



White House Admits To Flagging Posts To Be Censored By Facebook

Description

USA: We have [previously discussed](#) the **extensive censorship programs maintained by Big Tech**, including companies like Twitter and Facebook taking sides in major controversies from gender identification to election fraud to Covid-19. The rise of corporate censors has combined with a heavily pro-Biden media to create the fear of a de facto state media that controls information due to a shared ideology rather than state coercion. That concern has been magnified by demands from Democratic leaders for increased censorship, including censoring political speech, **and now word that the Biden Administration has routinely been flagging material to be censored by Facebook.**



White House press secretary [Jen Psaki admitted](#) that **the Biden administration is working with Facebook to flag “problematic” posts that “spread disinformation” on COVID-19.** She explained that the Administration has created “aggressive” policing systems to spot “misinformation” to be

“flagged” for the social media companies.

Psaki doubles down on calls for censorship of “disinformation:”

“It should not come as any surprise we are in regular touch with social media platforms...and we want to know that the social media platforms are taking steps to address this.” pic.twitter.com/YxlsFJ2iwg

— Benny (@bennyjohnson) [July 16, 2021](#)

The concern is obvious that this allows for a direct role of the government in a massive censorship program run by private companies. There have been repeated examples of the censoring of stories that were embarrassing or problematic for the Biden Administration. Even when Twitter expressed regret for the censoring of the Hunter Biden laptop story before the election, there was an immediate push back for greater censorship from Democrats.

The concern is that these companies are taking to heart calls from Democratic members for increased censorship on the platform. CEO Jack Dorsey previously apologized for censoring the Hunter Biden story before the election. However, rather than addressing the dangers of such censoring of news accounts, Senator Chris Coons pressed Dorsey to expand the categories of censored material to prevent people from sharing any views that he considers “climate denialism.” Likewise, Senator Richard Blumenthal seemed to take the opposite meaning from Twitter, admitting that it was wrong to censor the Biden story. Blumenthal said that he was “concerned that both of your companies are, in fact, backsliding or retrenching, that you are failing to take action against dangerous disinformation.” Accordingly, he demanded an answer to this question:

“Will you commit to the same kind of robust content modification playbook in this coming election, including fact checking, labeling, reducing the spread of misinformation, and other steps, even for politicians in the runoff elections ahead?”

“Robust content modification” seems the new Orwellian rallying cry in our society.

Here’s more of Jen Psaki issuing decrees on who should and shouldn’t be allowed to use social media, then smugly scoffing at the notion that this should concern anyone on the ground that we’re going to die if we don’t submit to the White House’s orders:
<https://t.co/3bAR2J9RMF>

— Glenn Greenwald (@ggreenwald) [July 16, 2021](#)

The same problems have arisen on Covid stories. **For a year, Big Tech has been censoring those who wanted to discuss the origins of pandemic.** It was not until Biden admitted that the virus may have originated in the Wuhan lab that social media suddenly changed its position. Facebook [only recently announced](#) that people on its platform will be able to discuss the origins of Covid-19 after censoring any such discussion.

DOOCY: “Facebook used to block people from posting that covid may have originated from a lab... Is there any concern things you are trying to block may some day turn out to be accurate?” @PressSec: “We don’t take anything down. We don’t block anything.”
pic.twitter.com/EmGqS44F2G

— Daily Caller (@DailyCaller) [July 16, 2021](#)

The back channel coordination with Facebook further supports the view that this is a de facto state-supporting censorship program. That is the basis for the recent lawsuit by former President Donald Trump. As I have previously noted, there is ample basis for objection to this arrangement but the legal avenue for challenges is far from clear. The lawsuit will face difficult if not insurmountable problems under existing law and precedent. There is no question companies like Twitter are engaging in raw censorship. It is also true that these companies have censored material with a blatantly biased agenda, taking sides on scientific and social controversies. A strong case can be made for stripping these companies of legal protections since they are no longer neutral platforms. However, private businesses are allowed to regulate speech as a general matter. It will take considerable heavy lifting for a court to order this injunctive relief.

Here’s a mashup of VACCINE MISINFORMATION from Joe Biden and Kamala Harris.

Does Jen Psaki want Big Tech to CENSOR this? pic.twitter.com/vqnuclmZjni

— Kyle Martinsen (@KyleMartinsen_) [July 16, 2021](#)

That is why we need legislative action. That includes removal immunity protections. However, the government should also consider the creation of an alternative to these companies which are now a threat to our political system. A few companies now control a huge amount of the political discourse in this country and have shown a clear bias in taking sides (even on issues later found to be wrong). Since litigation is likely to fail, legislation would seem an imperative. Congress has been spending hundreds of billions with utter abandon. Yet, there is little discussion over a government subsidized platform for social media or other measures to break up this unprecedented level of corporate control over our political discourse. I am no fan of government programs, particularly as it relates to media. However, Apple, Google, and these other companies are now operating like monopolies, including crushing competitors like Parlor. That is a direct and growing threat to our political process.

We need to consider a short-term investment in a social media platform that will focus any censorship on direct threats or criminal conduct. **There is currently a lack of not only competition but any real opportunity for competition to challenge these companies.** Either we have to redefine what we treat as monopolies or we need to invest in the establishment of competing platforms that are content neutral like telephone companies.

This is why I have described myself as an Internet Originalist:

The alternative is “internet originalism” — no censorship. If social media companies

returned to their original roles, there would be no slippery slope of political bias or opportunism; they would assume the same status as telephone companies. We do not need companies to protect us from harmful or “misleading” thoughts. The solution to bad speech is more speech, not approved speech.

If Pelosi demanded that Verizon or Sprint interrupt calls to stop people saying false or misleading things, the public would be outraged. Twitter serves the same communicative function between consenting parties; it simply allows thousands of people to participate in such digital exchanges. Those people do not sign up to exchange thoughts only to have Dorsey or some other internet overlord monitor their conversations and “protect” them from errant or harmful thoughts.

The actions by Twitter and Facebook on Election Day were reprehensible and wrong. That should have been sufficient cause for action by Congress. It is now growing more precarious and chilling by the day.

by Jonathan Turley

Date Created
07/19/2021