Pertinent to most at some level, but especially so to someone from Wisconsin, the recent shooting of Jacob Blake as well as the three protestors shot by Kyle Rittenhouse in Black Lives Matters protesting that followed is exceptionally painful after months on end of protests relating to this exact cause. Both yesterday, August 30th 2020, and today, August 31st, 2020, our president Donald Trump gave his own remarks on the incident as reported under the headline “Trump defends Kyle Rittenhouse on eve of visit to Kenosha” by USA Today, the headline “‘Great Patriots!’: Trump lavishes praise on supporters amid deadly clashes with social justice protesters” by The Washington Post, and “Trump defends gunman charged with murdering 2 in Kenosha” by Politico.

Perhaps the most immediate thing to note is that only USA Today mentions in the headline that Trump plans to visit Kenosha shortly here, something that the other two sources do mention within the body of their works – but neither of which draws the same attention to as USA Today does. At the same time, however, only Politico mentions that both city and state officials from Kenosha and Wisconsin respectively have been advising against the president’s visit to the area as a cautionary measure to prevent a potential powder keg from being lit. Almost immediately, this draws two questions to mind: why is USA Today the only paper to see that his praise of Kyle Rittenhouse is coming just days before his visit to the Wisconsin city, and why does only Politico acknowledge the fact that people from the area are telling him to stay away to not make a dangerous situation more volatile?

A quick check on the site Media Bias/Fact Check reveals that both USA Today and Washington Post are seen as having a left-of-center bias, with a notability for high factuality reporting, while Politico is far more center-leaning than these two other sources. This only just adds to the confusion, however: surely, a left-leaning source would want to take advantage of the fact that Trump is directly contradicting state recommendations and travelling to the area anyways to serve as another dig against him and how he asserts his will. A potential explanation for this, at least for the Washington Post, is that their article heavily focuses on the violence in Portland as well that has arisen as result of these recent protests; the Washington Post, having published their article a day earlier, was focusing perhaps more on the broader picture and on Trump’s more specific praise for the right-wing militias than on his specific comments.

What the two left-of-center publications point out that Politico misses, however, is the potential implications and ramifications of Trump voicing his seeming support for Rittenhouse: perhaps out of a need to seem unbiased, they leave out the fact that many of the right-wing militias will see Trump’s words as a go-ahead to continue with the potential for violence even further, even at the detriment for these communities that they claim want to protect (even though Rittenhouse wasn’t even a part of the Kenosha community). This leaves me, then, with just one question: why is it now political to explicitly report on the effects of our president’s usage of language?