



PolitiFact admits Trump is right about reducing debt . .. then goes ahead and calls him a liar anyway

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Hat tip to [Alex Pfeiffer at Daily Caller](#) on this one.

How exactly do media “fact checkers” confirm that a statement made by the president is factually accurate, then turn around and label it “mostly false”? I’ll tell you how. Because media “fact checkers” are not really fact checkers. They’re opinion writers hiding behind a label that makes them sound unbiased. And what they actually do is not check the accuracy of facts, but opine about what the facts supposedly mean. That’s a perfectly legitimate thing to do if you’re going to label yourself as an opinion writer.

But when you label yourself a fact checker and you call a statement “mostly false,” all kinds of people think you just caught someone in a lie.

So today, people are citing Politifact as having called a statement by President Trump - one I repeated the other night on Fox News - “mostly false.” So, exactly how far from accurate was the statement? As it turns out, not at all. And who says so?

The very same [Politifact writer who nevertheless labeled the statement “mostly false,”](#) that’s who:

“On January 20th, the day of the Trump Inauguration, the US Debt stood at \$19,947 billion,” the Gateway Pundit website reads. “On February 21st, a month later, the US Debt load stood at \$19,935 billion. Trump cut the US Debt burden by \$12 billion and 0.1% in his first month in office!”

The numbers check out. And in fact, the total public debt has dropped another \$22 billion since the Gateway Pundit article published, according to data from the U.S. Department of Treasury.

But, experts say, people shouldn’t read much into the numbers. Nor should Trump be popping champagne.

“Considering that Trump hasn’t enacted any fiscal legislation, it’s a bit of a stretch for him to take credit for any changes in debt levels,” Dan Mitchell, a libertarian economist and senior fellow at the Cato Institute, told us.

“Debt levels go up and down in the short run based on independent factors such as quarterly tax payments and predetermined expenditure patterns,” he said.

This is a classic tactic of liberal “fact checkers.” First they will deal with the raw data. But if the raw data do not lead to the conclusion they prefer, they will talk to “experts” and get their take on the data. If the so-called “expert” has a negative take on the matter, that is judged as being the equivalent of a fact, and is used as justification for calling true facts false.

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Let’s separate the two things going on here. Is the fact cited by the president accurate? Yes. It’s 100 percent accurate. It is not “mostly false.” It is absolutely true.

Is it possible, or even likely, the debt could go back up at some point? Sure. Is it reasonable to question whether Trump policies caused the debt reduction? Sure. But none of that renders a true fact false. It simply means there’s room for analysis and scrutiny of what the fact means in light of everything else happening around it.

Politifact cannot be expected to be taken seriously as a fact-checking outfit if it calls true facts false because, in its opinion, the fact doesn’t prove what the president wants it to prove. And if media “fact-checkers” are going to continue writing their own opinions and hiding behind their neutral-sounding label, then no one should ever take them seriously as arbiters of truth and fact. Because however misleading you may think the president’s statement about the debt is, it is far less misleading than Politifact’s claim to be actual fact-checkers.