

Letter published in the Hagerstown Herald-Mail

Two kinds of news for two Americas

To the editor:

I did not truly know how different the news was on right-leaning channels until recently when I heard that explained on a podcast by The New Yorker. Today, it was proven to me by the Feedback section of The Herald-Mail.

Harry from West Virginia thinks it's a good idea to allow the president to fire the FBI director who was investigating him. (Harry would probably like to fire the police officer who pulls him over for speeding, too.) Shawn from Pennsylvania believes that the fact (which has been accepted by all U.S. intelligence agencies) that Russia interfered with the 2016 election is a "conspiracy theory." Frank from Hancock is indignant that President Obama let Russian planes fly over American ships in international waters but he is not concerned that Trump invited Russians into the Oval Office and discussed sensitive intelligence with them. Pete from Pennsylvania thinks we all want to see Trump's taxes to see how much he paid. (It's about what countries he has business deals with, Pete.)

Conservatives are not getting the same news as liberals. They get a totally different slant on what is going on. For example: Trump is succeeding with fulfilling his promises. He is the CEO of the U.S. and can fire anyone, anytime, for any reason. The Democrats are crazy conspiracy nuts. The Russia-Trump connection is something the Democrats made up. Trump really fired Comey because he wasn't good at his job. And myriad other things that are quite opposite from what liberals hear.

This should be a bigger story: two kinds of news for two Americas. There really is a massive misunderstanding about the rules and protections of our democracy. Some Americans really don't seem to get that we are not a monarchy or fascist state and that our government is set up to keep us from becoming one. Too much power in the hands of one party is the beginning of the end of democracy. Read "On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century" by Timothy Snyder. It is short. It is easy to read. It has lessons in it that might keep us from throwing away our rights for the profit of others.

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