Lies that Matter

from The Wall Street Journal, Trump, The Press, and he Dictatorship of the Trolletariat:

> *But few journalists have appreciated the degree to which Mr. Trump's entire political and governing strategy depends on trolling them. They've mostly assumed his penchant for exaggeration and invention was the result of psychosis, or just ego. By now, though, it ought to be apparent that he's doing it intentionally, and strategically.*
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> *It is a kind of dictatorship, but not the kind Mr. Stelter imagines—an inchoate autocracy ready to metastasize into a propaganda-driven tyrannical state. No, this is the dictatorship of the trolletariat—a tyranny in which the media, and only the media, are subject to the ruler's whims.*
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> *The effect was to stop them from covering his candidacy in the usual ways—with the kind of one-sided analysis guaranteed to make his Democratic opponent look superior—and instead to send them off on crazy "fact checking" errands in search of intrinsically worthless data. Did "thousands and thousands" of Muslims celebrate the 9/11 attacks in New Jersey? Did he really oppose the Iraq war, and when? Is "The Art of the Deal" really the bestselling business book of all time?*
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> *I find Mr. Trump's way of handling the news media highly disorienting and regrettable. But it is a strategy, and the news media had better regroup and figure out how to deal with it. One obvious way is to ask whether each truth-claim the administration's giving them is important or not. All administrations fudge the truth, mislead and sometimes just lie. But is it an important lie, one calculated to evade the law or expand executive power? For claims about inaugural viewership, the answer is surely no.*
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> *Mr. Trump has decided, rightly or wrongly, that the press is*

> *not the people. A ridiculous "lie" to the press, in his view, is not a lie to the people. The press rejects that distinction, believing themselves to be the crucial link between the people and the government—indeed, between the people and reality itself. Right now, though, it doesn't matter what they think. They must deal with reality.*

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I find it hard to comprehend that this strategy is deliberate, but I have been nothing but wrong so far when it comes to Trump.

It is his intention to make the media appear trivial by making them verify intentional trivial lies? This seems like one of those bizarre strategies that works until it doesn't. It seems likely to become uncontrollable.

There were many trivial lies told by Hillary that were poorly covered or excused. But the greater damage comes from untrue statements made to advance costly policy goals.

The 2008 liquidity crisis was not caused by George Bush's tax cuts, as Hillary stated during the debates.

The United States is not the only western Democracy requiring voting ID, as Obama recently suggested.

The 47 million uninsured was a greatly exaggerated numbered, including non residents, prisoners, and citizens who qualified for state and federal programs but never registered for them. How quickly that number disappeared when the ACA passed. Obama spoke of the 30 million uninsured at the signing. Apparently his signature alone reduced the rolls by a third.

And then there is Jonathan Gruber, who lied to pass a health care bill that ultimately cost the Democrats control of the government.

These are the untruths that matter that the media largely ignored because it was done in the name of a greater cause which they supported.

Trump’s falsehoods and strategy may make them look trivial and this may work for a while. But the lack of trust the people have for the press is their own fault.