



Kevin McCauley  
Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's Newsletter



The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016  
212/679-2471. Fax: 212/683-2750  
[www.odwyerpr.com](http://www.odwyerpr.com); [jobs.odwyerpr.com](http://jobs.odwyerpr.com)

June 24, 2019 Vol. 52 No. 25

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC TAPS RUBENSTEIN

The Dominican Republic has issued a \$35K monthly contract with Rubenstein PR to provide advisory services regarding the impact that its reeling tourism sector will have on the economy and effect on the Caribbean nation. The effort is led by agency president Richard Rubenstein.



At least nine tourists have mysteriously died in the DR, including Leyla Cox, a Staten Island woman who passed away June 10 a day after celebrating her 53rd birthday.

Dominican officials have lashed out at US media coverage of the deaths, dismissing it as “fake news” about an island that welcomes 6M visitors a year.

“It’s all a hysteria against the Dominican Republic, to hurt our tourism, this is a very competitive industry and we get millions of tourists, we are a popular destination,” Carlos Suero, DR’s Ministry of Public Health spokesman, told Fox News.

The FBI has launched an investigation of the deaths and the US State Dept is monitoring the probe.

The State Dept already had a “level 3—‘exercise increased caution’ travel warning on the DR for violent crime, including armed robbery, homicide and sexual assault.

Rubenstein’s contract with DR’s Consulate General in New York runs through Sept. 11.

## MMGY WORKS MARKETING FOR COLORADO

MMGY Global has been selected as lead marketing agency for the Colorado Tourism Office.

The firm will develop market strategy for the CTO, as well as spearheading tactical campaign deployment and measurement.

The new contract also allows MMGY to establish an office in Denver’s RiNo district, which will support regional clients as well as other travel related brands based in the Colorado market.

MMGY Global currently employs 400 staff members and a network of destination marketing experts around the world, specializing in the travel, hospitality and entertainment industries.

Denver-based Karsh Hagan remains agency of record for the CTO.



## NEW MEXICO RELEASES TOURISM RFP

The New Mexico Tourism Department has floated an \$11M, multi-year RFP for marketing communications shop to promote and grow tourism in the state and build on the success and momentum of its New Mexico True advertising campaign.



Scope of the work includes supplying creative direction, development, production and strategy for an integrated advertising campaign under the New Mexico True banner; media buying; developing advertising creative and media plans for the fly, in-state, drive and niche-group markets and identifying other target markets; media placement, trafficking/distribution and account services; participating in the two annual events; and collaborating with NMTD and third-party contractors to plan and review work in progress as well as sharing best practices.

Current projected campaign budget is \$11 million per year, subject to annual budget appropriation and availability. Contract terms will not exceed four years.

Proposals are due by July 8 and should be mailed to: The New Mexico State Purchasing Division 1100 St. Frances Dr. Room 2016 Santa Fe, NM 87505

All proposals must be labeled “RFP # 20-418-1003-00001-00 (NMTD Advertising Agency)” on the outside of the envelope.

[Download the RFP, including amendment file \(PDF\).](#)

## BCW INKS \$1M PACT WITH UAE UNIT

BCW has inked an \$84K monthly contract to represent the government of Ras Al Khaimah, which is one of the seven emirates of the United Arab Emirates.

Working for the RAK Media Office, BCW is to provide strategic communications counsel, message development, events, thought leadership, issues management and PR/legal media counsel in the UK and US.

The one-year contract went into effect May 29.

RAK, which lacks the oil resources of fellow emirates Dubai and Abu Dhabi, has a diversified economy geared to tourism, real estate, cement production and pharmaceuticals. It has a population of less than 500K.

BCW’s Washington team on the RAK business includes Shaila Manyam, Yagmur Cosar, Michael Estevez, Christian Foster, William McQuillen and Aranthan Steve Jones.



## SUNY SEEKS PR SUPPORT

The State University of New York has issued an RFP for public relations firms that can provide services and support assisting the 64-campus college system's communications strategy.



SUNY seeks professional counsel and strategic communications services to reach key stakeholders with traditional and social media, as well as local, state and federal government officials, and support the system's communications strategy and selected campuses across the system.

Scope of the work includes communications (developing and implementing communications plans that elevate SUNY's reputation and accomplishes key strategic initiatives), crisis and reputation management (protecting SUNY's reputation and building awareness of the college system's history of inclusion) and strategic management and planning (assisting SUNY staff in the development, implementation, and review of new and existing programs and initiatives in order to identify best practices).

Duration of the contract is three years, with an anticipated start date of November 1.

Proposals should be mailed 3 p.m. (EST) on July 23. Proposals should be mailed to:

Jordan Lohre, Senior Contract Manager  
Office of Business Operations, S112  
SUNY System Administration  
State University of New York  
SUNY Plaza  
Albany, New York 12246

Questions are due by 5 p.m. (EST) on July 2 and should be directed to senior contract manager Jordan Lohre (jordan.lohre@suny.edu) or contract assistant Heather Loukmas (heather.loukmas@suny.edu).

[Download the RFP \(PDF\).](#)

## BERLINROSEN WORKS HARASSMENT SUIT

BerlinRosen is handling the sexual harassment and gender discrimination case filed by Karen Dunbar, a 26-year advertising veteran, against TracyLocke agency, which is part of Omnicom.

Filed June 20 in US District Court for the District of Connecticut, the suit alleges that Dunbar was demeaned, harassed and denied advancement opportunities during her three-year stint at TL due to its pervasive "good old boys" culture. Dunbar said she and other women at the firm were subjected to inappropriate touching and groping by male superiors.

A top TL executive bemoaned America's "PC culture" and used an offensive term during a business meeting, according to the complaint.

Dunbar, who was hired as an associate creative director in TL's Wilton, Conn., office, said after seeking fair treatment for herself and fellow females and forming a TL forum for women, she was fired in retaliation.

The Time's Up Legal Fund is supporting Dunbar's case because it wants to end the "Mad Men" culture present in the advertising business.

BerlinRosen represents the Fund.

## ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

**Hill+Knowlton Strategies-Miami**, which has been agency of record for the **Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority** since 2011, has announced that it will be continuing in that role for the eighth year. H+K plans to enhance its strategic support of the MBVCA through a diverse, integrated plan with a focus on digital and social tactics to engage with prospective visitors to Miami Beach. MBVCA chair Steve Adkins said that H+K's "expertise in building integrated communication programs, branding, digital, social media and content is the perfect complement to the goals of the MBVCA."

**The Pollack PR Marketing Group** and **Now You Global Communications** are partnering with **GetCharged, Inc.** ("Charge") to support the global launch of the company's electric scooter and bike charging, docking and service stations. Now You and PPMG will work to secure trade, metro and business media interest for Charge. The company's mobile docking stations are designed to be compatible with most brands of e-scooters and e-bikes.



**iMARS Communications** provided communication support for **SME Bank**, the Russian Bank for Small and Medium Enterprises Support, at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) 2019, which took place June 6-8. iMARS arranged interviews with leading Russian media as well as providing communications support for business programs and meetings. SME Bank was founded in 1999, and has implemented the Russian government's program to financially support small and medium-sized enterprises since 2004.

**Marino** has added **Knotel** and **Stay Alfred** to its portfolio of real estate accounts. The agency has been retained by the brands to develop and execute a communications strategy to elevate their public profiles and help build and establish them among key target audiences. Knotel is a flexible office provider that services companies of all sizes. Stay Alfred offers upscale travel apartments, with over 2,000 units in 33 cities.

**Manifest New York** has been appointed brand communications agency for Canadian plant-based beverage company **Earth's Own**. Manifest will focus on the company's two oat milk brands—Happy Planet and Earth's Own—which it will represent in the US and Canada respectively. The agency will work to grow awareness of both brands through public relations, the launch of new products and the creation and execution of two thought leadership-led content series.



**AF1 Public Relations** owner Amanda Fulkerson has been retained to assist with the rebranding of **Grow Capital**. Grow, which was once focused on the cannabis market, is now involved in acquiring and developing niche companies. Fulkerson, who founded AF1 in 2013, has also served as chief communications officer for the Clark County School District since 2011 and was chief deputy communications director and campaign press secretary for California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

## **PR TEAMS HAVE A STAKE IN DATA PRIVACY**

As consumers become more connected—in their day-to-day interactions to their usage of advanced tech and devices—their personal information becomes more exposed and at risk than ever. Consumer experiences continue to prioritize convenience and personalization, from online shopping and booking travel to easy sign-in across personal accounts. Similarly, devices aim to make life easier and connect consumers to family, friends, work, their homes and more. And today's consumers have come to expect this.



**Gary Davis**

While such services and products have certainly proven effective for users, if data and privacy aren't prioritized by the brands creating these in-demand experiences, the various touchpoints with consumer information

leaves the door open for breaches and hacks.

Recently, it seems that privacy and security breaches now drive news cycles, with massive data breaches, potential customer information at risk and misuse of personal data making headlines far too often. Ongoing conversations surrounding GDPR, the Cambridge Analytica scandal and recent Collections where billions of usernames and passwords were made available for sale on the dark web are just a few examples.

Such hacks not only impact users but brands' integrity, reputation and overall consumer loyalty. And often, the one on the frontline handling such crises is the PR professional. However, bouncing back from data mismanagement or a security breach is more than just a PR challenge; it has significant and lasting costs, trust and reputation implications. In some cases, reputation and financial recovery time has taken up to a year or more.

So, just managing the crisis as it happens shouldn't be the PR team's only purview. Brands must understand the role effective communications plays in earning and maintaining consumer trust during both good and bad times. It no longer suffices for companies to exclusively prioritize IT departments or teams when it comes to data privacy policies or concerns; they must be in alignment with communications and marketing teams to ensure those teams are equipped to manage any situation that may come their way.

Data is currency, and its misuse shouldn't be taken lightly. Businesses can easily find themselves in a position where they're responsible for additional costs or decrease in revenue, loss of brand value from consumers and stakeholders or damaged reputation. These results can impact clicks on ads, purchasing and usage habits, the withholding of personal info and more. According to the NCSA U.S. Consumer Privacy Index, privacy concerns this year have led to a decrease in consumer trust and brand engagement. In fact, key findings show that:

- 51 percent of consumers haven't clicked an online ad.
- 44 percent of consumers have withheld personal information.

- 36 percent of consumers have stopped using a website.
- 32 percent of consumers haven't downloaded an app or product.
- 29 percent of consumers have stopped using an app.
- 28 percent of consumers stopped an online transaction.
- 74 percent of consumers have limited their online activity.

It's important to note that a responsibility to protect sensitive personal data isn't one sided. It falls on both companies that harbor consumer data as well as users' best practices when it comes to personal information. However, brands now more than ever must prioritize data security and privacy in order to remain competitive in today's digitally driven, device first market; they must not only practice it as a key brand pillar, but must have a plan ready and practiced should things go awry.

Unfortunately, data breaches aren't always preventable, and while cybersecurity firms continue to chime in regarding better data privacy practices, there's a new imperative call to action to add to the mix. Brands must do their due-diligence to align with and leverage communications and marketing departments during the good and bad to showcase their data and privacy efforts. This can be done in simple yet effective ways, including:

- Collect only data that's needed to deliver your service.
- Be transparent about data usage and use layman's language as opposed to technical legalese.
- Use simple language in describing use of consumer information and make it readily available.
- Use privacy as a differentiator from competitors, but only if your company genuinely embraces a privacy-first business model.
- Stay informed on the current state of all things data and privacy, and use readily available knowledge on the subject to improve current strategies.
- Build a crisis communications plan and plan for the worst.

In today's hyper-connected world, brands face the risk of data breaches, cyber-attacks and more. While this might be the cost of doing business, sticking your head in the sand to ignore this reality isn't going to cut it. PR teams are often on the frontline of handling issues, and have experience in understanding how such news will be amplified through media, online forums, social media and more.

Brands must involve their communications teams in developing a crisis communications plan for any situation—and before anything actually happens—in order to have a unified approach that not only uses best practices, but also plans effectively for how they'll communicate to customers, partners and the world if the worst happens. For businesses to effectively survive in today's risky world, PR teams no longer just deserve a seat at the table, they should demand it.

*Gary Davis is Chief Consumer Security Evangelist at McAfee.*



## **ST LOUIS CID ISSUES RFP**

The Downtown St. Louis Community Improvement District has issued RFPs for PR services and political consulting in connection with the strategic planning for the future of the non-profit group.



The CID's term expires Dec. 31, 2021. It wants help to mull the available options related to the pending expiration and potential renewal or reorganization of the CID.

Firms may bid on either one or both of the RFPs.

The PR work involves setting up forums for public feedback, managing perception of the renewal/re-org, messaging/press relations/social media and stakeholder engagement strategy.

Firms pitching the PR contract "should have experience in developing communications strategies for civic engagements and initiatives, as well as experience in crisis communications," according to the RFP.

CID is looking for a political consultant with "experience in advising and strategizing for campaigns for ballot or petition issues in the state of Missouri."

Interested firms face a June 25 deadline to submit electronic proposals with "RFP for CID Political and PR Consulting Services" in the subject line.

Proposals go to Missy Kelley, CID president & CEO, at [mkelly@downtownstl.org](mailto:mkelly@downtownstl.org).

## **WELLS FARGO'S FRACKMAN JOINS ICR**

Marisa Frackman, who was director of healthcare equity capital markets at Wells Fargo Securities, is now at ICR's Westwicke healthcare brand. She takes on the managing director, capital markets, title.

Sameer Khambadkone, managing director, head of capital markets at Westwicke, expects Frackman's "strong origination and execution experience during her healthcare equity capital markets career" will drive continued growth at the advisory business.

Prior to Wells Fargo, Frackman was a healthcare investment banking analyst at Deutsche Bank Securities.

ICR ranks No. 6 on O'Dwyer's rankings of independent firms with 2018 fees of \$69.2M. It is the No. 2 financial firm (behind Edelman) with \$47.5M in fees.

## **GLOVER PARK PICKS IGER**

Mike Iger, former chief of staff to New York Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, has joined Glover Park Group as vice president.



**Mike Iger**

Iger joins the government affairs giant from Rep. Maloney's (D-NY) office, where he'd been stationed since 2012.

He was previously deputy chief of staff—and prior to that, legislative director—to late former Rep. Maurice D. Hinchey (D-NY). Iger also served

as a consultant with the Boston-based strategy consulting firm, Altman Vilandrie & Co.

Iger will be based in GPG's government affairs division in Washington, D.C.

## **PEOPLE ARE DODGING ONLINE NEWS**

A growing number of people in the digital world actively avoid news sites, according to a survey released May 23 by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at Oxford University.

About a third (32 percent) of the 75,000 respondents from 38 countries admit to dodging news sites, up six percentage points from two years ago when Reuters last posed the question.

News avoidance was up 11 percent in the UK, a rise that Reuters attributes to non-stop Brexit coverage.

Boredom, anger, sadness, a sense of powerlessness to change events and having a negative effect on their moods are among reasons why people turn off news sites.

Reuters found that respondents who identify themselves as "populists" are more likely to identify TV as their main news source and Facebook as the top online information site.

Despite a marketing push by the news industry, only a handful of people pay for online news sites via subscription, membership or donation. Just 16 percent of US respondents pay for online news and the bulk of them pay for only one site, according to Reuters.

## **T-MOBILE CALLS ON EX-CONGRESSMAN WYNN**

Former Maryland Congressman Albert Wynn is representing T-Mobile as it works to merge with Sprint to create the No. 2 wireless carrier.

CNN reported that the Justice Dept., which was considered the biggest potential hurdle to the deal, is expected to approve the \$26B merger.

That nod will depend on whether the parties can agree to such concessions as the divestiture of Sprint's Boost Mobile pay-as-you-go unit.

The Federal Communications Commission also must sign off on the Sprint/T-Mobile marriage. The telecoms then must settle a lawsuit filed by attorneys general of New York and California that charged the merger would reduce competition in the marketplace.

As senior director at Greenberg Traurig, Wynn is involved in "legislative monitoring and outreach on issues related to wireless telecommunications" for T-Mobile.



**Albert Wynn**

## **JCIR HELPS ELDORADO CONQUER CAESARS**

JCIR investor relations shop is advising Eldorado Resorts as it offers \$8.6B to acquire Caesars Entertainment to create the nation's biggest gambling company.

The combined entity will keep the Caesars name and have 60 US casino/resorts and gambling halls in 16 states. Eldorado and Caesars shareholders will own 51 percent and 49 percent of the new NASDAQ-listed company, respectively.

The transaction calls for the sale of three Caesars properties—Harrah's casinos in Atlantic City, Laughlin (Nev.) and New Orleans—to VICI Properties for \$3.2B.

JCIR founder/president Joseph Jaffoni, senior managing director Richard Land and managing director James Leahy represent Eldorado.

Teneo's Stephen Cohen handles Caesars.

## **'BE ANYTHING BUT A HAIRDRESSER'**

This month marks the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising, widely regarded around the world as a seminal event in the gay rights movement. LGBTQ Pride was not born out of a need to celebrate our being



**Tim Bird**

gay, but our right to exist without persecution. Not that long ago, women and men were regularly fired or not hired because of their sexuality. For myself and so many others, Stonewall changed the trajectory of my personal and professional future, and that of our industry.

A 1969 picture of me shows a precocious, expressive boy. My parents saw something else in me that was only ever spoken of in code. I could be anything, but NOT a hairdresser. This was code, of course, for queer. While I didn't pursue a hairdressing career (an honorable profession), I've been fortunate to be a part of a thriving communications industry with a unique capability to influence and inspire profound social change. My life depended on it.

The LGBTQ community that I became a part of changed the course of a global public health crisis and saved countless millions of lives. I came out in the 1980s, at the height of the AIDS epidemic. The stigma of the epidemic amplified long-standing discrimination and homophobia, including in the workplace.

Increasingly, our clients, companies and leaders understand that people are our most important asset. But we have a long way to go before every LGBTQ person feels supported by their employer.

Our voices give us power. As agency leader, I have an opportunity—and an obligation—to be proudly and visibly out in the workplace. Since its very beginnings, the fight for equality has belonged to brave, marginalized people whose fierce commitment compels them to protest, march, volunteer, vote and donate. When we speak up about LGBTQ equality, we are creating change. This is particularly important in the workplace.

As a society, we have a long way to go before every LGBTQ person feels supported by their employer. Many LGBTQ staff, and trans people in particular, still face discrimination, exclusion, barriers and even bullying at work. In the U.K., 35% of LGBTQ employees are still in the closet, and this number goes up to 55% in the U.S.

I recently visited the Stonewall Inn, now a National Monument, and reflected on how those events changed my life: from a little boy who couldn't be a hairdresser to an out-and-proud global executive. The greatest lesson I've learned is the need to repay that debt forward by being a role model, building an inclusive workplace, and fostering the careers of diverse, talented communicators.

Together, we have come so far. But there's much more to be done. Our industry's capability to influence matters. Pride still matters. Being out and proud, at home and in the office, will always matter.

*Timothy Bird is global CEO of Health Unlimited, a global health consultancy and communications agency with regional hubs in New York City and London. It is part of the Unlimited Group.*

## **NEWS SITES ALIGN TO COUNTER FB, GOOGLE**

A group of news sites from across the political spectrum have formed the Digital News Alliance, an advertising sales partnership that is intended to help them compete with Facebook and Google.

The alliance includes such conservative-leaning sites as The Daily Caller and Washington Free Beacon as well as left-leaning outlets that include Alternet and Raw Story. Mediaite and its sister site Law & Crime, which tend to take a more middle-of-the-road approach, are also part of the package.

According to both Daily Caller and Mediaite, the alliance will offer advertising packages geared toward the 2020 political advertising cycle, which WPP-owned media buying agency GroupM says is expected to bring in almost \$10 billion in ad spending, and beyond. Both sites note that the properties currently on board bring in over 145 million page views per month. They also have a combined 11 million Facebook followers and 1.1 million Twitter followers.

A *Wall Street Journal* report cites eMarketer figures that show Facebook and Google as controlling 60 percent of all digital ad spending, putting an increasing amount of pressure on sites that depend on advertising revenue.

The alliance says it will begin selling campaigns immediately.

## **SITRICK HELPS BUTTERFLY SNAG BOLTHOUSE**

Sitrick & Co. represents Los Angeles-based Butterfly private equity firm as it acquires Bolthouse Farms from Campbell Soup Co.

Founded in 1915, Bolthouse is the leading producer of fresh carrots and enjoys a strong presence in the refrigerated salad dressing category.



The Bakersfield company has access to more than 65K acres of premium growing land, employs 2,200 people and has operations in California, Illinois, Washington and Ontario.

Jeff Dunn, Butterfly operating partner, will become Bolthouse CEO, a job that he held from 2008 to 2012 when the company was acquired by Campbell Soup. He left in 2016.

Sitrick's Anita-Marie Laurie and Terry Fahn represent Butterfly.

## **ON THE MOVE**

**Dix & Eaton** has brought on **Melody Caraballo** as digital marketing manager and **Tom Wells** as digital media manager. Caraballo previously was the founder and owner of Cleveland-based Harmonious Marketing. Wells comes to the agency from San Francisco-based RadiumOne, where he was a senior account manager.

**Zilker Media** of Austin has promoted brand strategy director **Paige Velasquez** to chief executive officer. Previous CEO and founder **Rusty Shelton** will continue as founder and chairman, and **Nichole Williamson** has been promoted from digital marketing strategist to fill Velasquez's previous position. Velasquez helped start up Zilker Media in 2017. Before joining Zilker, she was digital director for a Texas statewide official's campaign.

## COMMENTARY

**PR firms are falling over themselves, pitching their ability to develop “Purpose” campaigns** to help brands connect emotionally with consumers.



**Carol Cone**

Carol Cone, who pioneered cause marketing and CSR, now runs “Carol Cone On Purpose,” which helps clients stand for something beyond profits.

She believes clients need a purpose that inspires stakeholders “to engage deeply with the organization, advocate for it, buy from it, and when needed, even defend it.”

The Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity honored Cone on June 20 with two Silver Lions for its “My Special Aflac Duck” social robot and comfort companion for children who have cancer.

Aflac said the program in less than a year resulted in 15 percent awareness of robot duck. One hundred percent of that group say they are more likely to insure with Aflac.

The rush for purpose, though, may result in “woke-washing,” according to Unilever CEO Alan Jope.

He warned that brands may say the right things about making the world a better place and then fail to deliver.

Calling “purpose” the most exciting thing that he’s seen in 35 years of marketing, Jope warned: “Purpose marketing is at an important crossroads. Woke-washing is beginning to infect our industry. It’s polluting purpose. It’s putting in peril the very thing that offers us the opportunity to help tackle many of the world’s issues..”

Jope declared Unilever is “all in” on purpose and promised that the company will not work with ad agencies and PR firms with a record of “purpose-washing.”

One hopes that “purpose” doesn’t follow the path of environmental PR, which took off in the 1970s following the first Earth Day and anti-nuclear movement.

Environmental PR was going full tilt in the late 1980s and 1990s and may have peaked with the 1993 publication of “Going Green” by E. Bruce Harrison (“The Dean of Green”).

Looking for good spin, polluters jumped on the PR bandwagon, triggering cries of “greenwashing,” which discredited environmental PR. The media and activists then distrusted all corporate green initiatives.

Environmental PR, which should be robust during the era of global warming, has never recovered and remains a shadow of its former self.

**Kudos to Public Relations Society of America** for calling on Donald Trump “to reestablish the all-important, traditional role of the press secretary to advocate for a free press and keep American citizens well-informed about actions being taken that will affect their lives.”

The Society’s June 19 statement follows Sarah

Huckabee Sanders’ decision to “officially” quit the White House press secretary job, though in reality she walked away from that post a long time ago, holding only two press briefings during the past six months.

Sanders spent that down time auditioning for a contributor job at Rupert Murdoch’s Fox News by appearing on the network more than a dozen times since mid-March.

While PRSA is earnest, it’s naïve to think the president agrees that routine and frequent press briefings provide the press the opportunity, as representatives of the people, “to ask in-depth, comprehensive questions and receive answers that inform the broader public.”

Trump, not known to ever smile, would bust a gut if he read PRSA’s statement, saying the critical function of the press is to scrutinize and hold the government accountable because that “aids in an open, honest and objective decision-making that is crucial to democratic societies.” He might even call it “fake news.”

PRSA’s heart is in the right place but the White House press secretary job may just as well remain vacant while Trump remains in office.

He is his own mouthpiece. And Twitter is his megaphone.

**On the same day PRSA issued its appeal**, the *Wall Street Journal* published an op-ed piece by *New York Times* publisher A.G. Sulzberger who took Trump to task for charging the paper with a virtual act of treason.

“He’s gone from misrepresenting our business, to assaulting our integrity, to demonizing our journalism with a phrase that’s been used by generations of demagogues,” he wrote.

Trump objected to the Times story about US intelligence hacking into Russia’s electrical grid.

Prior to publication, the paper cleared the story with the White House Security Council, National Security Agency and US Cyber Command. They raised no national security concerns.

Sulzberger wrote of the treason allegation: “There is no more serious charge a commander-in-chief can make against an independent news organization. Which presents a troubling question: What would it look like for Mr. Trump to escalate his attacks on the press further? Having already reached for the most incendiary language available, what is left but putting his threats into action?”

Trump got it wrong when he rolled out “Make America Great Again” as his first campaign slogan, a pitch that has now morphed into “Keep American Great.”

Sulzberger got it right in the WSJ: “Mr. Trump’s campaign against journalists should concern every patriotic American. A free, fair and independent press is essential to our country’s strength and vitality and to every freedom that makes it great.”

Put that on a bumper sticker. —Kevin McCauley