

The B-Movie Presidency With A-List Media Compliance

☒ The other day, something prompted me to think of an old movie I haven't seen in a long, long time. "I Come In Peace" is its name. It's a low-budget, science-fiction flick from the early '90s that stars Hollywood action icon, Dolph Lundgren. The movie was such a huge hit, that I think I'm one of about twelve people total who actually saw it in theaters during its brief run.

Anyway, I felt compelled to look the film up on the *Internet Movie Database*, but accidentally went to my Twitter account instead, typed the title into the search field, and hit the 'enter' key. Just as I realized my mistake, the search results poured in. I wasn't at all surprised that nothing on the movie came up. After all, it was a pretty obscure film that has about as much a chance of *trending* in the year 2013 as *Bugle Boy* jeans does. I was pretty surprised, however, that two of the top results were the official Twitter feeds of both Barack Obama and The White House.

It seemed kind of odd to me. It's not as if "I come in peace" is one of those irritating Obama catchphrases like "fair share" and "balanced approach" that might logically lead back to its source of repetitive tweets. Being a systems analyst, I spent a little time trying to figure it out but came up empty-handed.

Regardless of what's causing the Twitter mystery, I can't help but find some amusing irony in it because there is a striking parallel between that old sci-fi movie and the Obama administration.

You see, the film's title comes from a phrase repeatedly spoken by its extraterrestrial villain character. The M.O. of

this brazen alien, who came to Earth in search of drugs to sell to addicts on his home planet (yes, I really just typed that), was to enter the headquarters of sleazy drug cartels and calmly say, "I come in peace" right before brandishing a futuristic weapon, opening fire, and annihilating everyone in the room.

It was never explicitly explained *why* the villain preferred this contradictory choice of words. It just went without saying that there was a breathtaking disconnect between what came out of his mouth and what he actually did.

What does any of this have to do with President Obama? Well, the president certainly isn't a drug dealer or an alien (despite what Donald Trump might say), but he and his administration *do* have an absolutely unbelievable knack for spreading rhetoric that often bears no resemblance to their actions.

While the fabric of our politics has long been lined with shameless spin and partial truths, we've seen things go to a whole new level under this administration. At times, it's as if an alternate universe of false realities has been created, where spoken eloquence from the president not only becomes the latest national narrative, but also the widely-accepted conclusion. It's incredibly frustrating for those of us who value answerability over lip-service.

It defies belief that a president can get away with regularly calling for "bipartisan compromise" and "reaching across the aisle", while routinely attributing the most vile of intentions to the opposition party, and using them as a permanent scapegoat to explain his own failures.

It defies belief that a president can get away with claiming to lead the "most transparent administration in history", while going to great lengths to avoid answering serious questions, avoid handing over information to congress, avoid

documenting meetings with special-interest lobby groups, and discredit and marginalize news organizations and reporters (like Fox News and Bob Woodward) who refuse to tow the administration's line.

It defies belief that a president can get away with the glaring hypocrisy of absolutely excoriating specific policies as a candidate, then adopting them (and in some cases, doubling-down on them) once he takes office.

It defies belief that a president can get away with the broken promises of doing something about debt reduction, while adding nearly as much debt to our country as all of his predecessors combined, and demagoguing every plan to fix the problem.

It defies belief that a president can get away with incessant fear-mongering about phony crises that our country will suffer if lawmakers don't support his plans to increase taxes, increase spending, and expand government.

It defies belief that a president can get away with telling blatant lies to give himself political cover in the run-up to an election, like saying that the sequester was not his idea, that he has increased domestic oil drilling, and that he publicly identified the Benghazi assault as a terrorist attack the day after it happened.

And perhaps most disturbingly, it defies belief that a president has been able to get away with it all... *with such incredible ease.*

The result is a majority of the country that simply isn't aware of the enormous gap between what this administration says and what it does. This is a scathing indictment of today's media. It doesn't take chaotic scenes with laser blasts, explosions, and a blaring soundtrack, to make it abundantly clear to the viewing public that someone just isn't an honest person. All it takes, in the case of our leaders in Washington, is a responsible, curious media that recognizes

the importance of their role in a free, democratic society.

We know the media's capable of scrutinizing questionable rhetoric. They do it often with Republicans, whether it's Sarah Palin's "death panels" or Mitt Romney's charge that *Chrysler* might move *Jeep* vehicle production to China. When has the media ever gone after President Obama's dubiousness the way they went after those two, debatable claims?

Truth to power isn't about letting 'the powerful' define the truth. If today's media understood that concept in reference to our current president, the Obama overtures would most certainly be recognized as being about as believable and serious as a cheesy, Dolph Lundgren science-fiction movie from the early '90s.

Only the acting might be a little better.