

Who controls Fox News? A peek at the higher-ups

By SFBG

Here's an in-depth explanation of the News Corporation relationship map we ran with this week's cover package. This chart only begins to outline the close ties between the GOP, mega banks, multinational industries such as petroleum and mining, and News Corporation -- the media mega-conglomerate that owns Fox News Channel.

It is somewhat ironic that Fox strives for an image of a network that appeals to "real Americans" who are more interested in family values and patriotism than the ideas of elitist intellectuals, when its parent company is governed by an array of super-rich investors, high-level political operatives, and shrewd businessmen who are bent on advancing an economic agenda that's crippling the American middle class.

Rupert Murdoch, founder and CEO of News Corporation, is an Australian-born billionaire. According to *BusinessWeek*, "his satellites deliver TV programs in five continents, all but dominating Britain, Italy, and wide swaths of Asia and the Middle East. He publishes 175 newspapers, including the New York Post and The Times of London. In the U.S., he owns the Twentieth Century Fox Studio, Fox

Network, and 35 TV stations that reach more than 40% of the country ... His cable channels include fast-growing Fox News, and 19 regional sports channels." In 2003, when commenting to *Fortune* magazine on President George W. Bush's Iraq war, the far-right media mogul expressed his wholehearted support, saying he believed it would benefit the global economy by bringing down the price of oil.

News Corporation is a media conglomerate with multiple divisions, including newspapers, magazines, satellite television, television, cable programming, book publishing and filmed entertainment. Its total assets as of June 30, 2009 were approximately \$53 billion, and its total annual revenues were approximately \$30 billion. Its operations span the United States, the U.K., the E.U., Australia, Asia, and Latin America. News Corporation owns Dow Jones and the Wall St. Journal. It also owns the conservative New York Post, which drew protests earlier this year for running a political cartoon that appeared to compare President Barack Obama with a chimpanzee. The company owns Fox News Channel, which has drawn criticism from the White House recently for its far-right slant.

James Murdoch and Lachlan Murdoch are

Rupert's sons, and both serve on News Corp.'s Board of Directors. (Elisabeth, his daughter, previously ran Britain's BskyB television network, a News Corp. subsidiary. According to a profile that ran in *Vanity Fair*, she is married to Matthew Freud, great-grandson of Sigmund Freud and the head of a powerful London P.R. firm called Freud Communications.) Lachlan heads News Corp. in Australia, according to the *Vanity Fair* piece. James previously directed Asia's Star TV, then ran Britian's BskyB television network.

Roger Ailes sits on the Board of Directors of News Corp. and serves as chairman and CEO of Fox News Channel. Ailes' previous career as a media consultant took off when he steered President Richard Nixon to victory using successful television ads - marking the first time a campaign strategist had used TV commercials to market a presidential image. Ailes was also a media consultant for Ronald Reagan's presidential campaign, and he helped secure George H.W. Bush's campaign victory in 1988 by generating attack ads that sought to link Bush's opponent, Michael Dukakis, to convicted rapist Willie Horton. In a 1997 New York Magazine profile, Ailes was dubbed "Mr. Spin" and the "Dark Prince of the GOP." He once produced a television show for Rush Limbaugh.

Karl Rove is a commentator on **Fox News** and a regular contributor to the *Wall Street Journal*. He served as Senior Advisor to President **George W. Bush** from 2000–2007 and Deputy Chief of Staff from 2004–2007.

Jose Maria Aznar is a former prime minister of Spain and a member of News Corp.'s Board of Directors. He was a staunch Bush ally during the Iraq war, and even visited Bush at his ranch in Crawford, Texas in 2003 for discussions on Iraq, despite Spain's antiwar public sentiment. He is the president of a right-wing think tank, the Foundation for Social Studies and Analysis, which works closely with the **CATO Institute** and other right-wing U.S. think tanks, according to its Web site. Aznar's father and grandfather both held government jobs under General Francisco Franco, the fascist dictator, according to various news reports. According to an article in The Independent, a former Franco aide tapped Aznar to succeed him in leading the country's center-right party. He was nearly killed by a car bomb in 1995 planted by a Basque separatist group, and fighting terrorism has been a major focus for him ever since.

Natalie Bancroft is a member of the Board of Directors of News Corp. She is an opera singer in her late 20s. Her family previously owned the **Wall St. Journal**.

Sir Roderick Eddington is a member of the Board of Directors of News Corp. According to a Forbes profile, he was also non-executive chairman for JP Morgan Chase in Australia and New Zealand, and was formerly a chief executive of British Airways. He's listed as a director of Rio Tinto, a mining company with operations throughout the globe which mines for aluminum, copper, diamonds, coal, gold, industrial minerals like titanium dioxide, and iron ore. Eddington is also listed as a director of CLP Holdings, one of the largest electric utilities in Asia and one of two Hong Kong electricity companies. CLP Power owns a significant percentage of one of the world's largest coal-fired generation facilities, according to a company profile, and has investments in energy businesses in Australia, India, Taiwan, Thailand, and on the Chinese mainland. The company has a total generating capacity of more than 17,000 MW.

Mark Hurd, a News Corp. director, is the chairman and CEO of Hewlett-Packard, based in Palo Alto, according to a *Forbes* profile.

Thomas Perkins, a News Corp. director, is a Silicon Valley venture capitalist. He is a founding partner of **Kleiner**, **Perkins**, **Caufield** & **Byers**, an investment firm with stakes in Genentech, Google, Sun Microsystems, Netscape, Amazon, and others. He was previ-

ously an executive at **Hewlett Packard**. Perkins was the fifth husband of romance novelist Danielle Steel. He owned the 287-foot Maltese Falcon — the largest and most expensive private sailboat ever built. A partner at Perkins' firm, **John Gage**, also serves as a director of the **Markle Foundation**, a private nonprofit that provides recommendations for using technology to enhance the federal government's intelligence-sharing abilities, according to a policy paper published by the foundation. **Stanley Shuman**, another News Corp. director, is listed as a managing director at the Markle Foundation.

Andrew S. B. Knight, a News Corp. Director, is chairman of J. Rothschild Capital Management Ltd., according to a Forbes profile. That London-based firm owns RIT Capital Management, an investment company. According to RIT Capital Management's annual report, some of its largest holdings include a global energy fund that invests in oil and gas exploration and production, coal mining, oil refining and oilfield services; a fund that invests in gold, silver, and platinum mining; a fund that invests in companies involved in water supply throughout Asia; and something called Titan Partners, a U.S. equity fund. The Economist newspaper is also listed as one of J. Rothschild Capital Management's investments.

Peter Barnes, a News Corp. director, is listed as a former chair of **Phillip Morris** (Altria Group), the tobacco company, according to *Forbes*.

Phillip Morris (Altria) funds the Center for Consumer Freedom, according to a New York Times article. That group is headed by PR man Rick Berman, whom MSNBC's Rachel Maddow recently portrayed as a master of AstroTurfing: setting up fake grassroots organizations at the behest of corporate clients to win on a campaign or policy issue. Berman is a supporter of the tea party protests (a.k.a. Teabaggers). The Teabaggers overlap with Fox News commentator Glenn Beck's 9/12 Project, which seeks to drum up a groundswell of support for limiting government and cutting taxes by tapping into widespread fear and anger associated with the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

John Lawson Thornton, a News Corp. director, is listed on *Forbes* as a partner at Goldman Sachs, a director of Ford Motor Co., a chair of HSBC Holdings North America, a director at Intel, a professor and director of a Global Leadership Program at the University of Beijing, China, a member of the Board of Advisors at Yale School of Management, and a dizzying array of other memberships and affiliations.

Viet Dinh is a News Corp. director and attor-

ney who came to the United States as a boy from Vietnam. In a 2002 interview with the *LA Times*, Dinh, who then served as an assistant attorney general at the **U.S. Department of Justice**, recalled an exchange he'd had with then-Attorney General John Ashcroft in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks. "He told me: 'The art of leadership is the redefinition of the possible," Dinh recounted. "I want you to be the think tank to help me redefine the possible for the Department of Justice."

Dinh successfully redefined "the possible" by acting as a primary author of the **USA PATRIOT Act**, quickly propelling him to prominence as a darling of conservatives and an enemy of first-amendment watchdog groups.

A law professor at Georgetown, Dinh is also listed as the founder and chief of **Bancroft Associates PLLC**, a consulting firm that specializes in helping Fortune 500 companies "navigate the federal and state criminal or civil investigations, congressional investigations and complex litigation," according to the firm's Web site. It also specializes in public relations.

Stanley Shuman, a News Corp. director, is listed on Forbes as a managing director of New York investment firm Allen & Co., which employs former CIA Director George Tenet, according to BusinessWeek. Allen & Co. is also known for hosting a lavish annual retreat that attracts the ranks of the superrich. Shuman is also listed as a director of the Markle Foundation, a group of big business leaders and intelligence experts from past administrations, which advocates more efficient intelligence sharing at the highest levels of federal government to fight terrorism. The Markle Foundation's past recommendations influenced some of the legislation passed in the wake of 9/11, according to one of its policy papers, which greatly expanded government powers for information gathering. Shuman's online bio also names him as a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and notes that he served on the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board under Clinton. He is also listed as the chair of an intellectual property-rights outfit called SESAC.

John Malone, a shareholder of News Corp., is listed as a chairman of Liberty Media, the company that owns DIRECTV. Malone also serves on the board of directors of the CATO Institute, a conservative think tank that refutes the concept of climate change and advocates privatizing the nation's social security system (and works with Jose Maria Aznar's think tank).

Saudi Arabian Prince Al-Wadeen bin Talal, a billionaire and business tycoon who has been dubbed "The Saudi Arabian Warren Buffett," also owns shares in News Corp., according to various news reports. SFBG