

Not Acosta

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In late April, Scott Johnson, cofounder of the political blog Power Line, a former attorney and an accredited reporter, was banned from the Minnesota government's daily briefings about the COVID-19 pandemic. Officials also stopped answering his written questions.

Why?

Minnesota officials told the *Washington Free Beacon* that the briefings were limited to "professional journalists." But if they regarded Johnson as something other than a professional journalist, why had he been allowed to attend to begin with?

More plausible is Johnson's contention in his June lawsuit against the state that officials simply didn't

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like his conservative political perspective or his questions. Johnson had been critical of the policies of Minnesota's governor, Tim Walz, in combatting the pandemic.

Months later, Scott Johnson has won his lawsuit.



He can attend the briefings now. And officials must answer at least three of his written questions per week.

A question occurred to me as I was mulling this story: *Isn't what Minnesota did in banning Johnson from the COVID-19 briefings exactly like what Trump did to that CNN banshee, Jim Acosta, when he banned Acosta from presidential briefings?**

No, not exactly, I answer myself. Trump ousted a reporter who was persistently rude and disruptive. "Asking questions government officials dislike" and "being a constant ass" are not the same thing.

At Power Line, Johnson has posted many reports about the lawsuit and about the course of the pandemic in Minnesota.

He may not be welcome by those in government he probes, but we out here, far from power, are glad he is there.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.

* CNN sued and a judge issued a temporary restraining order against the White House, after which CNN and the Trump Administration agreed Acosta could return as long as he followed rules of decorum newly written by the administration and applied to all reporters.