

When America's Media Contradicts America's President

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On November 16th, the Washington Post headlined that ["CIA concludes Saudi crown prince ordered Jamal Khashoggi's assassination"](#) and reported that "The CIA's assessment, in which officials have said they have high confidence, is the most definitive to date linking [Crown Prince] Mohammed [bin Salman] to the [murder] operation."

Then, after almost a full week of silence on that, US President Trump, on November 22nd, denied that the CIA had come to any conclusion, at all, about whether Saudi Crown Prince Salman had ordered the murder of Khashoggi: [Trump said](#)

"They did not come to a conclusion. They have feelings certain ways. I have the report... They have not concluded. I don't know if anyone's going to be able to conclude that the Crown Prince did it."

Congressional Democrats promptly responded to the President's statement, by [repeating](#) what the *Washington Post* had said, and telling CNN,

"The CIA concluded that the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia was directly involved in the assassination of Khashoggi. They did it with high confidence, which is the highest level of accuracy that they will vouch for."

America's voting public believe whomever they want to believe, which is almost always the politicians and newsmedia that the given individual votes for and obtains news from. In such a country, objective reality is hard to find, because the crucial evidence is hidden from the public. For example, the CIA's report on the Khashoggi murder is hidden from the public. Neither the Government nor the press trust the public enough to allow the public to see anything of the actual report itself. So, voters can only go by whatever prejudices they have. Therefore, in America, prejudices reign, and it happens because the Government and the press don't trust the public enough to present the actual evidence to them. Either a person trusts the Government, or the person doesn't.

But what is "the Government," in such a case as this? Is it the *WP*-alleged assertion of what "the CIA" supposedly said, or is it instead the US President, who says that the CIA didn't assert any such thing? And, if you don't trust what one side, in such a case, calls "the Government," then it's easy for that side to label you "unpatriotic," even if you happen to be a patriot asserting the truth, and "the Government" happens to be the actual [traitor](#)

[against its own public, such as the US Government itself has been proven to be](#) (and not *only* about such matters as 2003's "[WMD in Iraq](#)", in which the US Government was clearly [traitorous](#)).

When the *Washington Post*, on November 22nd, [reported](#) Trump's comments about the CIA's report, the newspaper didn't even include Trump's denial, which was quoted here, but instead gave only fluff from Trump, such as "I hate the crime, I hate the coverup. I will tell you this: The crown prince hates it more than I do, and they have vehemently denied it." That newspaper merely paraphrased Trump, didn't actually quote him, about the important parts of the President's statement there. The newspaper opened its 'news'-report with "President Trump on Thursday contradicted the CIA's assessment that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman had ordered the killing of Washington Post contributing columnist Jamal Khashoggi."

But there was only that one-word paraphrase ("contradicted"). That's all there was, in the entire thousand-word 'news'-report, none of his actual statements about the CIA's report on the killing of Khashoggi.

Reporters like this should be fired, but they won't be if the purpose of hiring and retaining them is to hide the actual evidence from the public, by providing only paraphrases (in this case, a mere one-word paraphrase) for the crucial parts, instead of presenting the actual evidence itself (by quoting it directly).

The WP excluded anything like Trump's statement that "They did not come to a conclusion. They have feelings certain ways. I have the report ... They have not concluded. I don't know if anyone's going to be able to conclude that the Crown Prince did it." Instead, their mere paraphrase of that, alleging that Trump "contradicted the CIA's assessment" didn't present either a quotation from the CIA's report, or a quotation from the President, much less (as would have been required in an authentic news-report on an alleged contradiction, such as this) both, so as to allow subscribers to judge for themselves whether or not the President had 'contradicted' what the CIA's report had actually said. In other words: that was a fake 'news'-report in the *Washington Post*; it presented *no credible news*, but only evidence-less fluff, about this important matter.

'News'-media such as that are part of a political culture that's based not on science — a society in which individuals make public-affairs judgments on their own, on the basis of the actual evidence being presented to them — but that's based instead purely on faith. It's a religious (or faith-based) political culture, not a scientific one. That's to say: judgments are based on whatever the individual's prejudice happens to be. Judgments by the public are not based on the evidence, because the evidence is actually being hidden from the public. Obviously, there is no accountability — it's not even possible to have accountability in such a political culture, because the evidence is being hidden from voters.

On the night of Friday, November 23rd, Trump — his Administration — released the long-awaited "[Fourth National Climate Assessment](#)" from a panel of 300 climatologists, and it calculated, [for example](#), that Phoenix, Arizona, during 1976-2005, averaged around 80 days per year above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and that if we do everything possible to minimize fossil-fuels-usage, that average will be around 125 such days annually between 2070 and 2100, but otherwise it will be around 150 days annually, which is almost twice as many

sizzling days per year as compared with the period 1976-2005.

Donald Trump buried a climate change report because 'I don't believe it'

Analysis by [Chris Cillizza](#), CNN Editor-at-large

Updated 1557 GMT (2357 HKT) November 27, 2018



Screengrab from CNN

On Monday, November 26th, CNN headlined [“Donald Trump buried a climate change report because ‘I don’t believe it’”](#) and reported that,

“‘I don’t believe it,’ Trump told reporters on Monday, adding that he had read ‘some’ of the report. It’s a report which had been “produced by 13 agencies within the Trump administration — the result of Congress, in the 1980s, mandating that this sort of report be submitted every four years as a sort of reference point for lawmakers and legislators.”

This news-report from CNN was real, not fake like the *Washington Post’s* was on the Khashoggi matter, and it linked to the evidence, including to the actual study itself, and to Trump’s statement that he doesn’t believe it.

Here, then, is an actual example of authentic news-reporting, which is credit-worthy and not simply to be taken on mere trust (like the *Washington Post’s* ‘news’ about Trump’s ‘contradicting’ his own CIA’s report).

But will Trump’s voters still have faith in him, despite his clear divergence from the professionals on climatology, the scientists who are experts in these types of matters? Obviously, such a President (one who rejects the overwhelming consensus of scientific opinion on a scientific topic) is an actual crackpot; but will his voters believe him simply because they want to believe him — because they’re people of faith and he here happens to be peddling their particular belief — because they’re *not* people of science? Then how can democracy even function, with such a public? Only authoritarianism (a faith-based regime) can function, in such a country as this.

On November 26th, the most Trumpian ‘news’-medium of all, Breitbart, didn’t even report Trump’s “I don’t believe it,” but did include, on November 26th, a November 25th ‘news’-article bannered [“Experts on Climate Change Assessment: ‘Every Conclusion of This Latest Government Report Is False’”](#), which opened:

The federal government’s Fourth National Climate Assessment, released on Friday, has gained praise from leftists and left-wing environmental groups as a dire warning of the coming death and destruction in the United States if we don’t stop global warming.

But critics of the report, including scientists, have slammed it as “exaggeration,” bad science and even said its conclusions are “false.”

“This latest climate report is just more of the same – except for even greater

exaggeration, worse science, and added interference in the political process by unelected, self-serving bureaucrats,” Tim Huelskamp, president of the Heartland Institute said in statements released by the free-market think tank following the report’s release...

Nothing was said there about the Heartland Institute’s being [funded by far-right billionaires including many who own or are heavily invested in oil and gas corporations](#). These people have a financial stake in downplaying the environmental threat that’s posed by their products. Very few climatologists are members of that particular propaganda-operation. It’s fake, as an ‘authority’ about anything. Clearly, Trump represents those fossil-fuels corporate owners, not the public — not even the voters who had voted for him. All Americans have a real stake in the truth about the global-warming issue. All people everywhere do.

Is an authentic democracy possible in such a country as this, where it’s so easy for liars to win and keep public offices?

All that the liars have to do is to pump to the public the deceits that the billionaires they serve want them to pump. The politicians who do that will be the ones who are in serious contention to become winners, because their political campaigns will receive all the funding that’s needed in order for them to be in serious contention. The politicians who are honest won’t be among the ones who are in serious contention — it’ll be [like America’s Government actually is](#).

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Investigative historian **Eric Zuesse** is the author, most recently, of [They’re Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST’S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).

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