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The real political tragedy of Donald Trump isn't only that he's annihilating the Republican Party or that he says odious and dangerous things all the time. It's that his presence allows most of the media to ignore the corruption, recklessness and policy failures of Democrats, who now function without any genuine ideological opposition.

This week offers a vivid example of this dynamic.

When Trump was told this week that Hillary Clinton once unveiled a massive "infrastructure" plan — including a state-run "infrastructure bank" — he retorted, saying, "Well, I would say at least double her numbers, and you're going to really need more than that," before repeating a slew of liberal shibboleths about how the country is falling apart. If Trump loves debt, how can you be critical of Clinton? A majority of Republicans are now powerless to make a case on the issue.

Instead, we focus on crying babies and an aggrieved Gold Star family (which, by the way, makes it far more difficult to debate the genuine problems with allowing unvetted immigrants from war-torn nations) because Trump has gifted them the higher moral ground.

This week, for example, President Obama authorized a month of airstrikes against ISIS in Libya. If former President George W. Bush were bombing a country using a decade-old authorization of military force that has nothing to do with Libya, the event would consume the news cycle, forcing politicians to answer some questions. And rightly so.

And political implications are now being ignored. I imagine most Republicans support these bombing efforts, but Clinton has claimed she was the chief architect of our intervention in Libya. She was the one who urged Obama, over the strong misgivings of others, to intervene. Actually, Clinton has claimed that the U.N.-authorized Libyan air campaign in 2011 was a model of successful foreign intervention. She maintains that her decisions as secretary of state have prepared her to be commander in chief. I realize that Trump is supposedly against intervention (although he's constantly claiming he would annihilate ISIS). The problem is that today we're talking about how Trump reportedly asked numerous times during an hour-long briefing why America can't use nuclear weapons, making Clinton seem like the rational one.

The Wall Street Journal recently reported that the Obama administration airlifted \$400 million worth in cash to Iran, which coincided with the release of four American hostages in Tehran. "Wooden pallets stacked with euros, Swiss francs and other currencies were flown into Iran on an unmarked cargo plane, according to these officials," the story reads. Considering what we already know about president's penchant for empowering the Iranians, it's not surprising. The idea that the United States secretly paid off a state that sponsors terrorism and



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holds American servicemen hostage should be a huge story. Instead, the media can readjust its focus and talk about how the Republican nominee is facing fraud and racketeering charges, among others, for his role as founder of Trump University.

It's partly the media's fault. Of course most of them would rather talk about Trump than Obama.

Lately, one of my favorite pastimes is watching journalists pretend they didn't want Trump to be the GOP nominee and say his presidency would be bad for the country. In fact, Trump offers the best of both worlds for most of the media: He's great for ratings and terrible for Republicans.

A report from the Harvard University Kennedy School Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy, which analyzed all the major traditional print and broadcast outlets, states that positive media coverage of Trump in 2015 gave him a boost during the primaries. Any reasonable person can see that coverage has radically shifted since he became the nominee.

But Republicans helped make that possible. While the GOP candidate still has the support of loyal partisans — or those who believe Clinton is unacceptable no matter who the Republican nominee is — the nation is really only left with one party. While Republicans fight rear-guard actions against conservatives, clean up their candidate's messes and rationalize his nonsense, Democrats have the field to themselves. That's a dangerous event in a free nation.

David Harsanyi is a senior editor at the Web magazine The Federalist.

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