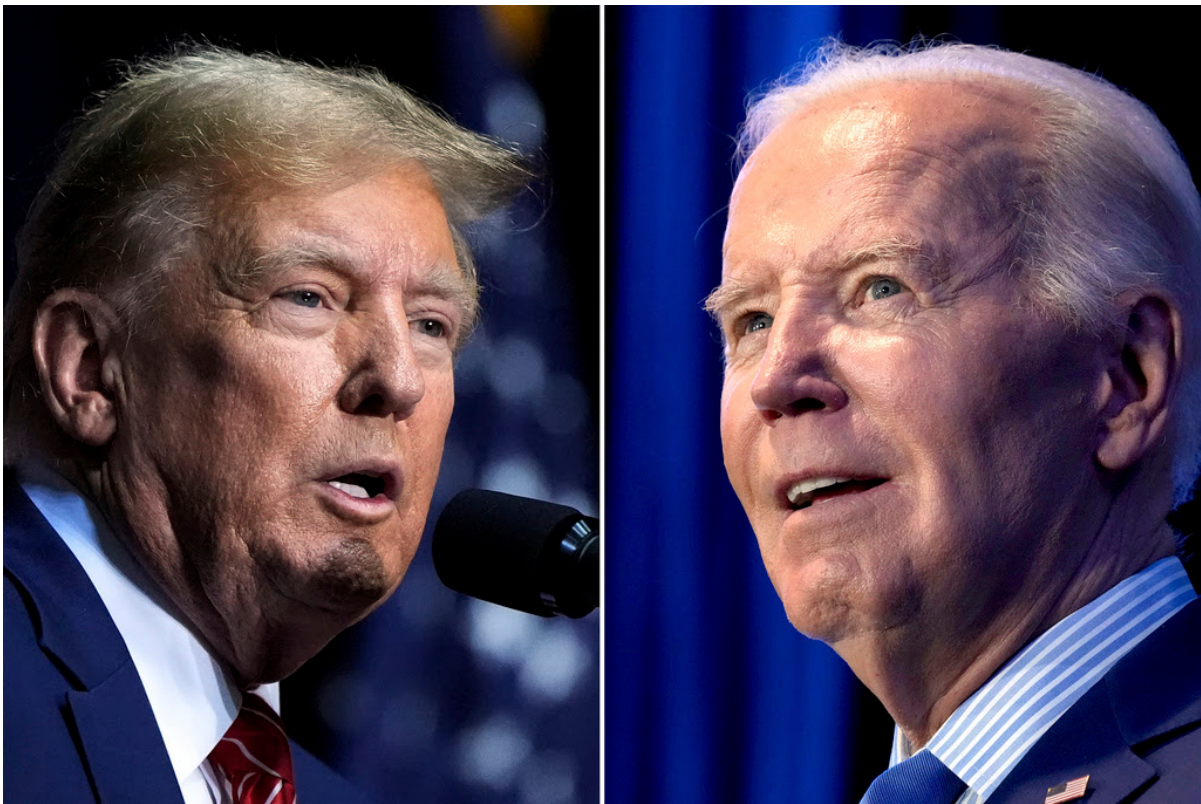




Some readers complain that we have different standards involving Donald Trump and Joe Biden. (AP Photo, File)

This column was originally emailed with last week's headline still attached, so we are re-sending it.

A more-than-occasional arrival in the email these days is a question expressed two ways, one with dripping condescension and the other with courtesy:

Why don't our opinion platforms treat Donald Trump and other politicians exactly the same way. Some phrase it differently, asking why we demean the former president's supporters in describing his behavior as monstrous, insurrectionist and authoritarian.

I feel for those who write. They believe in Trump and want their local news source to recognize what they see in him.

The angry writers denounce me for ignoring what they call the Biden family crime syndicate and criminality far beyond that of Trump. They quote news sources of no credibility as proof the mainstream media ignores evidence that Biden, not Trump, is the criminal dictator.

The courteous writers don't go down that road. They politely ask how we can discount the passions and beliefs of the many people who believe in Trump.

This is a tough column to write, because I don't want to demean or insult those who write me in good faith. I've started it a half dozen times since November but turned to other topics each time because this needle hard to thread. No matter how I present it, I'll offend some thoughtful, decent people.

The north star here is truth. We tell the truth, even when it offends some of the people who pay us for information.

The truth is that Donald Trump undermined faith in our elections in his false bid to retain the presidency. He sparked an insurrection intended to overthrow our government and keep himself in power. No president in our history has done worse.

This is not subjective. We all saw it. Plenty of leaders today try to convince the masses we did not see what we saw, but our eyes don't deceive. (If leaders began a yearslong campaign today to convince us that the Baltimore bridge did not collapse Tuesday morning, would you ever believe them?) Trust your eyes. Trump on Jan. 6 launched the most serious threat to our system of government since the Civil War. You know that. You saw it.

The facts involving Trump are crystal clear, and as news people, we cannot pretend otherwise, as unpopular as that might be with a segment of our readers. There aren't two sides to facts. People who say the earth is flat don't get space on our platforms. If that offends them, so be it.

As for those who equate Trump and Joe Biden, that's false equivalency. Biden has done nothing remotely close to the egregious, anti-American acts of Trump. We can debate the success and mindset of our current president, as we have about most presidents in our lifetimes, but Biden was never a threat to our democracy. Trump is. He is unique among all American presidents for his efforts to keep power at any cost.

Personally, I find it hard to understand how Americans who take pride in our system of government support Trump. All those soldiers who died in World War II were fighting against the kind of regime Trump wants to create on our soil. How do they not see it?

The March 25 edition of the New Yorker magazine offers some insight. It includes a [detailed review of a new book about Adolf Hitler](#), focused on the year 1932. It's called "Takeover: Hitler's Final Rise to Power" and is by historian Timothy W. Ryback. It explains how German leaders – including some in the media -- thought they could use Hitler as a means to get power for themselves and were willing to look past his obvious deficiencies to get where they wanted. In tolerating and using Hitler as a

means to an end, they helped create the monstrous dictator responsible for millions of deaths.

How are those German leaders different from people in Congress saying the election was stolen or that Jan. 6 was not an insurrection aimed at destroying our government? They know the truth, but they deny it. They see Trump as a means to an end – power for themselves and their “team” – even if it means repeatedly telling lies.

Sadly, many believe the lies. They trust people in authority, without questioning the obvious discrepancies or relying on their own eyes. These are the people who take offense to the truths we tell about Trump. No one in our newsroom gets up in the morning wanting to make a segment of readers feel bad. No one seeks to demean anyone. We understand what a privilege it is to be welcomed into the lives of the millions of people who visit our platforms each month for news, sports and entertainment. But our duty is to the truth.

Our nation does seem to be slipping down the same slide that Germany did in the 1930s. Maybe the collapse of government in the hands of a madman is inevitable, given how the media landscape has been corrupted by partisans, as it was in 1930s Germany.

I hope not.

In our newsroom, we'll do our part. Much as it offends some who read us, we will continue to tell the truth about Trump."

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Thanks for reading



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