

The Birth and Rapid Death of a Mendacious Anti-Trump Meme

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Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump greets Ohio Republican candidate for U.S. Senate Bernie Moreno (L) during a rally at the Dayton International Airport in Vandalia, Ohio, on March 16, 2024. (Scott Olson/Getty Images)

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By Roger Kimball



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Commentary

Gertrude Stein once observed that it was important for an artist to know how far to go in going too far.

The same is true of politicians.

Did former President Donald Trump just violate that golden rule?

If you listen to the legacy media, you would even now be in a fit of hysteria crying, à la Molly Bloom, “Yes! Yes! Yes!”

In case you, like me, avoid the legacy media, allow me to tell you what a friend just told me.

At a rally this weekend in Ohio to support GOP Senate primary candidate Bernie Moreno, President Trump warned that if he is not elected president in November, there will be a “bloodbath” across the entire country.

Moreover, he said, there would be no more elections.

What a boon to the anti-Trump media.

They went on an ecstatic feeding frenzy.

The word “bloodbath” was like blood in the water to a school of sharks.

As I write on Sunday morning, the platform formerly known as Twitter is alive with the gratified hand-wringing of anti-Trump pundits who cannot believe their good luck.

“Bloodbath! He said bloodbath! He threatened to unleash a bloodbath unless he is elected. He wants to spark a giant Jan. 6 and bring Our Democracy™ to an end!”

Quoth Biden spokesman James Singer, President Trump is “doubling down on his threats of political violence.”

“He wants another January 6,” Mr. Singer continued, “but the American people are going to give him another electoral defeat this November because they continue to reject his extremism, his affection for violence, and his thirst for revenge.”

Oh dear.

Wasn't it just like President Trump to call for violence?

Didn't he praise neo-Nazis or the Ku Klux Klan or some equally unsavory group in Charlottesville in 2017 after a young woman was killed?

Remember, he said there were “very fine people” on both sides.

Oh my gosh, he said that neo-Nazis and white supremacists were “very fine people”!

[Wasn't that](#), as ABC News wrote, “a low point in the Trump presidency, a moment difficult to justify for even some of President Donald Trump's most loyal allies”?

Well, no.

It turns out he didn't say that at all.

“Excuse me,” [said President Trump](#), “they didn't put themselves down as neo-Nazis, and you had some very bad people in that group. But you also had people that were very fine people on both sides.”

He went on to say, “I'm not talking about the neo-Nazis and white nationalists because they should be condemned totally.”

But to report that would be to hobble the narrative, and we can't have that.

So the media lied and told you that President Trump was a rabid white supremacist, just as they told you that President Trump encouraged Russia to spy on the United States when he said, in a news conference, that he hoped that they found the 30,000 emails that Hillary Clinton erased from her homebrew server.

It was extraordinary how the anti-Trump media went to town with that one, even though it was obvious from the beginning that President Trump was needling Ms. Clinton, not encouraging Russian espionage.

It is the same with “Bloodbathgate.”

President Trump was talking about Chinese moves to build huge automative plants in Mexico and then ship heavily subsidized cars to the United States.

Should they do that on his watch, he said, he would slap a 100 percent tariff on the cars.

“Now, if I don’t get elected,” President Trump said, “it’s going to be a bloodbath for the whole—that’s gonna be the least of it. It’s going to be a bloodbath for the country. That will be the least of it.”

So, budding hermeneuts, what do you think?

Was President Trump instigating violence?

Or was he talking metaphorically about the fate of the U.S. car industry should the invasion of Chinese cars made in Mexico be allowed to proceed?

Take your time.

I think Sen. J. D. Vance (R-Ohio) was right.

“Donald Trump said that a bloodbath would happen to the American auto industry if Biden kept on promoting Chinese made EVs,” Mr. Vance [wrote](#).

“He of course is 100 percent correct. All other reporting about his ‘bloodbath’ comment is complete propaganda. The media should be ashamed.”

Should be but won’t be.

Those who are shameless are not ashamed.

What we are watching, as one commentator observed, is the effort to create a new anti-Trump meme right now.

“We are witnessing the invention of the ‘bloodbath’ hoax in real-time,” the blogger known as “End Wokeness” [wrote](#). “Unfortunately for them, we have X.”

Mr. X himself, Elon Musk, with his 177.4 million followers, reposted what End Wokeness wrote, adding the comment, “Interesting.”

The bloodbath hoax will doubtless be assiduously circulated by the gutter press over the course of the 2024 presidential campaign.

But Mr. Musk effectively deflated it with a single word.

The platform formerly known as Twitter is at last performing the sort of function it was supposed to perform when it was unleashed upon the world in 2006.

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