

Burying the Lead: The Media Ignores Trump's Victories



It's no secret that the mainstream media loathes President Trump. The coverage of the Trump Administration has broken all records in terms of consistent, vitriolic negativity. (One study found that the coverage on the ABC, CBS, and NBC evening newscasts was critical 90 percent of the time.) This leads the media to devote ample column inches and airtime to arguably trivial smears, like the alleged Russian ties of low-level campaign aides and volunteers, the dirty laundry (real and imagined) of the president's family members, and unverifiable allegations of past affairs with professional strippers.

Essentially, the media has long since been weaponized in the war on Trump.

The other side of this sordid coin, however, is the media's indifference to important, positive stories far more worthy of the public's attention. In particular, journalists eschew any mention of President Trump's successes and breakthroughs. The list of these political victories is a long one, although you won't read about them in the *Washington Post* or the *New York Times*.

Lest we forget, the economy is booming. All indicators, including economic growth rates, unemployment rates, manufacturing growth, and stock market gains, are pointing to a level of dynamism unknown in the Obama years. The relaxation of bureaucratic regulations and the achievement of a historic tax reform package certainly have played a role in this economic renaissance. Whether President Trump deserves the credit for all of this good news is debatable. But the simple fact is, if he were a Democrat, the media would be crediting him much more often than they are.

Recently, thanks to President Trump's unapologetically aggressive policy towards North Korea, including harsh rhetoric and biting sanctions, Kim Jong-un expressed a willingness to consider denuclearization, and the U.S. announced an upcoming summit between Kim and President Trump. Had President Obama achieved a diplomatic breakthrough of this magnitude, his (second) Nobel Peace Prize surely would have arrived by priority mail the very next day. Trump's hard-

won progress, though, is ignored and slighted.

Likewise, the administration's successes in protecting U.S. technological and industrial preeminence, by preventing the foreign acquisition of critical American technology companies, and by shielding our steel and aluminum industries from unfair overseas competition, is ignored, or worse, undercut with wild speculation about possible retaliation. In both cases, Trump's actions have clear precedents in the moves of previous administrations, including that of Barack Obama, but the media always frames Trump's actions as entirely novel and abjectly foolish. The inconvenient truth is that real, tangible American jobs, and American workers, are safeguarded by these actions, but those stories are simply never told.

In yet another example of the media's selective coverage, the Trump administration's unprecedented success in reducing illegal immigration, which every administration since that of President Eisenhower has at least *claimed* that it wanted to achieve, is completely subsumed by the media's focus on anecdotal accounts of allegedly virtuous illegal immigrants facing deportation. The media could, of course, tell the story of the crimes committed by the many thousands of violent illegal immigrants who no longer prowl America's streets, thanks to President Trump. It won't, naturally. It literally can't, since any reporter who spoke of those crimes would be besieged with charges of "racism!"

The list of Trumpian achievements goes on: a stronger military, improved services for veterans and the firing of many incompetent VA employees, ISIS on its last legs, reams of useless regulations obliterated, an increasing realization among our allies that they must solve their own problems and provide and pay for their own defense, dozens of sterling conservatives appointed to our nation's courts, etc. And the media's attitude to these triumphs is invariably the same: denial, dismissal, obfuscation.

When it comes to all things Trump, the media is hopelessly blinkered. Unfortunately, their acidic commentary on the Trump presidency has had a cumulative effect on public attitudes, and it is almost certainly responsible for Trump's artificially low approval numbers, which make no sense given the basic strength of America itself.

Years ago, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared to his fellow Americans that they "had nothing to fear but fear itself." What he meant is that perception is

critically important, and it can even create, by its own power, new political realities.

I would argue that the media, with its relentless and intentional efforts to undermine the Trump administration, is actually reducing confidence in America itself and its political institutions. The negativity has reached such a crescendo that the stability of our democracy is under threat.

President Trump has his faults, yes, but the irresponsibility and lack of professionalism in our media knows no bounds. It is time to turn off the mainstream media and start over. Alternatively, it is time to reconsider our libel laws in order to hold the worst journalists accountable for their fabrications.

Information is the lifeblood of democracy, and, sad to say, our country has never been so ill-informed.

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