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CEO: We Press On

By [David Chavern](#) July 5, 2018

Feb. 14, 2017: The National Rifle Association (NRA) published a video, in which spokeswoman Dana Loesch says, “To those who bring bias and propaganda to CNN, The Washington Post, and The New York Times, your time is running out. The clock starts now.”

June 26, 2018: Milo Yiannopoulos posts on Instagram his words to reporters, saying, “I can’t wait for the vigilante squads to start gunning journalists down on sight.”

June 28, 2018, 2:40 p.m.: An armed man enters the *Capital Gazette* and opens fire. He kills five, injures others. Rob Hiassen, Wendi Winters, Gerald Fischman, John McNamara and Rebecca Smith are dead. Reporters tweeted gut-wrenching details and their own first-hand accounts of curling into a ball, hearing colleagues cry out before being gunned down.

June 29, 2018: The *Capital Gazette* “[put out the damn paper.](#)”

And we all press on.

Following the shooting, PayPal and Venmo banned Yiannopoulos from their platforms (he had a history of wiring money to reporters, such as the time he sent *The New Yorker*’s Talia Lavin \$14.88, a number used by Nazis and White Supremacists).

Last year, Twitter also banned him following his harassment campaign against actress and comedian Leslie Jones. Following his ban, Twitter provided a statement saying, “People should be able to express diverse opinions and beliefs on Twitter. But no one deserves to be subjected to targeted abuse online, and our rules prohibit inciting or engaging in the targeted abuse or harassment of others.”

But he is still active on Facebook and Instagram, continuing to defend his post. I wonder how Facebook’s famous secret algorithms weigh and balance the value his garbage verses the work of real journalists – like those at the *Capital Gazette*?

Last year, according to Reporters Without Borders, [326 journalists were imprisoned around the world for doing their work](#); sixty-five journalists were killed in the line of duty (Society of Professional Journalists sites this number at 74); and another 54 were held hostage by non-state actors.

And that’s considered a “light year”; the lowest in over a decade.

The day of the *Gazette* shooting, Trump tweeted, “Prior to departing Wisconsin, I was briefed on the shooting at Capital Gazette in Annapolis, Maryland. My thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families. Thank you to all of the First Responders who are currently on the scene.”

We believe “first responders” includes not just those in uniform, but those journalists in the field and back in the newsroom, who tell the stories and help the public make sense of these tragedies.

Thank you to the staff of the *Capital Gazette*, and all the reporters who were on scene and continue in the most tragic of circumstances to “put out the damn paper.”

Thank you to journalists around the world, who feel threatened and scared today and, despite that fact, are going into their offices, where they will report on their own communities.

Thank you to the reporters who, regardless of facing online harassment (even from the highest elected official), continue to work.

Thank you to Rob Hiassen, Wendi Winters, Gerald Fischman, John McNamara and Rebecca Smith. It is in your memory and legacy that we press on.



David Chavern

David Chavern serves as President & CEO of the News Media Alliance. Chavern has built a career spanning 30 years in executive strategic and operational roles, and most recently completed a decade-long tenure at the United States Chamber of Commerce.



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