

# A Bird's Eye View

by Jimmy Cardinal



Today, the *O-W Enterprise* joins with more than 100 other newspapers across the nation in speaking with a unified voice. These newspapers range from major dailies like the *Miami Herald* and the *Denver Post* to our small weekly publication and every classification in between. In response to a call put out by the editorial board of the *Boston Globe* last week, we join with our fellow newspapers in expressing our deep concern at the rhetoric that continues to be used by President Trump in reference to the free press in this nation. The *Boston Globe's* editorial board has asked for newspapers across the nation to speak with a unified voice on Thursday, August 16.

President Trump continues to take time during his rallies to call journalists, who are held in the middle of the crowd in a holding pen, the "enemy of the people" and then urges the crowd to harass those journalists. The old saying goes, "Sticks and stones..." well you get it, but what happens when the words that will never hurt us

turn into sticks and stones, or worse yet bullets? If President Trump doesn't stop ratcheting up his hostile rhetoric against the free press in this nation, there will no doubt be blood on his hands eventually, it is only a matter of time.

President Trump is by no means the first president to have a less than amiable relationship with the press, every president has complained at some point or another about the news' coverage of them. That means we're doing our jobs, holding the most powerful person in the world accountable. No one likes scrutiny and criticism, but that is the job. We are here to hold the government up to the light, question the decisions being made by those in authority and ensure that the electorate is informed of the actions being taken by those in power. The free press is the cornerstone of democracy, that's the reason that it is one of the foundational rights found in the First Amendment, next to religion, speech, assembly and petition.

President Trump has no problem criticizing the press, using hostile rhetoric and encouraging his followers to do the same, yet this is the same man who flies off the handle at the smallest criticism. And there's plenty to criticize. He has consistently demonstrated an unwillingness, bordering on inability, to tell the truth. He has turned away

people seeking refuge from oppression, put children in cages, praised dictators and attacked our closest allies.

It is our job, as a free press, to ensure that these actions are brought to the attention of the electorate. That does not make us the enemy of the people, it makes us the people holding those in authority accountable. President Trump uses phrases like "fake news" to discredit unflattering coverage of him. He tells us not to believe what we see, hear, or read. He calls hard-working journalists the "enemy of the people." These are the actions that we expect of a dictator. Josef Stalin used such words, so did Chairman Mao Zedong.

A recent poll by Ipsos reported that 43% of Republicans believed "the president should have the authority to close news outlets engaged in bad behavior," 23% believed that Trump should close down specific news outlets including CNN, *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, and 48% believed that "the news media is the enemy of the American people."

Government censorship is the bedrock of the authoritarian regimes that rule in North Korea, China, Russia and Turkey. Attacking the press is the first move in the dictator's handbook, that way the dictator is the only reliable source of information

(the government wouldn't lie to you, would it?). The fourth estate, the free press, stands in defense of our freedoms. Name one free nation that doesn't enjoy a free press, name one authoritarian regime that didn't crack down on the press. The Founding Fathers knew this, they fought for this and they codified it in the Bill of Rights. God willing, the free press will be around in this nation long after President Trump has left office, in the meantime, don't fall for his divisive and hostile rhetoric.

## Letter to the Editor

*Owen resident praises city, individuals who provide assistance*

Dear Editor:

Having moved to Owen not too long ago, and hearing a lot of negative lately about the city and certain city employees, I wanted to say that I'm glad I moved here.

Owen-Withhee is a friendly place, especially to someone like me who has special needs. I can have groceries carried out to my car. There a full service gas station. Even bait and such can be brought out to my car. This newspaper has done me favors to help me out.

The Public Works removes the snow in a timely manner, and helped setting up my home for my disabilities. The clerks here are helpful. The hanging baskets and flowers around town are pretty. I think the city does a marvelous job with the resources they have.

I hear a lot of complaining and focusing on the negative, but I think we should focus on the positive.

Mike Grobe  
Owen, WI

