation), quite a liberal-democratic establishment think tank supported by all the usual suspects.

By the way here is a Ziadeh addressing the American Jewish Committee in July 2011 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krTtu7LAmBI>

The views of our man on the ground are, amazingly enough, “echoed” among western nations, according to the ABC Middle-East correspondent, quoting, yet again John “Swift Boat” Kerry.

But to be fair, the ABC seeks balance so it pulls in an alternative view, that of Andrew Tabler of the Washington Institute (have a look at its site – you'll get the idea: <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/>), again, by sheer coincidence speaking with Al Jazeera, one of the ABC's “safe” and authorised middle east news sources.

Tabler says the election and its result IS an endorsement of some kind for Assad, thus it is important, because “this is the political program that backs up his attempt to shoot the Syrian people into submission and I think that's actually running up against US policy and confounding most US policy objectives”!!! Clever, but naughty, Mr Al-Assad!

The Black Hitler – sorry the new messiah – Obama Barak has firmly stated his position on the matter of Syria, something that should be appreciated, because after all he is busy in Europe at the moment preparing to write his name into the history books

along with Napoleon & the Aryan Hitler, for starting a world war and – third time lucky – conquering Russia from the west. Go Obama! The end of the world really needs you!

Our MOTW (master of the world) intends to redouble his efforts and spend a lot of money to support the “opposition” (not the one within Syria – the one set up and sent to Syria) and “change the dynamics on the ground”, so the Syrian people can “stand up against a dictator who bombs and starves his own people” (but who nevertheless seems inexplicably popular). This is to be achieved by arming and funding “moderate” terrorists, who, while rejecting even the pretext of democracy, will agree to stay in Syria while they impose feudal totalitarianism there, rather than spread all over the Middle East and Europe.

See: <http://www.blackagendareport.com/content/elections-syria-people-say-no-foreign-intervention>

If this is the war against terrorism, then it is the cure that is causing the disease!