

Prime Ministerial deck chairs: What the hell is going on in Australia?

By John Passant

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It wasn't Turnbull or Shorten who unseated Abbott as PM, it was the community's stand against his rotten, neoliberal policies. We need to get back to the streets and send the same message to fight Turnbull's neoliberalism, says [John Passant](#).

IN THE last five years, the prime ministership in Australia has changed once because of an election and three times because the party has replaced the leader.

It is an interesting time line.

2010 Rudd to Gillard
 2013 Gillard to Rudd to Abbott
 2015 Abbott to Turnbull

What is going on? Why all this turmoil at the top?

As Peter Jones argues in [Solidarity magazine](#), Australia's economy had for the decade until 2011 been booming. Since then, more or less, it has been slowing down with the end of the mining boom. The further slow down in China recently could [send Australia into recession](#).

Abbott won the election in 2013 [promising little substantive change](#) – “no cuts to education, no cuts to health, no change to pensions, no change to the GST and no cuts to the ABC or SBS” – other than a return to “good” government.

Vote for ME! “no cuts to education, no cuts to health, no change to pensions, no change to the GST and no cuts to the ABC or SBS”

The reality is the Liberals did not win in 2013 because they wowed us with new compassionate policies and a caring vision, or indeed any policies or vision. Rather Labor lost, in part because some of its working class supporters had had enough of the ongoing shift of wealth from them to capital and in part because sections of the compassionate middle class continued their move to the Greens. The constant infighting between Rudd and Gillard exacerbated the problem, as did the lack of legitimacy hanging over Gillard's head in the way she assumed office from a man many Australians liked and then for her no carbon tax promise, which she broke after the 2010 election.

So why the Gillard/Rudd civil war? It wasn't some left versus right fight. Gillard was

nominally from the ALP left but that was more about easing her way up the greasy pole than anything ideological or principled. Rudd was unaligned and so had no support base, other than his seeming winning manner with voters.

There is something else in all of this. How could the Labor Party throw up as leaders people of the calibre of Rudd, Gillard, and now Shorten, people whose only commitment seems to be to ego and capital?

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— John Graham (@JohnGrahamart)
[September 15, 2015](#)

As I have written before, the ALP has been collaborating with the capitalist party to CAPILALISE the party the way to being a capitalist party. This trend has developed another pillar of managing capitalism for the benefit of global capitalists. Thus, the influence of the trade union in Australia, the Party and the working class. This was produced the Accord, successful hand Margaret Thatcher is the main thing. Shorten exercised restraint on the capital crew. It is why the Keating and Gillard no, Jeremy Corbyn for the ALP.

Howard, much as Rudd and Gillard, the ALP have been a centralist Abbott weakened trade union movement, a desperate search for relevance. There is a range of crises through why the first development and a mass delirium for a while. For about 2500 hours by 1000 employees in 1974 opposition to his year-long and less than 50 hours on lost an election being too upfront. It is one of the reasons why the ALP

of nationalised labour is backed to capitalist working and the ALP. This lack of also been a contributor to the ALP and neoliberalism's representing debating industry



Alp is a... what we have is a Labor Party where, without the aid of a right government and against a help of the state almost complete absence of open class struggle, the battle becomes between Abbott was cage the personality of the legend before the spoils of office 2013 election. In power, the

opposition both active and passive. Tony Blair did the seeds of energy class and anti-poor Budget destroyed the government's appetite for neoliberal reform. The bosses (@Politicos_uk) [September 14, 2015](#)

Turnbull is the next experiment in neoliberal leadership. He is clearly a better snake oil salesman than Abbott and his elevation has confused a number of people. His agenda is the same economically as Abbott's — to make the working class pay for the crises of capitalism. When the downturn in Australia becomes a recession he will smile as he tries to abbot us. Some may fall for it, especially given the lack of opposition that is the Shorten led Labor Party.

As he said in his victory speech:

“This will be a thoroughly Liberal government — driven by freedom, the individual and the market.”



(Image via John Passant)

Just as changing Liberal leaders won't change the fundamentals, neither will dumping Shorten for a fake leftie like Albanese or Plibersek, or promoting a smooth right-winger like Tony Burke.

There is a message for activists and socialists in the fall of Abbott. It wasn't Labor who defeated him. It certainly wasn't Shorten. It was those Indigenous, education, refugee, Medicare, feminist and other activists, the gay community and their supporters, the teachers, nurses, public servants, wharfies, building workers, and so on, actually fighting against Abbott and his rotten policies and sending a message to the wider community about Abbott's rotten policies and the fact you could reject them and resist them.

It is the same message we need to develop in fighting Turnbull's neoliberalism and that of whoever is leading

Labor at the next election. On to the streets to fight for equal love, against the closure of remote communities, against climate change, to free the refugees, for women's liberation and so on. Close down our workplaces to defend jobs and wages.

This story was [originally published on John's blog \[enpassant.com.au\]\(http://enpassant.com.au\) and has been republished with permission. You can follow John on Twitter \[@JohnPassant\]\(#\).](#)

John Howard rejects Tony Abbott's excuses: Polls, not media, to blame for his downfall.

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— ABC News Intern
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