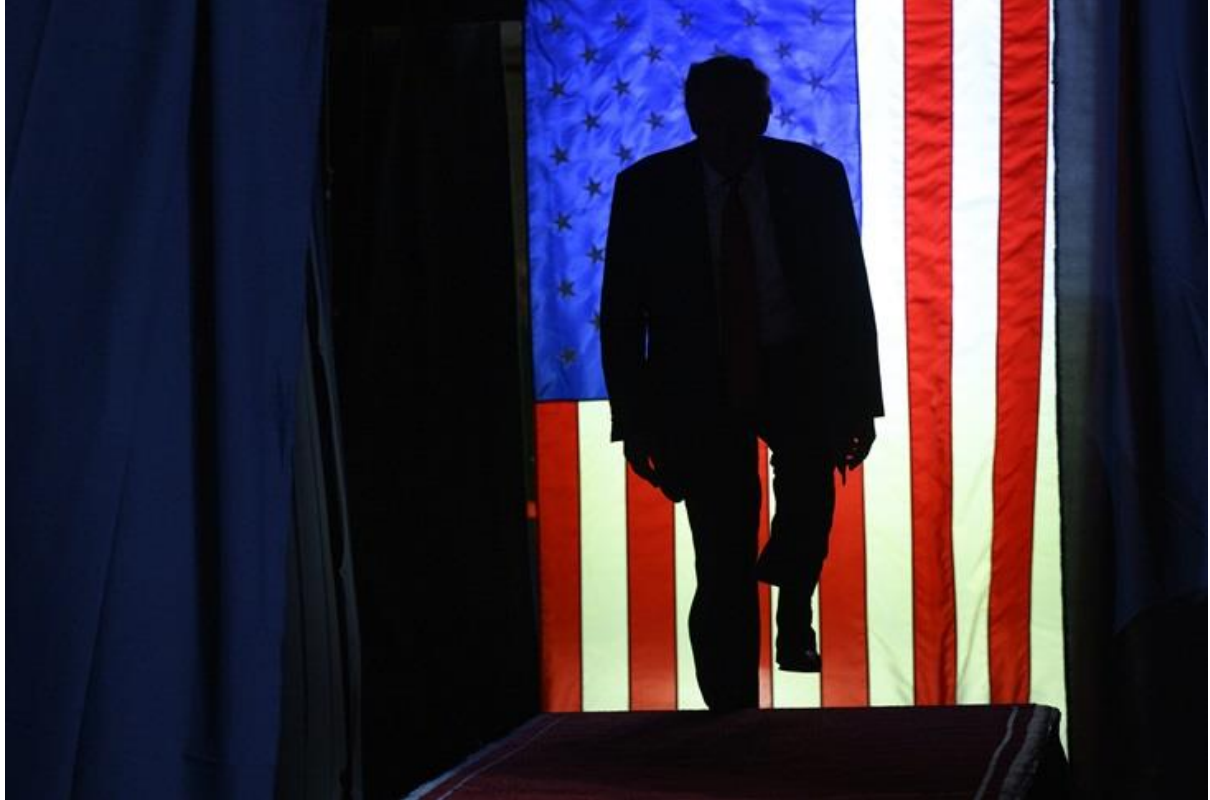


Trump a portent for Australian politics

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Trump might have only won 51 to 49 per cent of the popular vote, but the victory is assessed by friend and foe alike as so sweeping that it is already having global effects in causing even his political adversaries to modify their own policy stances.

If it wasn't apparent prior to the election, it is clear now that Trump wants to go beyond staunching the flow of Wokeism that has been, almost without remission, implanting itself within Western economies since the 1970s.

His [picks](#) for high office demonstrate a radical determination to overturn the political status quo within Defence, Energy and Climate Change, Education, Health, Immigration,

Tax, and public administration generally. Over 1,200 of the top jobs require Senate affirmation and even a heavily Trump-indebted Republican majority may push back on some he has selected. But the thrust of reform will be maintained.

Trump's choices include Pete Hegseth for Defence. A former Army major who once criticised Trump for ['falling into the narrative of the left'](#), Hegseth has already foreshadowed that he might fire the Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, revert to the 1992 military code to strip Woke policy measures from the military, and fire all top officers in charge of the evacuation of Americans from Kabul.

Then there is the Musk-Ramaswamy duo charged with cutting \$2 trillion of the \$5 trillion in budget costs and axing regulations across the board. Musk's competence in such tasks is unquestionable and neither he nor Ramaswamy will fall for any *Yes Minister* thwarting by incumbent public servants. This is especially so given the successful example of Argentina's Javier Milei downsizing his nation's bureaucracy. Doug Burgum is to head a new National Energy Council which will 'oversee the path to *US energy dominance* by cutting red tape [and] enhancing private sector investment across all sectors of the economy'. This will include removing regulations impeding fossil fuel developments and usage thereby ceasing all renewables subsidies (plus immediately banning offshore wind) slated to eventually amount to \$3 trillion under the absurdly named *Inflation Reduction Act*.

Lee Zeldin will head the [Environmental Protection Agency](#). As a Republican Congressman he was tagged by the activist 'League of Conservation Voters' as having the worst Congressional voting record on their definition of environmental issues. A champion of coal, gas, and oil and a deregulator, he is eager to rescind regulatory barriers and has talked about new coal generators (gas is the most important generator fuel in the US; coal accounts for 18 per cent).

The US will depart the *Paris Climate Agreement* immediately; one obvious outcome is that Australia will surely drop – even under its current blinkered energy policy leadership – its bid to host the 2026 energy junket-fest, COP 31, a successor to the farce currently underway in the klepto-ruled former USSR state of Azerbaijan.

Much is made of a possible resistance to subsidy removal indicated by a letter signed in August of this year by 18 Republicans representing districts which have benefitted from subsidies. The central role of deregulation, especially of energy, and the dominance of its promoters is unlikely to see these Members of Congress having more than token influence.

American energy, never having been handicapped to the extent of European and Australian regulatory burdens, will see a new lowering of costs. And the US will certainly not allow other countries to place variations of the Biden-EU proposed countervailing duties on imports that benefit from low-cost hydrocarbon fuels.

Mr Albanese, and anyone else who thinks the US abandonment of wind/solar opens up more opportunities for Australia, is blind to the incontestable evidence of the excessive costs these energy sources entail. The harm to consumers and competitiveness resulting from subsidising renewables and trying a regulatory kill-off of coal, gas and oil will now be compounded by a US economy gaining an even greater cost edge.

But the US election has wider ramifications. If, as many cogently maintain, a flagging US economy contributed to the failure of the US Democrats, incumbent governments in most other countries are in far greater trouble.

Australian socialism, vastly amplified by the Albanese government, has had far more debilitating effects than the measures deemed to have contributed to the Trump victory.

What must happen if Australian living standards are once again to advance is that Commonwealth and state governments abandon anti-business and growth-impeding Woke-populist policies. This includes rescinding the \$16 billion a year productivity-stifling costs designed to replace reliable coal and gas by wind/solar and 'green hydrogen'. It means, though this is a long-term factor, making a start in permitting nuclear power. And it means reforming environmental (and Native Title) regulations that are all too easily used by activists in and outside of government to prevent income-creating initiatives to be developed.

Recent comments by Mr Albanese on salmon fisheries in Tasmania and attempts to reduce regulatory costs in new housing show a belated recognition that government is not just about reaping some inevitable revenue flow to redistributing them to favoured constituencies. However, even if followed through, this will not take place at anything like the pace required. Indeed, the government is accelerating its spending on contracts for high-priced renewable energy via its oxymoronically named [Capacity Investment Scheme](#).

Electorates around the world are far more willing to change allegiances than in the past. We have seen this here in swings of 10 per cent and more in Western Australia and the Northern Territory and 7 per cent in Queensland. If Australian voters recognise that its governments' regulatory and excessive spending policies are undermining living standards, we can expect the sort of political turnaround we are seeing in the US.