



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on February 15, 2023

Sen. J.D. Vance: Ohio Train Derailment Exposes Biden Administration, Liberal Media

In the aftermath of the train derailment and the “controlled burn” of dangerous chemicals in East Palestine, Ohio, earlier this month, Senator J.D. Vance (R-Ohio) is calling out the Biden administration and mainstream media as “unserious people” focused on “fake problems.”

On Friday, February 3, about 50 train cars — at least 10 of which were carrying hazardous materials — derailed on the eastern end of the small village of East Palestine. The derailment caused a fiery explosion and spilled a mashup of deadly chemicals. In the days following the accident, officials, fearing a major explosion, made the decision to conduct a “controlled burn” of the chemicals, releasing plumes of vinyl chloride, isobutylene, and ethylhexyl acrylate.



AP Images
East Palestine, Ohio

Prior to the “controlled burn,” residents within a mile were evacuated to avoid the potential of mile-wide shrapnel if there were an explosion. Since the controlled burn, residents have [expressed fear](#) of the effects of the chemicals on air and water in the area. Furthermore, many of those residents have been hit with a [“wave of sickness”](#) including coughs, headaches, nausea, and just “feeling terrible,” though officials say the area is safe. Officials’ claims ignore the facts: Not only are residents awash in illness, but [fish and chickens in the area have died suddenly in the wake of the derailment and “controlled burn.”](#)

On Monday, Vance — a freshman senator — [appeared on Tucker Carlson’s show](#) and excoriated the Biden administration and mainstream media over the issue. He pointed out that there have been “hundreds of train derailments after we spent more than a trillion dollars on infrastructure in this country,” and added that “the fact that this isn’t getting obviously better is a major indictment of the people spending the money and what they’re spending the money on.”

Vance went on to say, “Now we know, if you listened to [Transportation] Secretary [Pete] Buttigieg today, that they are focused more on whether we have too many white men in construction jobs than he is on the fundamentals of his job, which is ensuring we have a viable transportation infrastructure in this country.” This is not the first time — and will likely not be the last — that conservative Republicans called out liberal Democrats for putting their “woke” agenda before the good of the country. But originality is not the point here; accuracy is. And where accuracy is concerned, Vance hits it over the fence.

Buttigieg is the veritable poster boy (if this writer may take the liberty of assuming Pete’s gender) of



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the “wokeness” that marks Biden’s administration. The first openly gay Cabinet secretary in U.S. history, Buttigieg has played his “oppressed” status card at every opportunity. He has also managed to transmogrify the United States Department of Transportation into an anti-white, anti-straight, anti-fill-in-the-liberal-demonized-group Department of Social Justice Nonsense, all the while ignoring the *actual* stated justification for the existence of the department — what Vance called the “fundamentals of his job” — “ensuring we have a viable transportation infrastructure in this country.” Buttigieg has used his Cabinet position to promote a litany of liberal causes having nothing to do with transportation, including abortion, homosexual “marriage” and other LGBTQ etc. issues, Greenism, so-called civil rights (for everyone except straight, white males), and open-borders immigration.

No wonder his billion-plus-dollar transportation plan has failed to prevent “hundreds of train derailments.” He has focused on transportation peripherally, at best.

Vance went on to tell Carson, “The problem we have, Tucker, is that we are led by unserious people who are worried about fake problems instead of the real fact that our country is falling apart in some of the most important ways.”

Vance took aim at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) — whose name implies its ostensible purpose: the protection of the environment — telling Carson, “You mentioned the Environmental Protection Agency — of course it says it right there — it should be focused on clean air, clean water, it’s the thing that I’m most focused on for the people of East Palestine, but so often, they’re focused on ‘[environmental racism](#)’ and other ridiculous things instead of fixing the problem that they are established to fix.”

Referring to the derailment and subsequent “controlled burn” of deadly chemicals as “an actual environmental disaster,” Carlson said, “I don’t detect any urgency from the EPA or from Washington at all,” and asked Vance if he thought it was because “these are not their voters.” Vance replied, “I think that’s a big part of it. I think that the entire country — the media complex, the leaders of this country, have decided to disregard the people of East Palestine.” He continued, “If you look at the way this story has been covered — *if it’s been covered at all* — it’s about how how there are poor people in East Palestine who have been victimized by this disaster. Well, of course that’s true, but you want journalists asking tough questions about what’s going on. You want to know, for example, what level of vinyl chloride is actually acceptable in the water.” Vance said he has “been trying to get an answer to that question for days,” but hasn’t “been able to get an answer to it.”

Continuing on that vein, Vance asked, “Why is vinyl chloride showing up in the Ohio River in West Virginia and Cincinnati *hundreds of miles away* from where this accident took place?” He added, “There are a lot of questions that we don’t — unfortunately — have a media that’s interested in asking those questions and answering them.”

Vance’s indictment of the liberal establishment — both in government and in media — is on point. This actual environmental disaster has not served as even a blip on the radar of the party that claims to be concerned about the environment, because it does not tick off enough of their preferred boxes. It appears that East Palestine is not heavily enough populated by non-white, LGBTQ folks — and, frankly, no one else much matters.



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