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The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

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## TAHOE SEEKS TRANSPORTATION PR SUPPORT

The Tahoe Transportation District is looking to hire a firm for PR and educational outreach for a number of projects related to highways, streets, shared use paths, bridges and transit facilities in Nevada and California.

The bi-state district, which provides transit and delivers capital projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin, seeks a firm able to work with partners to "ensure a smooth implementation" of a project, according to its RFQ.



The firm will develop creative messaging that reflects the qualities of Tahoe and local communities, pitch project awareness/benefits, conduct media relations and educate visitors.

It will be adept in social media, website development, public noticing and development of collateral materials

TTD plans to issue a three-year contract with options to renew for two one-year periods.

Proposals are due Oct. 18 and may be emailed to Judi Allen at [jallen@tahoetransportation.org](mailto:jallen@tahoetransportation.org) or mailed (CD or USB flash drive) to Tahoe Transportation District, Attn: Judi Allen, P.O. Box 499, Zephyr Cove, NV 89448.

Submissions must be marked "RFQ for Public Relations Outreach and Educational Campaigns."

Interviews will be conducted Oct. 24-25. TTD will award the contract Nov. 8.

Click [here](#) for RFQ.

## ISAKOWITZ GETS GOOGLE DC POST

Mark Isakowitz, chief of staff to Ohio Republican Senator Rob Portman has joined Google as VP-government affairs & public policy in Washington.

He replaces former Staten Island/Brooklyn Republican Congresswoman Susan Molinari.

Google advertising and search procedures are under intense scrutiny in DC. President Trump also has accused the company of being biased against conservative media outlets.

"Mark brings more than 30 years of experience in Washington, serious policy knowledge, and an impressive record of bridging divides and achieving results," Karan Bhatia, Google's government affairs chief, said in a statement. "He will help Google work with lawmakers to support policies that encourage growth and responsible innovation."

Isakowitz served as Portman's COS for five years and earlier was president of Fierce Isakowitz & Blalock lobbying firm.

## MBS "RESPONSIBLE" FOR KHASHOGGI HIT

Saudi Arabia crown prince Mohammed bin Salman takes responsibility for the Oct. 2, 2018 torture, murder and dismemberment of Washington Post contributor Jamal Khashoggi, according to a partial transcript of an interview he gave PBS' "Frontline," set to air Oct. 1.

He denies, however, any advance knowledge of the planned hit on Khashoggi, who was murdered in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, where he had gone to obtain documents required for his marriage.

Khashoggi's murder drew global condemnation and undermined Saudi Arabia's PR program that pitched MBS as a young and progressive leader of the Kingdom. Publicis Groupe's Qorvis Communications is Saudi Arabia's main PR firm.

Saudi Arabia initially denied official involvement in the plot to kill Khashoggi, a critic of the crown prince. A United Nations investigation in June found "credible evidence" that MBS and other royals were culpable.

The National Press Club will honor Khashoggi, the posthumous recipient of its John Aubuchon Freedom of the Press citation, on the one-year anniversary of his death. President Alison Fitzgerald Kodjak will lead club members and others in the moment of silence at 10 a.m., which will be followed by brief remarks.



Mohammed bin  
Salman

## ALTRIA FIRMS UP CONTROL OF JUUL LABS

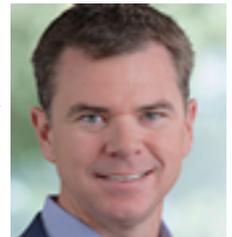
KC Crosthwaite, Altria chief growth officer, has taken over as Juul Labs CEO from co-founder Kevin Burns. Altria, parent of Philip Morris USA, invested \$12.8B a year ago in Juul for a 35 percent stake in the vaping company.

Crosthwaite spearheaded Altria's expansion into alternatives to combustible cigarettes and led commercial and regulatory efforts concerning the US launch of the IQOS heated tobacco device.

With Crosthwaite's appointment, Juul has suspended all print, broadcast and digital advertising in the US, and curbed federal lobbying efforts.

Crosthwaite plans to conduct a revive of Juul's practices and policies to ensure they are aligned with the company's aim of responsible leadership.

Separately, Altria has ended merger talks with Philip Morris International.



KC Crosthwaite

## **FENTON SPEAKS UP FOR KASHMIR**

The International Humanitarian Foundation, which advocates for Pakistan, hired Fenton Communications to educate the US media and public about the human rights crisis in Kashmir, the disputed region controlled by India and Pakistan.

In August, India stripped its portion of Kashmir of its autonomy, moved in thousands of troops, made mass arrests, issued a curfew and cut communications links to the outside world to put down an uprising against Indian rule, according to Reuters.

Houston-based IHF is headed by Sajjad Burki, US representative of Pakistan's Tehreek-e-Insaf centrist political party. It helped organize a rally in Houston on Sept. 22 to protest the "Howdy Modi!" event at NRG Stadium that attracted 50K Indian Americans and Donald Trump, who called Modi "the father of India."

Fenton signed a \$50K contract with the IHF on Sept. 19 to cover work through Sept 30. David Fenton and Ira Arlook, chief of advocacy, handle the work.

## **EDELMAN UPS MCLEAR TO US PA CHAIR**

Aaron McLearn has been named U.S. chair, public affairs at Edelman. He was managing director, public affairs and crisis for the agency's Western region.

Before joining Edelman, he was director of central communications at Uber. He has also served as an adviser to Neel Kashkari's 2014 California gubernatorial campaign and Mitt Romney's 2012 presidential campaign. McLearn previously was press secretary for Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and for the Republican National Committee.



**Aaron McLearn**

He is a key advisor on Edelman's partnership with the Gun Safety Alliance and has been the force behind the firm's commitment to gun safety, including its new research on Leadership and Anti-Gun Violence.

## **HOTWIRE LAUNCHES CHICAGO OFFICE**

US and UK-based tech PR specialist Hotwire has launched a new pop-up office in Chicago.

Hotwire's Windy City digs, which is officially open, is located in The National Building in the heart of the Loop. The new outpost will allow the New York head-quartered agency to support its roster of regional clients, strengthen its portfolio of consumer and tech companies and attract area top talent.

Hotwire maintains a growing base of Midwest clients, including project44, named one of Chicago's five hottest tech startups, as well as inRiver and Calabrio.

Leading the agency's Chicago team will be senior director of media strategy Sharon Kane, director Austin Weedfall and account manager Tammy Olson.

Hotwire said the pop-up model allows the agency to attract talent who want to work with global companies without a need to relocate. Hotwire currently operates additional pop-up offices in Minneapolis and Mexico City and plans to continue to expand across North America with additional forthcoming locations.

## **ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT**

**Hall+Co.** (formerly Ireland+Hall Communications Inc.) has formed a pro bono partnership with philanthropist Kathryn E Langley Hope's **Big Gay Bus** initiative. The agency will work with Big Gay Bus to promote their efforts to softly educate the Greater Toronto Area communities on human rights and health, as well as assist the organization with sourcing corporate partnerships. While Langley Hope says most LGBTQ+ programming has been focused on the downtown core, the Big Gay Bus push was designed to speak to a new audience outside of downtown who may not usually see such messaging.



**MWWPR**, has been retained by postseason sports ticket reservation marketplace **Lunatix** to guide the company's recent rebrand. The agency will lead all marketing communications efforts for Lunatix, including earned media strategy, corporate communications and influencer engagement to drive ticket sales and postseason reservations for the 2019-2020 sports seasons. MWWPR's sports and entertainment roster also includes the Kentucky Derby, FanDuel and Professional Fighters League.

**MSSmedia**, a Miami-based media and marketing firm which specializes in government agencies, higher learning institutions, lifestyle and hospitality brands, has been named public relations and communications agency for **G Brand BBQ**, a family-owned and operated barbecue restaurant in Crawford, GA. The agency will develop and execute a strategic media relations plan for the restaurant, focusing on both regional and national markets.

**REQ** has been engaged by DC-based social enterprise and living business school **Dog Tag Inc.** to raise awareness of the brand as it expands to new markets across the U.S. The partnership will include a full brand strategy, a comprehensive and integrated marketing plan to increase awareness and support, and the rollout of a website to assist Dog Tag in telling their story across platforms and showcasing their unique mission and forward-thinking approach. Dog Tag empowers transitioning service-disabled veterans, military spouses and caregivers to rediscover purpose through a five-month business and entrepreneurship-focused fellowship program.



**PAN Communications** has been named agency of record for ArmadaHealth, GetWellNetwork and GYANT. The agency will guide data science and services company Armada Health through a rebrand; develop a program for digital consumer health tech company GetWellNetwork to help the brand evolve and expand its reach; and work with patient connection and relationship management company GYANT to elevate its brand in the market through strategic earned media and thought leadership initiatives, as well as integrated marketing and content marketing strategies. A key factor that each brand cited for selecting the firm was PAN's measurement platform, PANoptic.

## **LOSING THEIR RELIGION**

“That’s them in the corner. That’s them in the spotlight, losing their religion.”

Front man Michael Stipe may’ve been crooning about himself in the REM classic, but he could’ve just as



**Fraser Seitel**

well been lamenting the fate of three heretofore bastions of American society, each of whom threw away an integral piece of their foundational values over the past month.

The three organizations—NBC’s “Saturday Night Live,” the NFL’s New England Patriots and the *New York Times*—have all recently suffered public relations setbacks that

believe a deeper loss of traditional standing.

### **Saturday Night Live’s loss of courage**

For four decades, “Saturday Night Live” has occupied a sacred place in the Peacock Network’s plumage.

SNL feared nothing and no one, no matter how wealthy or powerful. Over the years, the show has skewered presidents and princes, CEOs, celebrities and anyone else whose preening, pretentiousness or pomposity deserved to be taken down.

But this month, when faced with a PR dilemma that tested its tradition of courage, SNL folded like a cheap, politically-correct suit.

Almost immediately after SNL announced that three rising young comics had been hired for coveted spots in its 45th season, the Twitter backlash began.

One of the three new SNL hires, Shane Gillis, was accused of using racist and homophobic slurs on his podcast. Sure enough, Gillis, a 32-year-old Pennsylvania-based stand up who’d knocked around the nation’s comedy clubs for a decade, had, indeed, made fun of Chinese and gay people on an obscure podcast that almost nobody listened to. His comedy act, on the other hand, was virtually free of any such slurs.

In an earlier, more compassionate/more courageous day, SNL executive producer Lorne Michaels, who’s made a career of pushing the limits of comedic boundaries and consistently rejecting political correctness, might’ve given the young man a pass with a stern warning to avoid such slip ups in the future. But not today.

Michaels immediately caved to the PC crowd, fired Gillis on the spot and effectively ended a hard-working young man’s hopes of attaining stardom.

### **New England Patriots’ loss of morality**

The New England Patriots are the best team in the National Football League and also the most unethical. They are led by Bill Belichick, arguably the best coach in NFL history and inarguably, the most loathsome.

Blessed with the ability of the league’s best quarterback, Tom Brady, the Patriots have essentially cheated their way to NFL superiority. The team has been enmeshed in countless scandals, from illegally videotaping competitors’ signals to regularly falsifying injury reports to purposely deflating footballs.

Perhaps most egregious, Belichick and his team have made a living on hiring—and lavishly rewarding—some of the league’s best but most traitorous players,

after they’ve worn out their welcomes elsewhere.

True to form, this month the Pats signed the league’s leading but most infantile receiver, Antonio Brown, after he’d embarrassed not only his prior team, the Oakland Raiders, but also the entire league.

The Raiders had agreed to sign the troubled star to a \$50 million contract, after he refused to play for his former team, the Pittsburgh Steelers. Brown’s response to the Raiders’ largesse was to scuttle the deal from the beginning of training camp, by refusing to give up his unapproved helmet, burning his feet in a cryotherapy machine and threatening to bust a move on the team’s general manager. So, the Raiders, correctly, got rid of the serial troublemaker before the season even started.

Whereupon, of course, the Patriots rewarded Brown with a \$15 million contract on the same day he was cut loose by the Raiders. In Belichickian terms, to paraphrase William Henry Vanderbilt, “The right thing be damned.” Two weeks and a couple of sexual assault charges later, Brown proved too much even for the ethically-challenged Patriots to handle.

Last week, Antonio Brown was released by the New England Patriots, whom nonetheless reinforced itself as the most immoral organization in professional sports.

### ***New York Times*’ loss of fairness**

By this time, there can be no question that the *New York Times*—rightly or wrongly but certainly not “objectively”—openly despises all things Donald Trump. The proof is there to see every day in the paper, not only in the hysterical rantings of Trump-hating op ed writers but in the daily news pages as well.

While Times executive editor Dean Bacquet steadfastly denies the paper’s anti-Trump news bias, two weeks ago a Sunday column in the “Review” section left little doubt that the Great Gray Lady’s traditional sense of “fairness” has been forsaken.

The story was written by two veteran Times reporters, excerpting their forthcoming book on the sexual harassment allegations surrounding Brett Kavanaugh, Trump’s most recent appointee to the Supreme Court. The reporters revealed a “new, never-before reported” allegation by a former Yale classmate that Kavanaugh had exposed himself to her at a drunken dorm party.

Predictably, anti-Kavanaugh politicians, advocates and media seized on the revelation and demanded that Kavanaugh, like Trump, be impeached. Which might have happened had it not also been revealed—after a week of anti-Kavanaugh venom—that the reporters failed to include in their column that the Kavanaugh classmate declined to be interviewed for their book and that her friends say she does not recall the incident.

The Times ran a one paragraph “Editors’ Note,” sheepishly acknowledging that the missing information should’ve been included in the original column. So much for fairness at the *New York Times*.

*Fraser P. Seitel has been a communications consultant, author and teacher for 40 years. He may be reached directly at yusake@aol.com. He’s the author of the Pearson text “The Practice of Public Relations,” now in its 13th edition, and co-author of “Rethinking Reputation” and “Idea Wise.”*

## **70 NATIONS USE ONLINE DISINFORMATION**

Political parties or governments in 70 countries launched disinformation campaigns to shape domestic public attitudes in 2018, according to a report published Sept 26 by Oxford University.

Their cyber-troops rely on “political bots” to amplify hate speech or other forms of manipulated content; engage in illegal harvesting of data or micro-targeting and deploy an array of “trolls” to bully or harass dissidents and journalists online.



Oxford researchers found that authoritarian governments in 26 nations relied on social media as a tool of information control to suppress human rights, discredit political opponents and drown out dissenting opinions.

They also found highly sophisticated foreign influence operations in seven countries: China, India, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela

The researchers noted that China, which has traditionally manipulated public opinion at home via domestic platforms like WeChat, Weibo and QQ, has stepped up foreign influence activity.

The Chinese government this year employed global social media to paint Hong Kong's democracy advocates as violent radicals with little support at home.

“The growing sophistication and use of global social networking technologies demonstrates how China is also turning to these technologies as a tool of geopolitical power and influence,” reported Oxford.

Facebook is the No. 1 platform for cyber troop activity due to its market size as well as its links to family members and friends, amount of political news/information and ability to form groups.

The researchers believe strong democracy requires access to high-quality information and ability for citizens to come together.

## **EARTHJUSTICE REPS UN CLIMATE KIDS**

San Francisco's Earthjustice is representing 17-year-old Ayakha Melithafa of South Africa, one of the 16



**Ayakha Melithafa**

young people from around the world who submitted a legal complaint about climate change with the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child on Sept. 23.

The complaint alleges that despite widespread understanding about the risks of climate change, the leading industrial nations of the world failed to curb greenhouse gas emissions and continued to promote fossil fuels.

The petitioners, which include Swedish student Greta Thunberg, also participated in the global climate strike and activities related to the UN's climate action summit.

Earthjustice, which helped international law firm Hausfeld LLP prepare and file the complaint, also is doing PR outreach via social and traditional media to raise awareness of climate change and its impact on societies.

It is working on a pro bono basis.

## **BROWNSTEIN ESTABLISHES CRISIS UNIT**

Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck has launched a crisis management unit led by shareholder Mitch Langberg and chief culture & communications officer Lara Day.

Rich Benenson, managing partner, said while the law firm has counseled clients during crisis situations, it made sense to formalize the offering.

“Our clients are increasingly turning to our team because their multidisciplinary skill sets, combined with their deep knowledge of their business, enables us to quickly and effectively triage an issue to create a strategic communications plan to protect their reputations,” Benenson said in a statement.

Prior to joining BHFS, Day was PR supervisor at Pure Brands Communications.

The crisis team also includes Nadeam Eishami, former chief of staff for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and Ken Khachigian, who was chief speechwriter for President Ronald Reagan.

## **VOX MEDIA ACQUIRES NEW YORK MAGAZINE**

Vox Media is acquiring New York Media, which publishes *New York* magazine and its allied digital platforms, to form what they say will be “the leading independent modern media company.”

Vox Media chairman and CEO Jim Bankoff will lead the combined company, while current New York Media CEO Pamela Wasserstein will take the role of president, Vox Media, overseeing the existing New York Media brands as well as strategic initiatives that will include the company's commerce and consumer businesses.



Current New York Media editor-in-chief David Haskell will continue to lead the New York Media brands. Vox Media publisher Melissa Bell will remain in charge of the Vox Media brands. “Nothing changes editorially for any of our brands,” Bankoff said.

## **NEWS OF FIRMS**

**Vested** is partnering with **Asset TV**, an online channel serving the investment community, to offer a suite of training and content opportunities for the financial marketing community. The focus of the partnership will be a seminar series focused on financial storytelling for marketing executives, hosted at Asset TV's studios. Jointly produced media training for industry professionals will also be available. In addition, AssetTV will give its investment experts additional exposure via Vested's expert source platform, Qwoted. Vested's team has trained C-suite executives at Bloomberg, E\*TRADE, Citi & Scottrade.

**Max Szabo**, according to a report in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, told the Chronicle that his firm, slated to open on Oct. 1, has been incorporated and has five major clients lined up. Szabo's departure from the San Francisco DA's office comes as the office prepares for new leadership. George Gascón, who been DA since 2011, when he was appointed by then-San Francisco mayor Gavin Newsom to succeed Kamala Harris, is not running for re-election in November.

## DIRECT IMPACT HIRES OBAMA ALUM MYERS

Sam Myers, who held communications posts in the Depts. of Education and Commerce during the Obama administration, has joined Direct Impact as president. DI is the grassroots arm of WPP's BCW.



**Sam Myers**

At the DOE, Myers served as White House liaison and supported the program to promote healthy eating in schools and America's College Promise. For Commerce, he served as director of enterprise services change management and communications.

Myers also did campaign work for Clinton/Gore 1996, Gore/Lieberman 2000, Kerry/Edwards 2004, Obama for America 2012 and Hillary for America 2016.

Since exiting the Obama White House, he worked at Brooklyn's Huge as senior VP for partnerships and development and the DC outpost of The Outcast Agency as senior VP.

## O'GRADY REPORTS FOR SERVICE AT CROSBY

Meg O'Grady, who helped launch the Defense Dept.'s spouse education & career program as associate director in the office of family policy, has joined Crosby Marketing Communications as executive VP/military & veterans practice leader.

The former West Point cadet will help CMC clients communicate to active duty personnel, veterans, military spouses and their families. She also will support the firm's work for the DOD, Dept. of Veterans Affairs and DAV (non-profit for disabled American veterans).

During her tenure with the U.S. Army, O'Grady worked with Army Family Advocacy, Army Education, the Army Career and Alumni Program, and was the first training officer for the Army's Wounded Warrior Program, AW2.

She joins CMB from Kaplan Higher Education, where she was VP-military & public sector solutions.



**Meg O'Grady**

## NEWMARK HONORS ITALY'S BORROMETI

Italian journalist Paolo Borrometi, known for his reporting on the Sicilian mafia, received the 2019 Peter Mackler Award for Courageous and Ethical Journalism at a ceremony at the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism on Sept. 25.

The award, established in 2008, honors reporters and editors who have demonstrated a commitment to fairness, accuracy and speaking truth to power, and a matching commitment to asserting the right to publish or air that story in countries where independent media is under threat.

Following the award ceremony, a panel was held that addressed "The Danger of Reporting Hidden Truths."

The conversation covered such topics as the proliferation of "fake news," as well as the increasing threats to the safety of journalists

## ON THE MOVE

Ketchum has named **Jeffrey Moran** managing director of its consumer packaged goods industry offering. Moran most recently served as vice president of public relations and marketing services at Pernod Ricard USA, a longtime Ketchum client. He led a team of specialists with responsibility for media relations, creative services, promotions, trade advocacy, point-of-sale, influencer engagement, entertainment marketing and sponsorship management for Pernod Ricard's brands. Based in New York, he will be responsible for leading Ketchum's team of CPG specialists across North America.



**Jeffrey Moran**

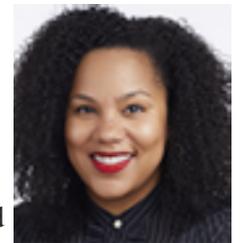
**FARE** (Food Allergy Research & Education), the world's largest private funder of food allergy research, has named **Steve Danon** senior vice president of external affairs. Danon comes to FARE from the National Restaurant Association, where he was senior vp of public affairs. He previously served as partner and managing director at Hudson Park Group and vice president, strategic communications at DDC. From 2006 to 2013, he was a chief of staff in the United States House of Representatives. Danon will manage all external relations for the organization.

**Hill+Knowlton Strategies** has expanded the roles of global presidents **Richard Millar** and **Lars Erik Grønntun**. Millar is assuming responsibility for the US, in addition to H+K's global client and creativity and innovation agendas. Grønntun will lead the agency's international portfolio, taking responsibility for the major markets of UK, Germany, Canada and Greater China as well as the Asia, LatAm, Continental Europe and Nordics clusters. He will also continue to oversee the global operations agenda. Both report directly to global chairman and CEO AnnaMaria DeSalva.

**Markstein** has named **Keelie Segars** chief executive officer. Segars has been with the agency since 2015, most recently as senior vice president. Before coming to Markstein, she was a vice president at Luckie & Company and client services director at Scout Branding Company. At Markstein, Segars has worked to grow the agency's paid media strategic offering, improve profitability and launch strategic industry alliances.

**Development Counsellors International** has hired

**Beth Miller** as vice president of media relations. Miller comes to DCI from global real estate development and construction company Skanska, where she was vice president and head of communications for its commercial property development operation in the U.S. She previously served as a press secretary for the City of New York under the Bloomberg administration. In her new post, Miller will serve as the lead earned media strategist, media training expert and crisis communications professional for the company's Economic Development practice.



**Beth Miller**

## COMMENTARY

**There's an upswing in CEOs either walking or being shoved off the corporate plank**, according to Challenger, Gray & Christmas, outplacement firm.

Juul Labs' Kevin Burns, WeWork's Adam Neumann and eBay's Devin Wenig were among high-profile chiefs to get the old heave-ho last week.



**Kevin Burns**

CG&C reports that a record 159 CEOs exited their jobs in August, an uptick of 28 percent from July.

During the first eight months of 2019, 1,009 CEOs departed, which is 15 percent more than the comparable 2018 period.

CEOs are vanishing at a faster clip than the recession year of 2008, which was the biggest year of exits.

Andrew Challenger believes uncertainty surrounding global business conditions and market strengths are why CEOs are getting the ax.

That's good news for CG&C: lots of jobs to fill.

**In making his annual "America First" pitch at the United Nations on Sept. 24, Donald Trump said each nation has a "cherished history, culture and heritage, that is worth defending and celebrating."**

The future doesn't belong to globalists, he added, a statement that didn't go over very well with the UN crowd.

That sentiment also doesn't go over well with the folks back home. Nearly seven-in-10 (69 percent) Americans want the US to take an active part in global affairs, according to a survey released Sept. 6 by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. That level of support for the UN is the highest recorded in the survey's 45-year history.

There's across-the-board backing of US involvement overseas. Three quarters of Democrats support foreign activism, followed by Republicans (69 percent) and Independents (64 percent).

The Council's survey found that most (87 percent) of Americans support international trade but are split when it comes to China. More than half (54 percent) of Republicans view China as a "critical threat" to the US. That number compares with 40 percent of Independents and 36 percent of Democrats.

And speaking of the UN, 59 percent of Americans have a favorable opinion of the world body, according to Pew Research. A third don't like it.

Europe was especially bullish on the UN with a median support level of 62 percent. Sweden (80 percent), Poland (78 percent), Lithuania (71 percent), Italy (71 percent) and the Netherlands (70 percent) registered the strongest support of the US.

Israel (65 percent), Russia (43 percent), Tunisia (40 percent), Greece (36 percent) and Japan (35 percent) have unfavorable views of the UN.

**It's hardly news that Donald Trump uses the term "fake news" to attack negative though accurate stories, delegitimize the press and whip up anti-media frenzy among his most rabid supporters.**

It is news that more than 50 prime ministers, presidents and top government officials from around the world have followed the example of Trump, according to a study by the *New York Times*. They take their cue from a guy who presides over a country that once took great pride in its fierce defense of an open and free media.

During a talk at Brown University on Sept. 23, NYT publisher AG Sulzberger said the fake news phrase has even been used to deny the existence of an entire people. "There is no such thing as Rohingya," a Myanmar official told a Times reporter.

The government of Myanmar is trying to eradicate the Rohingya from the country.

Foreign leaders pay attention to Trump when he calls reporters "enemy of the people," and accuses them of treason. "By threatening to prosecute journalists for invented crimes against their country, president Trump gives repressive leaders implicit license to do the same," said Sulzberger.

While the Constitution, rule of law and a robust media serve as restraints on Trump, it's open season on reporters overseas. Sulzberger said: "Even as we worry about the dangers our own reporters face, these dangers usually pale in comparison to what courageous local journalists confront around the world. They search for truth and report what they find, knowing that they and their loved ones are vulnerable to fines, arrests, beatings, torture, rape and murder."

Threats and intimidations hurled at reporters also have a chilling effect, as many stories never surface, go unreported or get covered up.

"This is a perilous moment for journalism, for free expression and an informed public," said Sulzberger. "But the moments and places where it is most difficult and dangerous to be a journalist, are the moments and places where journalism is needed most."

The Times publisher chided elected officials who betray the ideals of the Constitution when they undermine the free press for short-term gain.

Sulzberger urged leaders of both political parties to support independent journalism and oppose "the countless efforts underway to attack, intimidate and delegitimize" journalists here and overseas.

"This is a worldwide assault on journalists and journalism," said Sulzberger. "But even more important, it's an assault on the public's right to know, on core democratic values, on the concept of truth itself. And perhaps most troubling, the seeds of this campaign were planted right here."

—Kevin McCauley