

The Unrelenting Assault on President Trump

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by Conrad Black



There has never been a presidential campaign in the United States where the administration was so massively opposed by the principal media outlets as in this election. Nor, in at least a century, have the national political media so widely and thoroughly discarded the traditional criterion for journalistic professionalism: the clear division between comment and reporting. Almost throughout the four-term presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the great majority of American newspapers was officially opposed to him. But far more important than the publishers' editorial recommendations were the generally favorable disposition to him of the working press. He charmed them and the journalists ate from his hand.

Many aspects of the Trump presidency are unprecedented; he is the first president never to have sought or held a public office, elected or unelected, or a high military command; and this is the first presidency, at least in living memory, in which almost the entire national political media have completely and constantly misreported the president's public remarks and policies. The former newspaper of record, the *New York Times*, has been commendably forthright in declaring that it was opposing rather than just reporting on the Trump administration. Trump delivered the greatest speech of his career on Friday evening at Mount Rushmore, devoted altogether to celebrating the idealism of the American Revolution, the suppression of the Confederate insurrection in the Civil War and the abolition of slavery, and the enactment – albeit tardily – of the Jeffersonian promise, renewed by Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg, that all men are created equal. The *Washington Post* editorial board declared that he had reached “new depths of depravity.” This is an outrage worthy only of the press of a totalitarian country describing an opposition figure.

With very few exceptions, the United States is now served by a national political media that is incapable of reporting about the president accurately, that baits him at press briefings with disgusting insolence, and that is extraordinarily negligent in ignoring or downplaying anything that reflects poorly on the president's other enemies, the media's allies in the war against the president. The hideous permutation of the legitimate protests following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25 – protests the president endorsed – into widespread arson, pillage, vandalism, and assault resulting in more than 20 deaths in many cities across the country was largely ignored or deemphasized by the media. On the July 4 weekend, Chicago had 87 shootings resulting in 17 deaths, New York City 64 shootings and 10 deaths, Atlanta 31 shootings and five deaths, and the crime rate in New York City since the city council voted to reduce the annual police budget by a

billion dollars has increased 130 percent over the corresponding figure in 2019. The anti-Trump media have said almost nothing about this.

The semi-organized mobs of urban guerrillas masquerading as social reformers and champions of racial equality have been generally soft-pedaled by the anti-Trump media as understandable forces of resistance to Trumpian injustice. Black Lives Matter (BLM), a Marxist organization that is anti-white and denies that all lives matter, has been sugar-coated as legitimate reform. Trump and most of American history and its most admired personalities have been explicitly or tacitly debunked. The destruction of a statue of Frederick Douglass, America's greatest 19th-century black leader, in Rochester, like the destruction of a San Francisco statue of U. S. Grant, newly morally indistinguishable from his Confederate opponent, Robert E. Lee, was almost entirely ignored. Most of the national political media have treated the American public, in BLM Marxist parlance, as an ignorant lumpenproletariat unworthy of hearing the truth.

In the same spirit, the national political media have simply dismissed the administration's view of the evolution of the COVID-19 crisis. The fact that weekly fatalities have descended by nearly 90 percent in two months is never mentioned. Also rarely mentioned are the facts that large increases in detected coronavirus cases have occurred because almost 40 million Americans have now been tested and most of these new discoveries are cures, and that a large number of healthy people have contracted the virus with no or minimal symptoms as the country has reopened and are essentially progress towards the general immunization of the country, as second infections are rare and comparatively resistible. The failure of the administration's COVID-19 policy has been enthroned as conventional wisdom despite these contrary facts.

Another unique aspect of this election campaign is that the candidate who has emerged from a contested nomination, Joe

Biden, is not now moving back toward the center. He was extracted by the party elders from the ditch where the primary voters had deposited him, transported to the finish line on the wheels of the Democratic machines that have so disgraced themselves in the dissolution of metropolitan government in the last months, and in so far as he is campaigning at all, he is still moving to the left. He has promised to "transform America." Given the influence now being exercised within his party of a rigorous, authoritarian socialism that no substantial American electorate has ever approved, that ticket is likely to be written by the Sanders-Ocasio-Cortez-BLM faction of the Democrats. At Mount Rushmore, the president condemned the socialistic and anti-American brainwashing conducted in a great swath of American schools and universities. The following day, Biden promised the primary teachers' union (NEA), that he would abolish charter schools and produce an "education system for the teachers." The status of the students and their parents was nebulous.

The principal reason for these unprecedentedly profound cleavages in public sentiment and media conduct is that this president ran as an outsider to win the Republican nomination and an upset victory for the presidency. He had attacked the governance provided by both parties as working almost indistinguishably together on key issues in the post-Reagan years, and was severely critical of the resulting Bush-Clinton-Obama record of poor economic growth, increasing poverty and violence at home, and in the world, enervating, endless war in the Middle East, and loss of status to a rising China as the Western alliance slowly disintegrated. He promised to drain the Washington swamp, conspicuously including the national political media.

That he has been assaulted by all those whom he promised to depose or reform cannot be a source of amazement. As no such candidate had been elected before, it was impossible to foresee the fury and tenacity of the resistance to him. The

Russian-collusion fraud, the spurious impeachment, and the profound dishonesty of the national political media have been the result. If President Trump is reelected, his enemies will not have the strength or credibility to continue to obstruct with the fiendish determination of his first term. If Joe Biden wins, he will be an ineffectual figurehead in a chaotic and radical administration. With Trump gone, many of those distracted by their fear and hatred of him will return to a recognizable concept of the national interest, and the replacement administration will be an unmitigated shambles. From this distant point and in this hypothesis, the most likely president for 2024 could be a revenant Donald Trump, bidding to succeed Grover Cleveland as the only other two non-sequential-term president in American history.

After four years of a dysfunctional Biden Tower of Babel, Trump would be a nostalgic figure.

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