



## Panama Papers

The disclosure of the internal documents of the Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca on 3 April 2016, now known as the 'Panama papers', exposes something of the unparalleled corruption in the worldwide Capitalist order. But it must be understood that the highest level of corruption is in the Capitalist West itself.

The documents, spanning four decades, provide details of thousands offshore companies, trusts and foundations established to channel the wealth of hundreds, comprising politicians, officials, businessmen and others, through 'offshore tax havens' offering little legal or taxation oversight, enabling even the ownerships of these investments to be masked. In many cases relatives and associates of key figures have been used as conduits for these funds, such as the cousin of Bashar al-Assad, the sons of Nawaz Sharif, the brother-in-law of Xi Jinping and the long-time musician friend of Vladimir Putin. Close to four hundred journalists from more than one hundred media organisations have been working over the last year to analyse the more than 11 million documents released from the firm.

Corruption is inevitable in Capitalism. The Capitalist ideology promotes material self-interest above all else.

Many forms of wealth accumulation by politicians and government officials have of course been legalised, so people do not usually think of such practices as incorrect. But despite this, the addictively materialistic habits of Capitalist politicians and government officials are always pushing them beyond even the weak legal restrictions that are still in place.

Corruption in Capitalism is not simply an undesirable consequence of the material self-interest of unethical politicians. It is, by design, one of the key mechanisms by which vested interests are able to take control of democratic governments. Democracy, as it is academically understood, cannot practically exist. It is simply not possible for vast populations to collectively design comprehensive legislation, just as it is not possible for vast populations to collectively design complex engineering systems. So in reality Western democracies are oligarchies, controlled and directed by elite interests who sometimes cooperate with each other but who are sometimes in competition with each other also. As such, corruption is far more rampant, and of a far higher order in Western democracies than elsewhere in the world; but Western democracies are far more adept at concealing, managing and legalising their corruption, so it is usually non-Western countries that are left with a bad reputation for being corrupt.

The leak of the Panama papers follows this pattern. Most of the names mentioned, at least initially, are of individuals outside of the Western sphere, for instance Putin and Xi Jinping. But as China's Global Times editorial says, "The Western media has taken control of the interpretation each time there has been a document dump..."; it also noted that, "Information that is negative to the US can always be minimised, while exposure of non-Western leaders, such as Putin, can get extra spin". It is interesting, for example, that of the 11.5 million documents leaked, only 149 were initially released to the public. The West will continue to carefully choreograph future document releases in order to support their own political objectives while minimising damage to themselves.

The present Muslim rulers are undoubtedly corrupt, as illicit wealth is the key lever through which these Western agents are controlled by their masters. But it would be a great mistake to think that the West has not achieved far, far greater levels of corruption in their own lands. The West's own elite has no reason to go all the way to Panama to hide their illicit gains - there are vastly superior facilities available to them in their own countries for the safeguarding of their enormous wealth.

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