

The Trump-Media War

Editor's Note:

Bill O'Reilly weighs in on the ongoing battle between the president and the press.

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In a way, CNN reporter Jim Acosta's editorial bomb throwing in a press conference with President Trump was a Pearl Harbor moment: the Trump administration has now officially declared war on the media essentially banishing the provocateur by pulling his White House credential.

Predictably, CNN has sought to capitalize on the situation by filing a law suit asserting that First Amendment free press "rights" are at stake, even though CNN has other White House correspondents on the scene. No matter, the cable news network wants Jimmy there so he can continue to stir up chaos.

Putting aside the legalisms, it is clear that there is gamesmanship on both sides. CNN and most of the national media are no longer in business to bring information to Americans, their game plan now is to destroy the Trump presidency. It's an ongoing news reality saga designed to get ratings and circulation: can the media bring down Trump?

For his part, the President is genuinely outraged by the constant press attacks but often tries to use them to his advantage. He knows conservative Americans generally distrust the media and plays to that perception. Press persecution gives the President a certain victim status and casts doubt on the negative reporting about him.

While the animus between Mr. Trump and the media is truly terrible, the truth is that most presidents loathed the press. In my lifetime, only John F. Kennedy was able to control the

media and use it to his advantage. Dwight Eisenhower basically dealt with a compliant media because TV was in its infancy and he was a hero of World War II.

But leave it to Ike's predecessor to lay it out there about the American media. A few years ago, I came across a private letter that President Harry Truman wrote to a friend. Truman was furious about negative newspaper coverage and opined this way.

"In going over the history of various Presidents I find that this is nothing new. Washington was abused in the press of his time and there was never a more thoroughly misrepresented President than Thomas Jefferson. Of course, you are familiar with how they treated Andrew Jackson but they did not get away with it in his case like they did with some of the others."

President Truman continues pointing out that "they almost hounded (Grover) Cleveland to his grave."

The difference today is that there is big money to be made with a hate Trump format. CNN well understands that. Harry Truman would not.

It remains to be seen if the judiciary understands that it is not journalism involved the White House controversy but show business. The old adage is: the show must go on.

Jim Acosta and his corporate masters really hope that will be the case.