

Idiom by Lon Yan

大言不慚

da4 yan2 bu4 can2

President Donald Trump said in a speech that no US president had done more than him in the first 90 days of their presidency.

But a news agency did a reality check for him, saying that his claim “flies in the face of (悍然無視) history,” as his “legislative victories are minor, surpassed by those of a variety of high achievers in the White House.”

According to the Associate Press report, Trump had, in fact, been quite ineffectual in delivering what he has promised:

“Trump’s tax overhaul and infrastructure plan have yet to reach Congress. His attempt to secure the borders from people from terrorism-prone regions is so far blocked by courts. And his first attempt to repeal and replace President Barack Obama’s health care law failed in Congress.”

We can call Trump “大言不慚” (*da4 yan2 bu4 can2*).

“大” (*da4*) is “big,” “言” (*yan2*) “speech,” “word,” “to say.” “大言” (*da4 yan2*), as a term, means “to exaggerate,” “to boost.” “不” (*bu4*) is “no,” “not” and “慚” (*can2*) “to feel ashamed.” Literally, “大言不慚” (*da4 yan2 bu4 can2*) is “big words not ashamed.”

The idiom means “to be shamelessly boastful,” “grandiloquence,” “to boast shamelessly,” “to talk big.”

You can use it on insufferable boasters (自吹自擂的人) by telling them: “You really are “大言不慚” (*da4 yan2 bu4 can2*)!” But beware that this is a rather blunt way of expressing your feelings, so expect to make a new enemy!

Terms containing the character “言” (*yan2*) include:

言論 (*yan2 lun4*) – discourse; opinion on public affairs

言語 (*yan2 yu3*) – spoken language

言行 (*yan2 xing2*) – words and deeds

失言 (*shi1 yan2*) – make an indiscreet remark; a slip of tongue; gaffe