

Plagiarism Cases in Politics

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According to Turnitin, a plagiarism checking website, the word *plagiarism* has its origins in the latin language *plagiarus*, that means *kidnapper*. The word in the form we use today *plagiarism*, was used for the first time in history by the author Ben Jonson, and he was using it to describe the literature theft. [1]

The act of plagiarism is an act of a very serious nature, regardless of the conditions under which it was carried out. It is mostly known of copy pasting some information from one place to another, but it can also be rephrasing of some materials without mentioning the source, theft of intellectual property by inserting ideas that do not belong to the person presenting them, as well as taking information without citing the source from which it was taken, or without inserting quotation marks.

Plagiarism in politics can refer to both other's ideas that are presented without credit, as well as campaign materials. The plagiarism in Politics can have sever consequences on the political figure, as it can put the integrity and qualifications of the politician into question. In this paper I will present several cases of politics plagiarism, showing both the evidence and the repercussions of these serious actions.

Several politicians around the world were facing accusations of plagiarism, being discredited in the public press, involved in lawsuits, and if found guilty, they got stripped away their titles (e.g. PHD, Dr. etc), and even punishable with a fee or jail.

Unexpectedly, Marin Luther King Jr., considered to be one of the influential people in America and awarded with a Nobel Peace prize was involved in a plagiarism scandal regarding scandal in in regard to his dissertation on the basis of which he received his PHD title in 1955. [2]

Although evidence of such an accusation would result in the person's degree being revoked on the basis of plagiarism, in Martin Luther king's case the PHD degree was not withdrawn.

In 1990-1991, the committee reviewed the dissertation of the American Baptist minister and activist, and although they found clear evidence indicating plagiarism, they decided to attach to his dissertation a summary of what they identified as plagiarized passages.

According to the New York Times, the Boston University committee that investigated the allegations against Dr. King consisted of four members, but they said they saw no purpose in revoking his degree from the same university. [3]

Another plagiarism case that worth to be mentioned is the one that involves the actual President of the United States, Joe Biden. In 1987, when he was for the first time in the run of presidential campaign, he was accused of plagiarising one of his speeches. The source of inspiration was a speech held by Neil Kinnock, a British politician at that time. After the event that is known as one of the most popular plagiarism case in history, the most important man of the United States of America apologized for the mistake he made and he dropped out the campaign. Other than the one mentioned, after Joe Biden became president, several plagiarism accusations had him as a protagonist.

Another case of plagiarism I would like to present is that of Hillary Clinton. In February 2008 she gave a speech that was the subject of much discussion because of words and passages similar to those used by the governor of Massachusetts. In this case too, the subject initially denied the accusations of plagiarism, blaming the similarities on coincidence. Subsequently, the presidential candidate apologised, arguing that she did not plagiarise with intent. This event played an important role in her election campaign, as opponents did not hesitate to criticize and publicly discredit her for what she did.

The US presidential candidate later apologized publicly, and she acknowledged that she made a mistake. This event took place in the same year that Michelle Obama delivered the speech that Melania Trump would later plagiarize.

Barack Obama was also involved in a plagiarism scandal, based on a speech he made in 2008 while he was running for presidency. The speech had the intention of introducing his wife, Michelle Obama.

Those in charge of the presidential campaign acknowledged that some language was borrowed from the Governor of Massachusetts, explicitly mentioning that they had no intention of plagiarizing. This is one of the few

cases where the consequences of such an act did not have serious repercussions for the soon-to-be President of the United States, although the situation received significant media attention.

Melania Trump is the former first lady of the United States of America. In 2016, as the wife of the future US president, she gave a speech in the state of Ohio to express her personal opinion about her husband, Donald Trump, candidate of the Republican party. Unfortunately, the discussions on this speech were not the ones she had hoped for, as there was a lot of criticism towards Melania Trump due to the similarities between her speech and the one Michelle Obama gave in 2008 for the opposition party. [4]

The most notable similarities were identified in those passages of the speech that addressed themes such as the values and principles the couple share.

As mentioned in the introduction to this report, most plagiarism cases end up in the press, being intensely discussed and harshly judged. Melania Trump's situation falls into these cases, as this speech has generated a lot of criticism. Initially, Donald Trump's campaign representatives denied the allegations, but later this incident was considered a major incident. Meredith McIver, known as Donald Trump's ghostwriter, and speechwriter of the speech in question took responsibility for the similarities identified by the public. She also offered her resignation, which was rejected by the Trump couple.

In conclusion, plagiarism in politics does not go unnoticed and has serious repercussions. After analyzing the most popular cases of plagiarism, I can say that those who have been found guilty of such accusations have suffered in terms of their careers and have even had their fraudulently obtained degrees withdrawn. Thus, in conclusion, I would like to note that it is necessary to know the ways in which plagiarism can be prevented and what its forms are, since such an event or escape in most cases calls into question moral values that have been accumulated over the years, and which can be lost in a few moments, due to carelessness.

References

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