

Western Media Calls Hugo Chavez a “Dictator”, While Endorsing a “Real Dictator” in Saudi Arabia

By [Joe Emersberger](#)

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[ZCommunications](#)

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

An [NBC news article](#) on Venezuela stated

Venezuela's next presidential election is scheduled for October 2018.
Maduro — the current president and successor to dictator Hugo Chavez
— is likely to face pressure from the opposition and from the
international community.

Thanks to the “free press” how many people would know any better? Even Bernie Sanders’ campaign was ignorant (or dishonest) enough to call the late Hugo Chavez a dictator. Hugo Chavez and current president Nicolas Maduro were both democratically elected, but when Washington (and its accomplices in Ottawa and London) want a foreign government overthrown the corporate media is always eager to help. Facts will not stand in the way.

When the media isn’t calling Maduro and Chavez dictators outright, it does all it can to insinuate that they are. It is unsurprising that they simply label them dictators from time to time. Almost two decades of propaganda pays off.

But surely a more liberal outlet, like say the Guardian in the UK, would be better – less subservient in its reporting to the foreign policy objectives of the US and its allies.

Well no. Not at all.

In recent days the Guardian has been passing off unabashed PR pieces for Saudi Arabia – perhaps the most brutal and backward dictatorship on Earth – as news articles. Saudi Arabia is also being heavily armed by the US, UK and Canada as it perpetrates a slaughter in Yemen, so it literally gets the royal treatment from the western press.

Below are two [stomach churning](#) examples from [recent days](#).

Saudi arrests show crown prince is a risk-taker with a zeal for reform



Saudi arrests show crown prince is a risk-taker with a zeal for reform

Mohammed bin Salman is confronting some of the kingdom's richest and most powerful men in his anti-corruption drive – but is he taking on too much too fast?

theguardian.com

Saudi Arabia

'This is a revolution': Saudis absorb crown prince's rush to reform

Consolidation of power in Mohammed bin Salman's hands has upended all aspects of society, including previously untouchable ultra-elite



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3,876

Martin Chulov in Riyadh



As FAIR pointed out, [hyping “reform” in Saudi Arabia](#) has been a regular feature of corporate news for at least the past 15 years, especially for one high profile pundit. Any reader who casually imbibes corporate media “news” over the past two decades will be dismayed by “repression” in Venezuela but feel hopeful about “reform” in Saudi Arabia. The propaganda system works and big NGOs like Human Rights Watch are part of it, not just the corporate media.

Consider how Human Rights Watch wrote about the death of King Abdullah in Saudi Arabia.

JANUARY 23, 2015 7:12AM EST

Saudi Arabia: King's Reform Agenda Unfulfilled

New Leadership Should Prioritize Improving Country's Human Rights Record

Available in العربية English

Print



Mild criticism combined with upbeat spin about “reform” for the late US-armed beheader-in-chief.

Now consider what Human Rights Watch put out a few hours after the death of Chavez.

March 5, 2013 5:24PM EST

Available in English Français Po

Venezuela: Chávez's Authoritarian Legacy

Dramatic Concentration of Power and Open Disregard for Basic Human Rights



MORE READING

September 18, 2008 News Release
Venezuela: Rights Suffer Under Chávez

Harsh criticism and not a positive word about a democratically elected president who greatly reduced poverty in his country despite the US-backed opposition's efforts to overthrow him by force.

Recently, Ken Roth, head of Human Rights Watch, called Nicolas Maduro a “buffoon” on Twitter. I [reminded Roth](#) that he called his own mass murdering government “the world's most powerful proponent of human rights”.

There are obvious complexities in managing such a multinational organization. For all its faults, the U.S. government remains the most powerful proponent of human rights, and the Human Rights Watch base in the United States gives the organization special access to Washington. But much of the world is rightly suspicious of the U.S. government's agenda, so Human Rights Watch is careful to maintain our independence from U.S. foreign policy (we regularly report on and criticize it) and to establish offices and working relationships in other key and emerging global capitals.

Do you want rich western states to have civilized foreign policy? Prepare to do battle with liberals like Ken Roth and the editors of the Guardian.

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