

THE INFORMED DEMOCRAT OF SWFL



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Introducing a New Column:

Fighting Fake Facts

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The Trump Administration has been a rich source of misinformation. In his first term alone, the Washington Post detailed some 30573 falsehoods over 4 years. Now he's back at it. We know we at *The Informed Democrat* can't keep up with all of it but we are beginning a monthly column where we invite our readers to submit the most outrageous fake facts they encounter. Write to us and send info about fake facts you've spotted. Please include a source for the fake fact and a source for the true rebuttal. State and local fake facts are welcome, too.

Ukraine started the war. President Zelensky is a dictator. On Feb. 18, as if speaking to the Ukrainians, President Trump said about the war: "You should have ended it three years—you should have never started it, you could have made a deal." The truth? On Feb. 24, 2022, Russian troops bore down on Kyiv in the largest military operation since World War II. As for Zelensky as a dictator, he was elected in free and fair elections in 2019. Under the Ukrainian constitution, elections have been suspended under martial law declared because of the invasion. Zelensky's popularity rating in mid-February hovers around 57%.

Doge saves \$8 billion by canceling just one contract! (Doge.gov, "Wall of Receipts"—since deleted because of massive inaccuracies). The geniuses tasked with rummaging through government databases to root out waste, fraud, and abuse reported savings of \$8 **billion** from a cut to ICE's Office of Diversity and Civil Rights. The fact: the program cut was **\$8 million**, not **\$8 billion**! (*NY Times*, 2/18/25)

American Indians are not citizens! In a court filing in Washington state, Trump's Justice Department relied on an 1884 case to argue that American Indians "lack a constitutional birthright to citizenship" because they give allegiance to their tribes." The filing caused significant confusion. The fact: Native Americans *are* citizens. They were *specifically* awarded US Citizenship by an Act of Congress in 1924.

Social Security Payments go to millions of centenarians, including those aged 150! On Feb. 18, President Trump claimed that "millions and millions of people over 100 years old" were in Social Security roles, implying that they were collecting benefits. *Wired* magazine refuted these claims, adding context about the coding used for Social Security. According to *Wired*, the Social Security system uses an old computer programming language called Cobol whose reference code defaults to 1875 when a specific date of birth is not entered. That default is—*wait for it*—150 years ago! So, take heart! While Elon Musk at a press conference and on X suggested that there must be "millions of vampires" around, it looks like his geniuses have merely discovered coding shortcomings of an old system.)