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Harper's Award Speech

This award is being given on one of the darkest days ever known in the history of the First Amendment. CBS, META, YouTube, ABC and Twitter have all settled perfectly good First Amendment cases with Trump. The same is true of Brown and Columbia. Harvard, Virginia and Pennsylvania are all in the settlement mode, and this does not count the settlements made by major law firms.

But where is the outrage? Arne Duncan, former education secretary under Obama, commented the other day that university presidents must join together to stop Trump, and Governor Pritzker of Illinois asks why the democrats don't join together too.

By the way, is there any outrage out there? If so, let's hear it.

But don't worry about tonight's award winner, A.G. Sulzberger, he is a leader of the First Amendment fight against Trump.

Let me tell you about A.G.: He projects a calm and modest demeanor. He, however, carries a big stick and has a big bite.

He burst on the scene before he was publisher when he was asked by the then editor to do a memo suggesting new digital products. He came back with a paper suggesting the whole paper should be a new digital product.

This became the digital footprint for the Times which is one of the great digital triumphs of this era. Can you believe the circulation of the New York Times is 12 million (**check**). It was closer to one million during my time. By comparison the Washington Post is two million and the Wall Street Journal four million.

But it would be boorish of me to suggest that a First Amendment Award should be given for commercial success particularly when this event is a celebration of the written word used by Harper's for over 175 years.

Furthermore, this commercial success belongs collectively

to a large group at the Times including family members and particularly their professional colleagues.

This is unlike A.G.'s singular ability to be the number one press spokesman for the First Amendment - which he is.

When he became publisher of the Times, wet behind the ears he was not afraid to take on Trump. He met with him not once but twice to warn him he was trying to destroy a free press. And when Trump mischaracterized A.G.'s meeting by lashing out about the press printing "fake news" and being "the enemy of the people", A.G. immediately corrected him publicly and called him "dangerous".

A.G. then turned his attention to international press freedom issues particularly with Brazil, Hungary and India. He alerted the public in a prescient op-ed piece in the Washington Post that authoritarians such as Orban of Hungary, Bolsonaro of Brazil, Modi of India have similar anti press playbooks. This includes denigrating the press, bringing false lawsuits and encouraging the sale of

opposition media to authoritarian friendly owners. He warned that Trump, if elected for a second time, would follow that playbook.

In a major address at Notre Dame in May, A.G. said the press was “under attack” and said further that everything that he predicted would happen to the press in his op-ed piece had indeed happened. “A free people need a free press” he said.

A few weeks ago at the Investigative Reporters and Editors Organization A.G. urged those present “to stand up for your journalism and journalists rights” and to support “fellow journalists” when they were attacked.

Therefore I am giving you the First Amendment Award for three reasons: first, for your fighting speeches defending freedom of the press; secondly, for maintaining the New York Times as a beacon of light in the present sea of darkness by publishing a paper driven by independent journalism which is both authentic, honest and courageous (which we knew already); and finally, to encourage you to

continue to write and speak with a bite to chase the huge elephant in the room, and we all know who that is, out of this room and the door so that he no longer damages the First Amendment. I hereby give you the James C. Goodale award for the First Amendment.

James Goodale's telephone # is 212 861 2614